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WFP EVALUATION

Flexible Systems-Effective Responses?

Regional Evaluation of WFP's contribution to Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (2015-2022)

Decentralized Evaluation Report

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation has been made possible by the invaluable input and support from a wide range of stakeholders of the WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and the multiple Country Offices that were involved and support throughout the process. We extend our sincere gratitude to WFP representatives in LAC in RBP and COs, HQ, SRSP beneficiaries, government, and other partners and donors for their collaboration and assistance.

We would also like to express our thanks to WFP for their unwavering support throughout the evaluation process. Special thanks go Michala Assankpon, Evaluation Manager and Natalia Acosta, Regional Evaluation Officer and other colleagues in Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, and Ecuador for their coordination of field visits, gathering key reference documents, and providing general logistical guidance.

The dedication and hard work of the entire evaluation team (ET) deserve special acknowledgment. Their flexibility, cooperation, and diligence during the evaluation process were crucial to its success.

Lastly, our heartfelt appreciation goes to all the members of the Evaluation Reference Group for their valuable feedback and contributions throughout the evaluation process. Their insights and guidance have been invaluable in shaping the outcomes of this evaluation.

DISCLAIMER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. This **thematic evaluation**, commissioned by the Regional Bureau for Latin American and the Caribbean (RBP), examines the work carried out by the World Food Programme (WFP) in **Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)** from **2015 to 2022**. Geographically, it **covers** WFP's work in the region, spanning across **12 country offices (COs) and the Caribbean multi-country office (MCO)** which encompasses 22 countries and overseas territories.¹

2. This **formative regional evaluation has two main objectives: learning and accountability**. **Emphasizing learning**, the evaluation aims to understand high-level outcomes and extract lessons and good practices. For **accountability**, it identifies the results achieved from implementing the SRSP framework and pillar of the Regional Social Protection Strategy (2019) by WFP in LAC. The evaluation assessed the **coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and gender and inclusion aspects** of WFP's engagement in SRSP, the system-wide commitments on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), and the extent to which **gender, equity, and wider inclusion issues** and considerations were integrated in the interventions' design, including for people with disability.

3. The evaluation is intended for WFP COs and RBP as well as the Social Protection (SP) unit in Headquarters (HQ) which will use its conclusions and recommendations for future programming and partnership strategies and for identifying future areas of focus for its SRSP work. External users include governments and regional bodies, as well as UN agencies, other multilateral organizations and bilateral donors and civil society collaborating with WFP on SRSP.

¹ Including Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela, while the MCO covers 22 countries and overseas territories, all of which are classified as small island developing States, namely Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

Context

4. The region is characterized by significant **socio-economic disparities and exposure to various shocks**, such as climate-related shocks, economic crises, migration waves, and public health emergencies, like COVID-19. Vulnerable populations in the region face heightened risks during these crises, necessitating the development of shock-responsive social protection systems.

5. As part of its commitment to addressing food insecurity and improving nutrition, WFP has been working on SRSP in the LAC region since 2015. The evaluation assesses the different stages of this engagement including **initial research to conceptualize the work**, further **evidence generation** and specific actions undertaken by the country offices and RBP to provide **technical assistance and advocate** for greater responsiveness to shocks of national social protection systems. Many of these actions were aimed at **strengthening institutions** that are in charge of social protection programmes and disaster response and contributing to the enabling environment around social protection. In some cases, WFP also **directly delivered assistance** to vulnerable populations affected by shocks. Provided that this type of activities is often integrated within wider programmes and areas of work, the exact number of beneficiaries and costs associated with the subject of evaluation are not presented to avoid misinterpretation.

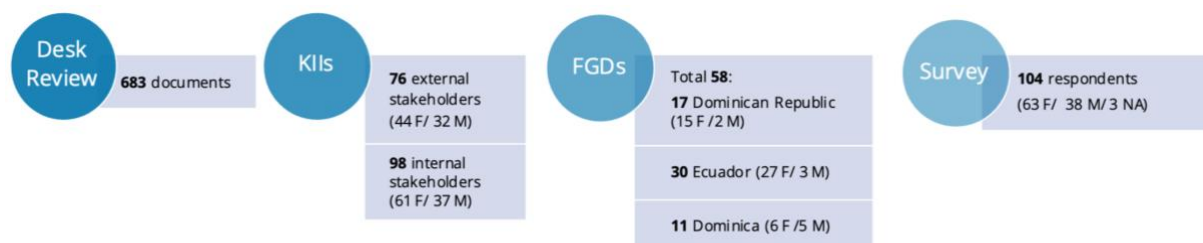
Methodology

6. The evaluation adopted a **mixed-methods approach** and followed a **utilization-focused and theory-based approach**, using **outcome mapping** to assess WFP's contribution to strengthening shock-responsive SP systems in LAC. **Qualitative data** was gathered through:

- **Three field visits** (Dominican Republic, Ecuador and the Caribbean MCO).
- **Three desk review+** (Colombia, Nicaragua and Peru), where in-depth document reviews were conducted along with remote Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), primarily involving WFP staff and government partners. In addition, two desk review+ were conducted for thematic case studies in technology and country capacity strengthening (CCS).
- **One further in-depth document** review country (Haiti).

7. Quantitative data was gathered through an online survey (response rate 38%). Figure 1 summarizes the methods used.

Figure 1. Data collection methods



8. The Evaluation Team (ET) conducted a comprehensive review and analysis of WFP's engagement in SRSP across the region. This encompassed a thorough examination of provided materials, including evaluations, strategies, financial data, country case studies, roadmaps, Country Strategic Plans, Annual Country Reports, and Gender and Age Marker reports and other documents. Furthermore, the ET engaged in interviews with various stakeholders, including WFP COs in the region, RBP, WFP social protection

personnel in other regional bureaus, government representatives, UN partners, Civil Society Organizations, academic experts, and beneficiaries of the interventions.

9. The **sampling strategy** involved a purposeful approach, with an initial stakeholder list created and validated through country-level consultation with WFP Social Protection staff and the Evaluation Manager. A **snowballing method** was employed to include additional stakeholders referred by initial participants. For Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), participants were selected from existing lists of targeted Social Protection recipients, considering diverse profiles and inclusion of persons with disabilities, when possible.

10. Data analysis involved **content analysis** to process information from documents and interview notes based on the evaluation matrix. Quantitative data analysis included generating descriptive statistics from survey and available monitoring data. **Comparative analysis** was conducted to contrast findings from different sources, and triangulation was employed to ensure credible and unbiased conclusions, using a mix of primary and secondary data sources.

11. **Major methodological limitations** consisted of the absence of a Theory of Change (ToC) or logical framework to comprehensively capture WFP's involvement in SRSP in the region, along with monitoring data limitations. Additionally, the evaluation was challenged by staff turnover both within WFP and among governmental counterparts, efforts were made to contact and interview these key stakeholders to ensure continuity and accuracy of information.

Findings

TO WHAT EXTENT HAS WFP'S ENGAGEMENT IN SRSP IN THE REGION CONTRIBUTED TO STRONGER, MORE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS?

12. WFP's **evidence generation initiatives have strategically positioned it as a thought leader** on SRSP through high-level events, South-South and Triangular cooperation, and partnership building. This aligns with its overarching ToC. Although the evidence generated by WFP has varying levels of uptake, it has **played a crucial role in creating a comprehensive framework for SRSP**. It has **fostered relationships with government stakeholders and identified country-specific opportunities** for enhancing social protection system. WFP has made important contributions to strengthening these systems at individual and institutional level, but there is limited evidence of successful advocacy work to influence social protection budgets.

13. **WFP's SRSP engagement has expanded coverage, including vulnerable individuals and migrants**, in response to various shocks and crises, such as climate-related disasters and economic or public health-related shocks. WFP's **response to the COVID-19 pandemic involved strategic shifts**, including **beneficiary identification and electronic cash distribution methods**, showcasing its contribution to addressing pandemic challenges within social protection measures.

14. The emerging positive effects include enhanced targeting processes, formalization of distribution processes and financial inclusion of excluded groups. However, in many cases there is room for improvement when communicating the rationale for transfer values.

15. WFP's initial engagement in SRSP lacked an operational approach to mainstreaming gender and inclusion dimensions. Over time, it has made **progress through partnerships, internal efforts and awareness**. Although some COs have addressed gender-specific needs and vulnerable populations in design and targeting, **systematic and consistent inclusion remains a challenge**.

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED WFP'S ENGAGEMENT IN SRSP IN THE REGION IN GENERAL AND WITH REGARDS TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS?

16. Externally, **national political will and ownership play a pivotal role**, further enablers are a well-conceived normative framework tailored to SRSP, standard operating procedures, contingency plans, and effective inter-agency coordination. Governments must also have identified resources (human and financial) to lead and support the work. Within WFP, **supportive management perspectives, targeted advocacy efforts, and capacity-strengthening initiatives** for government decision-makers contribute to successful engagement.

17. Barriers and trade-offs arise from external and internal factors. These encompass lack of engagement and competing interests among government ministries, limited decision-making ability of government technical staff, and absence of a clear national SRSP normative framework with delineated roles for disaster risk management and social protection ministries. Within WFP, factors like staff turnover and resource limitations present barriers to effective engagement.

18. The significant progress achieved in rendering national social protection systems shock-responsive is attributed in part to the COVID-19 pandemic response. However, these **gains remain fragile and susceptible to changes in government priorities or fiscal constraints**. WFP's disaster risk financing initiatives were identified to have potential to contribute to **longer-term sustainability**. Opportunities lie in local-level interventions to bolster SRSP systems' sustainability, **standardizing approaches** to embed SRSP within national normative frameworks, and leveraging the experiences of boosting resilience and recovery through school feeding programs.

19. The SRSP experience in the LAC region has generated **valuable practices that can be shared across WFP operations**. These encompass collaborations with sub-regional institutions to enhance SRSP capacity, direct engagement with women for gender equality and financial inclusion, optimizing routine social protection systems, fostering government leadership and coordination, development of Disaster Risk Financing strategies, enhancing resilience and recovery through school feeding programs, and investments in regional SRSP expertise through training efforts. Further takeaways include the necessity for **customized digitalization solutions coupled with capacity building**. Lessons from the COVID-19 response emphasize the importance of preparedness and flexibility in social protection systems, as well as supporting systems integration and inclusivity.

WHICH MODALITIES OF ENGAGEMENT DEPLOYED BY WFP WERE THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT IN SUPPORT OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN SRSP IN VIEW OF DIFFERENT CONTEXTS?

20. Countries with pre-existing strong SP systems, have generally required more focus on normative frameworks and coordination to enable the connection with DRM actors; in countries where pre-existing SP systems were less developed, WFP is using a range of entry points. Across contexts, coordination and alignment among stakeholders within a defined process proved efficient and effective in achieving positive outcomes.

21. WFP's SRSP work has also proven itself to be an effective response to climate-related shocks, as well as public health emergencies, as demonstrated by WFP's significant contribution to the COVID-19 response through technical assistance and funding support. While **SRSP adaptation to migration**

contexts was limited, the Caribbean MCO and Colombia CO demonstrated **potential by addressing gaps among others by strengthening information systems and advocating for model legislation** to extend universal social protection coverage.

22. A considerable **rise in WFP staff integrating SRSP elements** into their work was observed. This integration extended beyond the social protection unit, encompassing various teams within WFP such as emergency preparedness and response, technology, and climate change. There were also **considerable investments in knowledge generation, training, and project seed funding** to advance SRSP. This was enabled by the management-level prioritization to establish a consistent investment fund over several years.

23. WFP has made significant strides in **recruiting and training staff for SRSP activities**. However, the nature of these contracts has resulted in many individuals not staying for extended periods, leading to the loss of institutional knowledge and limitations in developing long-term plans. There are also perceived **gaps in the adequacy of financial resources and sustainability of investments**, posing challenges for the effective implementation and institutionalization of SRSP.

TO WHAT EXTENT DID WFP'S ROLE IN ADVANCING SRSP PROGRAMMING IN THE LAC REGION CONTRIBUTE TO WFP'S CORPORATE VISION AND APPROACH TO SOCIAL PROTECTION AND WIDER DISCUSSION ON THE SUBJECT?

24. There is **alignment between the regional and corporate social protection strategies** on the use of social protection to address shocks. However, the corporate strategy has steered away from using the 'SRSP' terminology. WFP's approach to this work, organizationally, has been influenced significantly by the RBP experience, though this is not the only factor. Still, the **robustness and scale of the SRSP work in RBP has legitimized WFP's mandate in this area for other regions**. Lessons learned have to some extent informed the work beyond LAC, although the sharing of experiences across regions remained ad hoc.

25. WFP is recognized for its strong comparative advantage in cash-based transfers, in-kind assistance, climate-financing mechanisms, digitalization, and school feeding. Its distinctive value also lies in its operational agility, logistics capabilities, and expertise in identifying vulnerable groups through assessments. Yet, local presence seems more directed toward emergency response than capacity strengthening of local authorities. In addition, WFP's innate strength in linking social protection and disaster risk management is utilized to varying degrees across the region.

26. WFP's collaboration with development and humanitarian partners on SRSP in LAC is evident. At the regional level, **WFP has played an important role in inter-agency working groups**, though the absence of a formal coordination mechanism on SRSP is a limiting factor. **UN collaboration varies by country**, with the Adaptive Social Protection Working Group in the Dominican Republic highlighted as a positive example of WFP's contribution to strengthened coordination. **Closer collaboration with International Financial Institutions is a growing trend**, offering opportunities for broader partnerships.

Conclusions

27. **Results, Challenges and Opportunities in SRSP Implementation:** WFP's engagement in SRSP in the LAC region has shown positive effects in improving coverage, transparency, and financial inclusion. WFP has been able to build on its comparative advantages, and good practices, such as collaboration with sub-regional institutions, gender equality efforts, and leveraging school feeding programmes, have shown promising results. Challenges include external factors like varying government engagement and reception capacity, as well as internal aspects such as staff turnover and resource constraints. While recognizing the need to tailor the support, WFP's operational SRSP Guidance offers methodology to structure engagement with counterparts at country level. Further opportunities lie in advocacy work for national budgets to be allocated for social protection.

28. **Harmonizing SRSP Strategies:** There is a considerable alignment between the Regional Social Protection Strategy (2019) and the Corporate Social Protection strategy. However, at corporate level WFP rightly steered away from using the term 'Shock-Responsive Social Protection' as it co-exists with other terms which in certain cases in LAC resulted confusing for governments and partners. The pioneering role of the LAC region, in advancing SRSP within WFP has influenced the corporate approach, but there is room to enhance cross-regional exchanges.

29. **Evidence-based leadership, relationship-building and coordination:** WFP's evidence generation and related policy advocacy efforts have played a significant role in raising awareness about social protection and shock-preparedness and response. This has led to improved coordination and partnerships with governments and other key stakeholders and, to varying degree across countries, a stronger positioning of the topic on national agendas. However, as more stakeholders engage in SRSP, there is a growing demand for further strengthening this coordination and alignment to foster synergies and avoid duplication and conflicting demands on government resources.

30. **Organizational adaptability and capacity strengthening:** WFP has significantly increased resources deployed for SRSP activities, including staff recruitment, training, evidence generation, advocacy, and project seed funding. The organization's adaptability and recognition of the growing importance of SRSP are evident. However, initially strategic reliance on short-term contracts starts showing its limitations and moving forward an appropriate staffing mix including national professional positions becomes important to enhance retention and financial sustainability.

31. **Integration of gender and inclusion towards enhanced effectiveness:** WFP's SRSP engagement has effectively responded to different types of shocks and expanded coverage and inclusivity in social protection measures. However, improvements are needed in systematically and consistently including affected groups, such as persons with disabilities. Effective two-way communication with beneficiaries and collaboration with other organizations can enhance effectiveness in this regard.

Lessons Learned

32. WFP's investment in strengthening shock responsiveness of social protection systems **requires a longer time frame** compared to humanitarian programming and considering changes in governments, leadership, and policies in its approach and guidance for SRSP to ensure adaptability.
33. To enhance responsiveness to shocks in a long run, it's key to gain solid understanding of the individual systems and contribute to its overall strengthening.
34. Collaboration with sub-regional institutions to enhance capacity, normative frameworks, and set standards in SRSP adds value to WFP's engagement.
35. Supporting **coordination efforts and institutionalizing coordination platforms** are crucial elements in strengthening responsiveness to shocks of national social protection systems.
36. **Close engagement with** partners from the **national governments** and responding to their emerging needs is key to **foster ownership and enhance uptake** of new solutions (e.g., electronic payment cards).
37. WFP's field presence, satellite offices, and operational capacity can enhance shock-responsiveness at the local level through community-level preparedness and response mechanisms.
38. Supporting governments in the systematic use of **participatory approaches, consultative assessments, and ensuring the inclusion of diverse perspectives** to address the needs of marginalized groups in accessing social protection systems and services is key to **enhance their inclusiveness**.



Recommendations

R1: WFP should establish more **structured platforms for knowledge sharing and exchange** both **internally** among its country offices and regional bureaus as well as **externally** among partners, while also providing support to strengthen capacities in less advanced regions. (Headquarters & RBP, Dec 2024)

R2: WFP should **continue positioning itself as a key partner to national governments** in regard to SRSP, as part of its broader contribution to social protection system strengthening, for better food security and nutrition outcomes. This includes **contributions to coordination, evidence generation and exchange as well as development of country-specific strategies**. (RBP, Dec 2024)

R3: WFP should continue **generating robust evidence** on its engagement in **strengthening social protection systems** and contribute to **enhancing the monitoring and evaluation capacities** of these systems. (Headquarters & Regional Bureaus, Dec 2024)

R4: Recognising the significant investment to date, **WFP should continue with internal and external capacity strengthening on SRSP** as part of the broader capacity strengthening efforts on social protection in LAC, including training partnerships, south-south cooperation, and conferences. (RBP, Dec 2024)

R5: WFP should continue to expand **its evidence generation and investments in disaster risk financing**, where it is relevant, to contribute to **sustainable financing models of response to shocks** through strengthened social protection. (RBP, Dec 2024)

R6: WFP should continue exploring opportunities in **supporting governments of the region in digitalization processes** to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of social protection delivery. Particular **emphasis should be placed on registries, monitoring, payment and delivery systems**. (RBP, Dec 2024)

R7: WFP should seize the opportunity when assisting governments in strengthening social protection systems and emergency preparedness and ensure that it also contributes to enhancing inclusion, gender-sensitivity and potentially their transformative attributes. (RBP, Dec 2024)



1. INTRODUCTION

1. In line with its mission, the World Food Programme (WFP) has supported national social protection.¹ (SP) systems with the purpose of improving the situation of the poor and vulnerable populations. In recent years, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has faced a number of shocks and crises, including political and migration crises, climate-related events and COVID-19. This, combined with other challenges such as demographic growth and urbanization, has adversely affected the livelihoods and food security of the population, especially the most vulnerable groups.²

2. In 2015, **WFP introduced Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP)³ as crucial tool for national governments to address external shocks.** As such, WFP works in the region on direct response to emergencies but also on supporting governments through technical assistance with the purpose of strengthening systems in preparedness and response to emergencies. With the recent COVID-19 pandemic, SRSP was proven to be an effective tool to respond to challenges beyond conflict and climate-related disasters. Furthermore, since 2015 the Regional Bureau for Latin American and the Caribbean (RBP) has further invested in social protection and identified pillars of engagement that became the basis for the **Regional Social Protection Strategy**, launched in 2019. WFP's corporate Social Protection Strategy was released in 2021. Both strategies are broadly aligned, despite some differences in terminology.

1.1. EVALUATION FEATURES

3. The **Regional Evaluation of WFP's contribution to Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean** was commissioned by the RBP and covers the period from 2015 to 2022. The subject of this thematic evaluation is WFP's work in the field of Shock-Responsive Social Protection implemented in 12 country offices (COs) and the multi-country office (MCO) in the Caribbean, supported by the RBP.

4. WFP's agenda on SRSP in the region focuses on **three approaches**: 1) generate evidence to inform practice; 2) foster inter-institutional dialogue at national levels and sharing between countries; 3) operationalize SRSP through WFP's emergency preparedness and response actions and technical assistance activities.

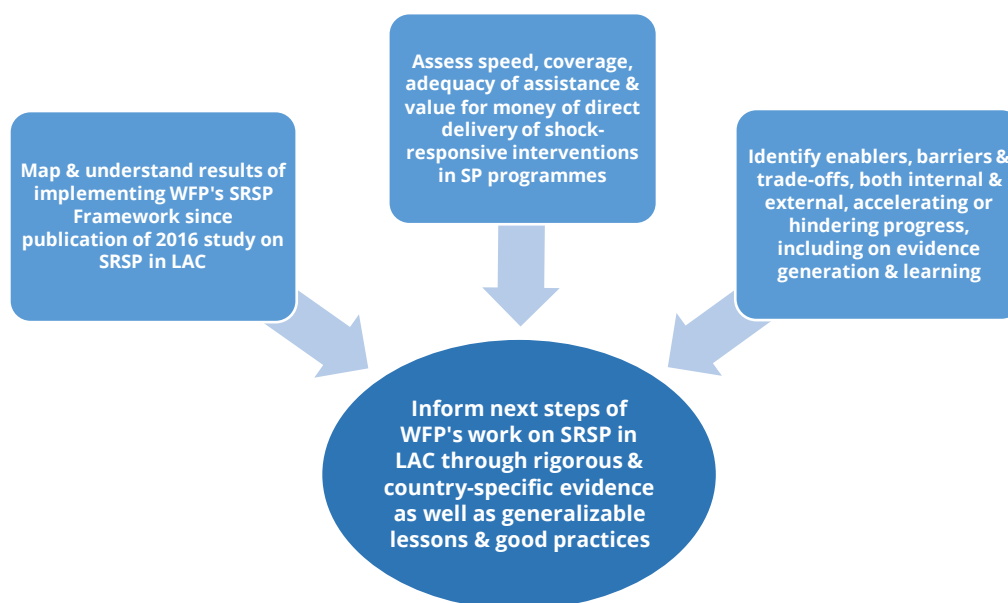
5. This **thematic evaluation**, which took place from January to November 2023, is relevant at this time since there has been interest to map and understand the results of implementing WFP's SRSP framework since 2015, including the extent to which WFP has contributed to **strengthening national social protection systems through direct delivery** (i.e. downstream work) **and technical assistance** (i.e. upstream work), to inform WFP's programming and future engagement with governments and institutional partners on SRSP in LAC. Figure 1 presents an overview of the rationale and expected use of the evaluation.

¹ According to the Oxford Policy Management, social protection is defined as "the set of public actions that address both the absolute deprivation and vulnerabilities of the poorest, and the need of the currently non-poor for security in the face of shocks and lifecycle events." Source Oxford Policy Management (2017). OPM (2017a) 'Shock-Responsive Social Protection Systems Research: Literature Review', OPM/DFID, Oxford, UK.

² Solórzano, A. and Cárdenas, I. (2019). Social protection and climate change: WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean's vision to advance climate change adaptation through social protection. World Food Programme in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management.

³ Defined by the RBP Social Protection Strategy as "the use of national social protection programmes and administrative capacity to provide assistance to the population affected by a crisis." Source: WFP. (2019). Social Protection Strategy: Latin America and the Caribbean.

Figure 1. Summary of Evaluation Rationale and Use



Source: own elaboration.

6. This primarily **formative evaluation has the two mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning**. In terms of **learning**, the evaluation determines the extent to which outcomes were achieved and examines the reasons why certain results were or were not achieved. It also seeks to identify good practices and provide lessons to feed into future strategic and operational decisions in LAC and, possibly, other regions. In terms of **accountability**, the evaluation identifies the results emerging from the implementation of the SRSP framework and SRSP pillar of the Regional Social Protection Strategy (2019) by WFP in LAC. The evaluation also reinforces WFP's commitment to being accountable to the populations it serves, who are the direct and indirect beneficiaries influenced by WFP's work on SRSP. The evaluation provides a strong evidence base for further engagement with governments and institutional partners on establishing social protection systems that benefit equitably diverse groups and take into account country-level specificities **in line with 'leave no one behind' principles**. As such, the means to assess the extent to which WFP's methods of engagement promote social protection models that perpetuate gender stereotypes or that empower recipients and help to achieve more inclusive norms and systems were mainstreamed into the evaluation criteria and questions.

7. The primary audience for the evaluation report, along with the accompanying country and thematic case studies, video, and infographics, include **WFP COs and RBP as well as the SP unit in HQ** which will use the conclusions and recommendations for informing future programming, partnership strategies, and for identifying future areas of focus for its SRSP work. **External users** include governments and regional bodies, UN agencies, other multilateral organizations, and bilateral donors as well as civil society groups collaborating with WFP on SRSP.

8. The **evaluation's scope** included an assessment of all WFP major activities outlined in the field of SRSP in the LAC region conducted between **January 2015 to December 2022**, and all types of beneficiaries. Geographically, the evaluation focused on **12 WFP COs and the Caribbean MCO**;⁴ however, it also considered the work that has been done in the non-presence countries.

⁴ Including Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela, while the MCO covers 22 countries and overseas territories, all of which are classified as small island developing States, namely Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

9. The evaluation assessed the **coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and gender and inclusion** aspects of WFP's engagement in SRSP, the system-wide commitments on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), and the extent to which gender, equity, and wider inclusion issues and considerations were integrated in the interventions' design, including for persons with disabilities.

10. The evaluation was conducted by a team of six external consultants with diverse expertise, including social protection, gender, country capacity strengthening and evaluation methods (5 female, 1 male). The consultants were hired by DeftEdge Corporation, three of them are either citizens or residents of LAC countries and the remaining members have extensive work experience in the region. The field work took place between April and May 2023.

1.2. CONTEXT

Poverty and inequality

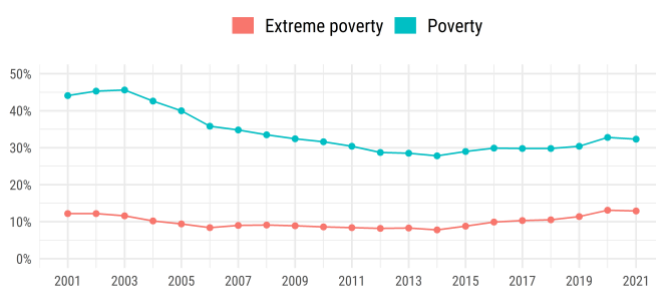
11. Between 2001 and 2014, LAC experienced a reduction of 16.3 percentage points (pp) in poverty and 4.4 pp in extreme poverty. However, as shown in Figure 2, the **number of people in poverty and extreme poverty has increased since 2015**, with an acceleration in 2020 due to the pandemic...⁵

12. Poverty levels in LAC **vary greatly across populations** (between countries, genders, and ethnicities) due to present inequality. Inequality, measured using the Gini coefficient, has remained stable in recent years (with a value of 0.46 in 2021), with notable variations between more equal countries, such as the Dominican Republic with a Gini coefficient of 0.40, and more unequal ones, like Colombia at 0.53.

⁶

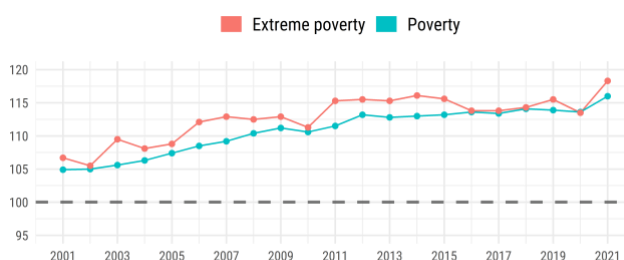
13. **Inequalities between men and women** in occupations, labour market participation, and distribution of unpaid domestic work are associated with a slower reduction of poverty rates. As shown in Figure 3, 105 women lived in poverty for every 100 men in 2001; a figure that increased to 116 women in 2021...⁷

Figure 2. LAC population living in poverty, 2001-2021



Source: own elaboration based on data from ECLAC (2022). *Social Panorama in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

Figure 3. LAC feminity index of poverty, 2001-2021



Note: the feminity index estimates the number of women in poverty for every 100 men.
Source: own elaboration based on data from ECLAC (2022). *Social Panorama in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

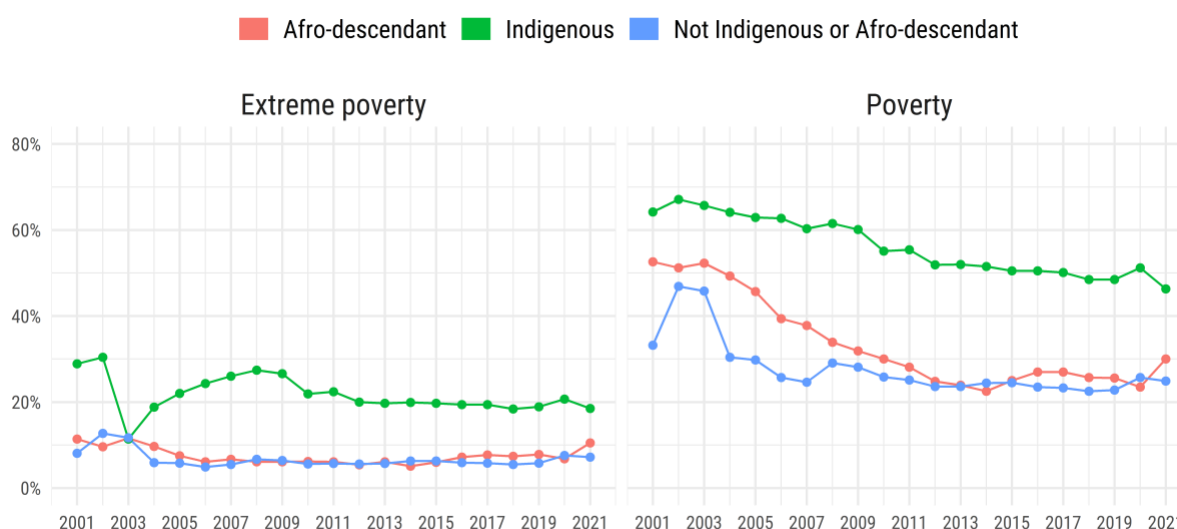
⁵ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (2022). *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022 (LC/PUB.2022/15-P)*. Santiago, ECLAC. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48519-social-panorama-latin-america-and-caribbean-2022-transforming-education-basis>.

⁶ Idem.

⁷ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (2022). *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022 (LC/PUB.2022/15-P)*. Santiago, ECLAC. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48519-social-panorama-latin-america-and-caribbean-2022-transforming-education-basis>.

14. Indigenous groups represent 9.8% of the population in LAC (reaching 43.6% in Guatemala and 41.5% in Bolivia),⁸ and experience a significantly **higher level of poverty compared to non-Indigenous and non-Afrodescendant people** (21.4 pp higher, see Figure 4). Indigenous and Afrodescendant people face further barriers in accessing quality education. This latter group accounts for approximately 20-30% of the population in LAC and reaches more than 90% in some Caribbean countries like the Bahamas, Barbados, and Jamaica.^{9, 10} Although there has been progress in closing the poverty gap between Afrodescendants and non-Indigenous/non-Afrodescendant people, disparities have increased since 2016.¹¹

Figure 4. LAC population living in poverty by ethnicity, 2001-2021



Source: own elaboration based on data from ECLAC (2022). *Social Panorama in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

15. Despite persistent disparities, **poverty levels in rural areas have consistently declined** throughout the 21st century (see Figure 5). Conversely, **poverty in urban areas has risen since 2015**, which is a matter of concern as 81.2% of the population lived in urban areas in 2020.¹²

⁸ Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)/Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y el Caribe (FILAC). (2020). *Los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina - Abya Yala y La Agenda 2030 Para El Desarrollo Sostenible: Tensiones y Desafíos Desde Una Perspectiva Territorial*. Santiago, CEPAL y FILAC. [Online]. Available from: <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/45664>.

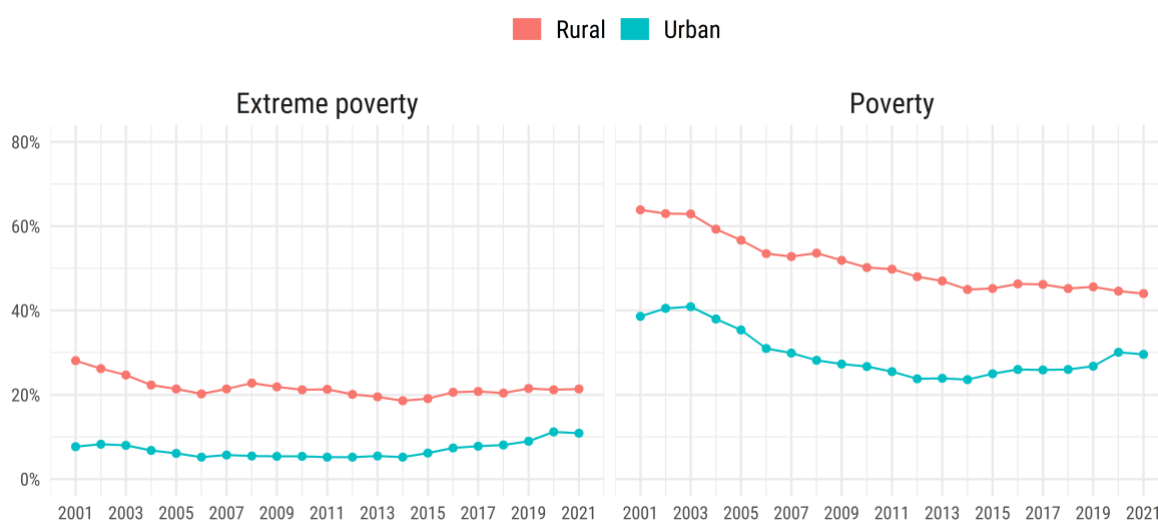
⁹ Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). (2021). *Health of Afro-Descendant People in Latin America*. Washington, D.C., PAHO. [Online]. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.37774/9789275124895>.

¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency of the United States (CIA). *The World Factbook-Central America and the Caribbean*. [Online]. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.37774/9789275124895>.

¹¹ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (2022). *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022 (LC/PUB.2022/15-P)*. Santiago, ECLAC. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48519-social-panorama-latin-america-and-caribbean-2022-transforming-education-basis>.

¹² Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). *CEPALSTAT: Base de Datos y Publicaciones Estadísticas*. [Online]. Available from: <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/databank>.

Figure 5. LAC population living in poverty by geographical area, 2001-2021



Source: own elaboration based on data from ECLAC (2022). *Social Panorama in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

16. Economies in LAC are expected to grow by 1.3% in 2023, a significant slowdown compared to the estimated growth of 3.7% in 2022 and 6.7% in 2021.¹³ High inflation is adding to this challenge, especially in food and energy prices, which has disproportionately affected low-income households who spend a large portion of their budget on these necessities. In October 2022, average inflation was 8.7% in South America, 7.7% in Central America, and 7.4% in the Caribbean.¹⁴ Unemployment rates declined from 11.5% in the third quarter of 2020 to 7% in the second quarter of 2022.¹⁵ However, seven out of every ten jobs created occurred in the informal sector.¹⁶

External events increasing the pressure on social protection systems

17. The **COVID-19 pandemic, trade policies, and the war in Ukraine** have impacted the region significantly. Although LAC has seen a decrease in 2022 on the effects of the pandemic, COVID-19 led to 2.8 million excess deaths in the region between 2020 and 2021.¹⁷ This is causing prolonged health and social crises which has led to an increase in extreme poverty rates from 13.1% in 2020 to 13.8% in 2021. China's stringent biosecurity measures caused an economic downturn in 2022,¹⁸ affecting many LAC countries that rely on China as their main trading partner.¹⁹ Furthermore, the war in Ukraine has continued to disrupt the region with economic uncertainty and increased prices of food, fuel, and fertilizers. Caribbean countries are particularly vulnerable due to their reliance on food imports.²⁰

¹³ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (2022). Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2022. Executive summary (LC/PUB.2022/19). Santiago, ECLAC. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48575-preliminary-overview-economies-latin-america-and-caribbean-2022-executive-summary>

¹⁴ Idem.

¹⁵ Idem.

¹⁶ Idem.

¹⁷ Haidong Wang et al. (2022). Estimating Excess Mortality Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. *The Lancet*, 399, no. 10334: 1513–36.

¹⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ((Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA] 2022)

¹⁹ World Trade Organization (WTO). (2022). [Online]. Available from: https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/trade_profiles22_e.htm.

²⁰ Caribbean Community (CARICOM et al. 2022). [Online]. Available from: <https://www.wfp.org/publications/caribbean-food-security-livelihoods-survey-august-2022>.

Political instability and violence

18. From 2015 to 2022, **LAC faced political instability** that led to presidents being ousted or impeached in Honduras and Peru. The region has faced **social unrest** due to the lack of progress in reducing poverty and inequality. In this context, clashes between protestors and security forces led to **human rights violations and increased violence**. In 2021, there were 40 recorded violent conflicts in the Americas.²¹ Violence caused by non-state armed actors has caused internal displacement in several countries. Deteriorating economic situations or political instability can prompt individuals to migrate and can lead to governments being financially or socially strained in respect to providing certain services or activities (such as responding to shocks).

Migration and internal displacement

19. In 2023, **29.2 million people in LAC have needed humanitarian assistance**, 1.3 million more than in 2022.²² Much of this is due to migration waves in the region which have occurred for diverse reasons, including economic, social, political, and environmental factors. In Aruba and Curaçao, for example, the proportion is one in six and one in 11, respectively,²³ while the number of migrants in the Caribbean tripled from 2019 to 2021.²⁴

20. Migrant caravans to the United States have been on the rise with people migrating from different countries including Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. In 2021, 226,000 migrants from the Northern Triangle reached the Mexico-United States border, with 34,000 of them being unaccompanied minors.²⁵ Whilst migrants in general confront obstacles and hazards when moving from place to place, those encountered by women, girls, LGBTQI+, and adolescents are often more severe. Such dangers may include human trafficking, with a focus on sexual and labour exploitation. Additionally, these groups encounter greater difficulties when attempting to obtain essential services such as healthcare, education, and housing.²⁶

21. In 2021, there were **1.4 million internal displacements in LAC**. However, in 2017 and in 2020, the number of people displaced was much higher, with around three million people affected each year. Between 2010 and 2021, **most displacements (76.9%) happened because of climate shocks** such as hurricanes and floods, while 23.1% were caused by conflicts and violence.²⁷

22. Situations of high human mobility and disasters require an urgent response from governments. The vulnerable context of migrants and displaced individuals necessitates that governments consider mechanisms enabling these individuals to have suitable living conditions. Many of these measures are channelled through social protection systems.

²¹ (Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research 2022). (2022). Heidelberg, HIIK. [Online]. Available from: <https://hiik.de/conflict-barometer/current-version/?lang=en>.

²² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2022). Global Humanitarian Overview 2023. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.unocha.org/2023gho>

²³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2022). [Online]. Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/635a578f4/mid-year-trends-2022.html>.

²⁴ (McAuliffe, M. and A. Triandafyllidou 2021) [Online]. Available from: <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022>.

²⁵ Idem.

²⁶ United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Migration and Gender. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/migration-and-gender>.

²⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. (2022). Global Internal Displacement Database. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>.

Climate change and climate-related disasters

23. Home to 13 of the 50 countries most prone to climate-related shocks globally, LAC is one of the regions that is the most vulnerable to climate change. Between 2001 and 2022, the average number of extreme climate-related weather events doubled compared to the previous two decades.²⁸ Figure 6 gives an overview of the most significant recent climate-related shocks in the region. These have impacted countries heavily, with climate change affecting crop yields, livelihoods, and food security. The Caribbean has been particularly hard hit. Between 1950 and 2018, 324 of the 511 disasters worldwide that affected small states occurred in this sub-region, displacing 24 million people. In some instances, the economic impact of the disaster exceeded the size of the country's entire economy. Similarly, Central America is extremely vulnerable to climate change, with its Dry Corridor often facing extended dry seasons, which can have devastating effects on crops and livestock, exacerbating food insecurity.²⁹ The consequences arising from climate change disproportionately affect individuals with limited resources. Due to the overrepresentation of women among those living in poverty, they are particularly susceptible to the devastating effects. Indeed, studies indicate that females are 14 times more susceptible to fatalities resulting from climate-related shocks than males.³⁰

Figure 6. Recent climate-related disasters in LAC

Disaster	Name	Year	Country(ies) affected
Hurricane	Matthew	2016	Affected Haiti, Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Jamaica
	Irma and Maria	2017	Damages in several Caribbean countries and territories
	Dorian	2019	Affected the Bahamas
	Eta and Iota	2020	Seve flooding and landslides in Central America
	Lisa	2022	Affected Belize
	Fiona	2022	Affected the Dominican Republic and Guadeloupe
Earthquake		2020	Struck Northwest Ecuador's coast
		2021	Struck the Tiburon Peninsula in Haiti
		2021	Struck the Tiburon Peninsula in Haiti
Volcano eruption	La Soufrière	2021	Displaced 21% of the population of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
	Fuego	2022	Caused significant ashfall and evacuation in Guatemala
Wildfire	Atacama	2021	Burned for several weeks, causing widespread damage to the ecosystem and communities in Chile, Peru, and Bolivia

Source: Own elaboration.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

24. **Progress towards GEWE in LAC has been slow and uneven.** In 2020, the regional average for women's parliamentary representation was 24.7%, with LAC occupying the sixth rank globally. While some countries had over 40% women's representation, others had less than 10%.³¹ The gender pay gap in LAC is also a persistent challenge since women earn 14.3% less than men for the same work. One-third of women lack any form of income compared to one in ten men, and women perform 70% of all unpaid household work.³² The Gender Inequality Index for LAC is 0.381, which is considered moderate gender inequality. However, scores vary widely across countries, with higher levels of gender inequality in Suriname and Guyana, and lower levels in Cuba and Uruguay. In Latin America, the highest rates of femicide are seen in Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and El Salvador, with 4.7, 2.4, and 2.1 cases per 100,000 women, respectively.³³

²⁸ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD et al. 2022) [Online]. Available from: <https://www.oecd.org/dev/americas/economic-outlook/>.

²⁹ (Pacilo et al. 2022) [Online]. Available from: <https://www.wfp.org/publications/climate-risk-multiplier-central-american-dry-corridor>.

³⁰ UN Women. SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. [Online] Available from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-13-climate-action>

³¹ (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) - Women in National Parliaments 2020)

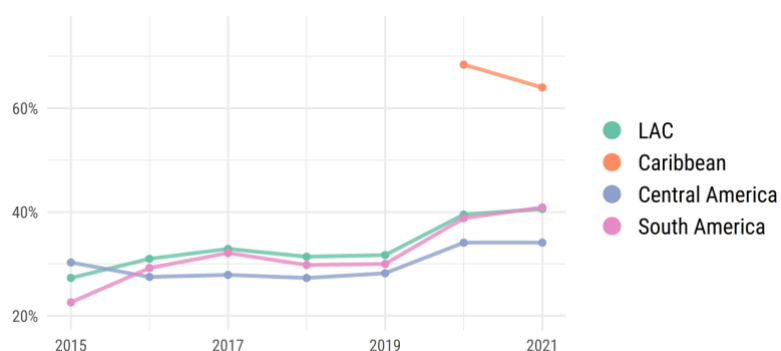
³² (ECLAC n.d.)

³³ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (ECLAC 2021)

Food and nutrition security

25. The coexistence of undernutrition and overnutrition, known as the **double burden of malnutrition**, is omnipresent in LAC causing 75% of deaths associated with **non-communicable diseases**.³⁴ The double burden of malnutrition is associated with high socio-economic cost, for countries in the region, as demonstrated by the ECLAC/WFP Study of the Cost of the Double Burden in 8 countries. Estimated cost in terms of annual GDP ranges between 0.2% to 16% across the 8 countries analyzed.³⁵ The prevalence of hunger in Latin America reached 9.1% in 2020 – the highest figure since 2005 – affecting 59.7 million people, and the prevalence of those suffering from moderate or severe food insecurity reached 41%, affecting 267 million people. In the Caribbean, hunger affected 16.1% of the population in 2020, with Haiti having 46.8% of its population being affected.³⁶ With these dynamics, **the region has been off track to meet Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2.1 to end hunger**. Figure 7 presents the prevalence of food insecurity in LAC, with disaggregation by sub-region. Moreover, food insecurity has disproportionately affected vulnerable populations: in 2020, 42.8% of women experienced moderate or severe food security compared to 32.2% for men. This disparity has increased over time, while in 2014 the difference between men and women was 4.1 pp, the difference in 2020 was 9.6 pp. On the other hand, 7.5% of children are overweight in LAC, which is 2 pp higher than the global average. Additionally, 59.5% of adults in LAC are overweight, 20 pp higher than the global average, while one quarter are affected by obesity, surpassing the global average by 13.1 pp.³⁷

Figure 7. Prevalence of food insecurity in LAC



Source: own elaboration based on data from Faostat (2023). *Social Development Goals Indicators*.

26. Over the past two decades, LAC has made **important strides in reducing stunting prevalence** from 18% to 11.3%. Nevertheless, progress has slowed down in the last decade, delaying the achievement of SDG 2 targets. In 2020, the countries with the highest stunting³⁸ prevalence were Guatemala (42.8%), Ecuador (23.1%), and Haiti (20.4%), while Chile, Paraguay, and Saint Lucia had a prevalence below 5%. Similarly, there has been progress in reducing anaemia among women of reproductive age over the past two decades, with LAC rates being half-lower compared to the global rates (17.2% vs. 30%). However, some countries still face challenges, including Haiti with an anaemia prevalence rate of 47.7%, followed by Guyana (31.7%), and the Dominican Republic (26.4%).³⁹

³⁴ (FAO et al. 2020). Santiago. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb2242es/cb2242es.pdf>

³⁵ WFP/ECLAC (2017-2020). The cost of the double burden of malnutrition. Available from: <https://es.wfp.org/publicaciones/el-costo-de-la-doble-carga-de-la-malnutricion-0>

³⁶ FAO et al. (2021). Latin America and the Caribbean - Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2021: Statistics and trends. Santiago, FAO. [Online]. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7497en>

³⁷ (FAO et al. 2020). Santiago. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb2242es/cb2242es.pdf>

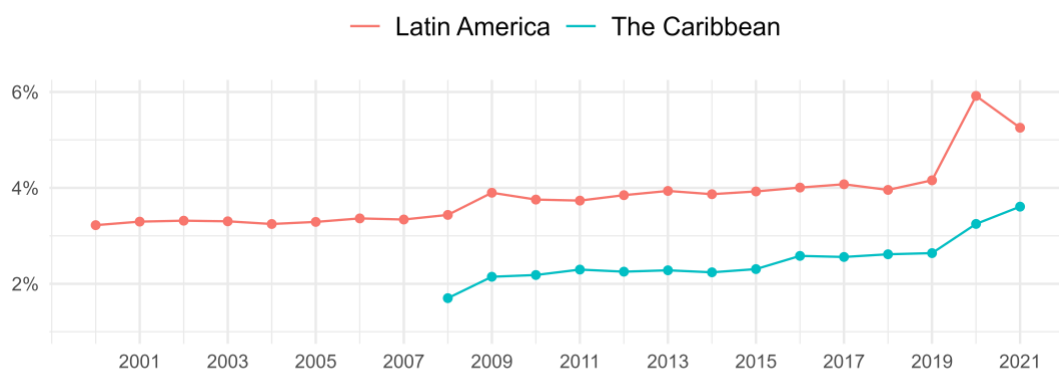
³⁸ Stunting refers to low height in relation to age and is a result of chronic malnutrition during childhood, which can have adverse effects on health and overall development.

³⁹ FAO et al. (2021). Latin America and the Caribbean - Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2021: Statistics and trends. Santiago, FAO. [Online]. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7497en>

Social protection systems

27. **LAC is recognized for having a diversity of national social protection (SP) systems**, characterized by different levels of development. In some countries, such as Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador, these may be considered ‘mature’ with relatively efficient administrative capacities, operational and regulatory processes, and extensive coverage...⁴⁰ On the other hand, in the Caribbean and Central American sub-regions, many countries have weak SP legislation, unclear or overlapping targeting criteria, limited information management systems and low coverage. Nonetheless, contributory SP coverage has increased in the last two decades, reaching 46.6% of the employed population, which is commonly linked to insurance programmes, health services, and pensions. In terms of WFP’s SRSP work, the main focus has been on supporting **non-contributory schemes**: in 2017, 30 cash transfer, 34 social pensions, and 72 labour works programmes were implemented by LAC governments...⁴¹ In 20 countries with national cash transfer programmes, an average of 15.3% of households have at least one member receiving the transfer...⁴² while in 16 countries with social registries (or similar) the average coverage is 51%, reaching over 265 million people...⁴³ As shown in Figure 8, **public spending towards SP as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been rising in LAC**, with an increase of around two pp between 2000 and 2021 in Latin America and between 2008 and 2021 in the Caribbean. The pandemic brought a surge in spending, although while the Latin American trend declined in 2021, it continued to rise in the Caribbean...⁴⁴ Despite this increase, the proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes (a target of SDG 17.1) has seen a decline since its peak in 2007, before stabilizing in 2011 onward...⁴⁵ Having social protection systems with appropriate coverage and financing is a way to measure progress in achieving one of the key goals of the 2030 Agenda: ending poverty in all its forms, including poverty caused by structural issues and by shocks, as well as the SDG2 of zero hunger and malnutrition.

Figure 8. LAC public spending on social protection as a percentage of GDP, 2000-2021



Note: data before 2008 was not available for the Caribbean.
Source: own elaboration based on data from ECLAC (2022). *Social Panorama in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

⁴⁰ Rodolfo Beazley, Ana Solórzano, and Valentina Barca. (2019). Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean: Summary of Key Findings and Policy Recommendations. OPM and WFP.

⁴¹ Pablo Casali and Fabio Bertranou (cords.). (2021). Overview of Social Protection Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. ILO. [Online]. Available from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/---sro-port_of_spain/documents/publication/wcms_824905.pdf.

⁴² Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Non-Contributory Social Protection Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean Database. [Online]. Available from: <https://dds.cepal.org/bpsnc/home>.

⁴³ Guillermo Cejudo et al. (2021). Inventario y Caracterización de Los Programas de Apoyo al Ingreso En América Latina y El Caribe Frente a COVID-19. Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. [Online]. Available from: <https://publications.iadb.org/es/inventario-y-caracterizacion-de-los-programas-de-apoyo-al-ingreso-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe>.

⁴⁴ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). CEPALSTAT: Base de Datos y Publicaciones Estadísticas. [Online]. Available from: <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/index.html?lang=es>

⁴⁵ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Banco de Datos Regional Para El Seguimiento de Los ODS En América Latina y El Caribe. [Online]. Available from: <https://agenda2030lac.org/estadisticas/banco-datos-regional-seguimiento-ods.html?lang=es>.

External actors' work on Shock-Responsive Social Protection

28. The responsiveness of SP systems to unexpected shocks is crucial for their effectiveness. In addition to WFP, **other organizations have been involved in different capacities** to support governments in the region. Noteworthy contributions have been made by institutions such as the World Bank, which focuses on enhancing the adaptability of SP systems to changing circumstances, thereby ensuring their efficacy. Organizations such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) have concentrated on bolstering emergency response mechanisms to effectively address sudden-onset disasters, while ECLAC has analyzed the repercussions of such shocks on SP systems through in-depth studies. WFP collaborates closely with these organizations, among others. The overarching aim is to cultivate a more synchronized and efficient approach towards augmenting the responsiveness of SP systems when confronted with unexpected shocks.

WFP's humanitarian work in the LAC region beyond SRSP

29. WFP plays a crucial role in the provision of emergency food (cash and in-kind) assistance to communities affected by food insecurity. Within the region, WFP forges strong collaborative ties with local partners and governmental bodies, jointly identifying and addressing the pressing needs of vulnerable segments of society. Through these concerted efforts, WFP ensures that access to food is ensured through cash or in-kind food assistance. Moreover, beyond its emergency food assistance, WFP delves into the foundational causes of hunger and malnutrition. This multifaceted approach involves the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices designed not only to fortify local markets but also to underpin the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. In addition, WFP has promoted actions in resilience, climate change adaptation, and sustainability. Disasters compounded by the climate emergency have made its work much more relevant in the local and international context. By nurturing these programmes, WFP effectively contributes to the cultivation of a food system characterized by resilience and sustainability which in turn lays the groundwork for enduring societal well-being...⁴⁶ By supporting national social protection systems including school feeding programmes WFP invests in strengthening platforms for long-term scale-up of solutions against hunger and malnutrition.

1.3. SUBJECT BEING EVALUATED

Work on the Shock-Responsive Social Protection Pillar

30. The subject of this thematic evaluation is the work carried out by WFP in Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) in Latin America and the Caribbean from January 2015 to December 2022. The RBP Social Protection Strategy defines SRSP as "the use of national social protection programmes and administrative capacity to provide assistance to the population affected by crises"...⁴⁷ This work has mainly been conducted in 12 countries where WFP has an office, as well as through the Caribbean MCO which covers an additional 22 countries and territories. The scope and intensity of the work varies considerably amongst these locations.

31. Social protection, as defined by the Social Protection Inter-agency Cooperation Board, encompasses "policies and programmes aimed at preventing, and protecting people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion", which "can be provided through social insurance, tax-funded social benefits, social assistance services, public works programmes," among other schemes...⁴⁸ Social protection systems are generally established to reduce *chronic* poverty and support individuals throughout their life

⁴⁶ WFP. (2019). Social Protection Strategy: Latin America and the Caribbean.

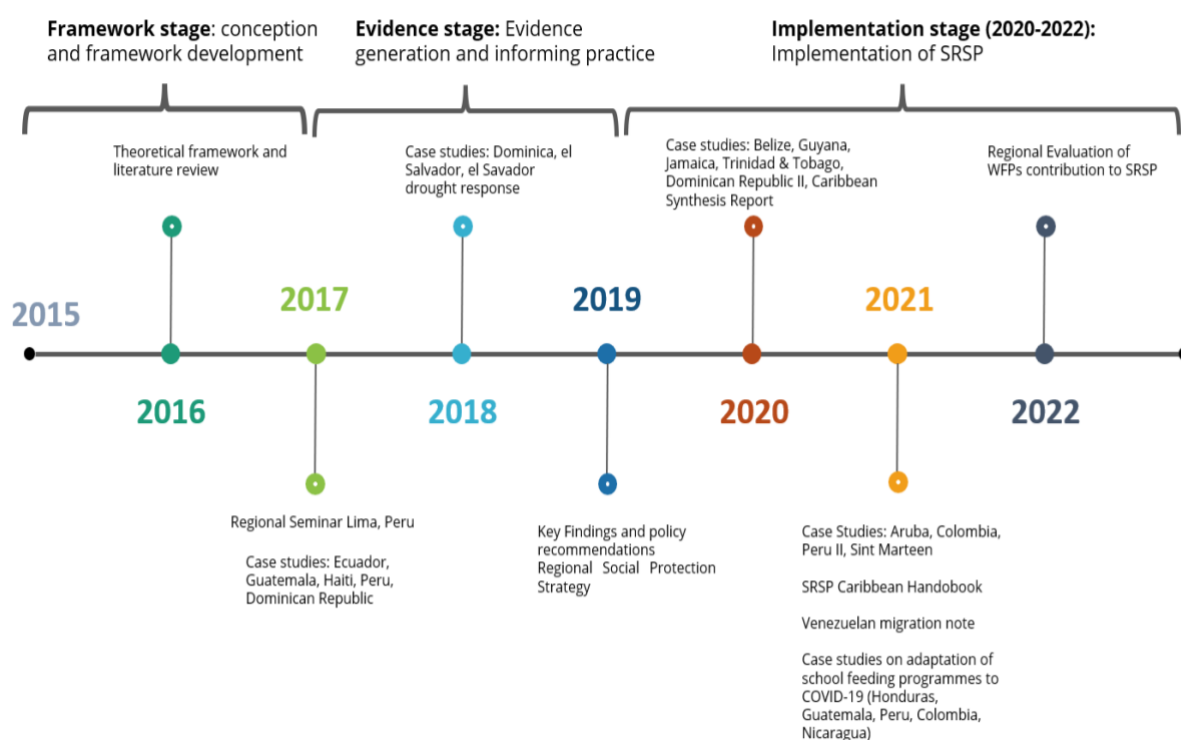
⁴⁷ WFP. (2019). Social Protection Strategy: Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁴⁸ Social Protection Interagency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B). (2019). Collaborating for Policy Coherence and Development Impact. New York, SPIAC-B.

cycles...⁴⁹ However, people also face *covariate shocks* that threaten their well-being, including food insecurity. This has motivated **WFP to work on SRSP with a dual role**: complementing government efforts through direct implementation whenever required in contexts of limited capacities and resources, and (since 2015) supporting countries in strengthening their capacities through technical assistance and advocacy. In LAC, the latter role is particularly relevant given the circumstances of the countries in which RBP operates...⁵⁰

32. Figure 9 illustrates the **three primary stages** of work conducted between 2015 and 2022: this includes the 1) "framework stage" to develop the SRSP framework, 2) "evidence stage" to carry out country case studies and systematize information to influence practice, and 3) "implementation stage" of the strategy in which SRSP has been implemented in country level programming and CSPs. While these three stages follow a logical sequencing, with implementation being informed by the framework and evidence generated, this is not a strictly linear process as early implementation (e.g., in Peru and Ecuador) had informed the evidence generation process and vice versa, with both these processes also feeding into the development of the theoretical framework. It is also important to mention that WFP's work in SRSP followed a supply-driven approach whereby WFP saw an opportunity for governments to use social protection to respond to shocks, and then started to create the demand for SRSP through evidence generation and advocacy. Once the demand was created, WFP started to provide technical assistance to support in-country implementation.

Figure 9. Timeline of SRSC work in LAC



Source: Own elaboration based on the ToR.

⁴⁹ Rodolfo Beazley, Ana Solórzano, and Valentina Barca. (2019). Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean: Summary of Key Findings and Policy Recommendations. OPM and WFP.

⁵⁰ WFP. (2019). WFP's Social Protection Strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean.

33. During the **initial framework stage**, WFP contracted Oxford Policy Management (OPM) to jointly develop the theoretical framework and literature review to establish the foundation for the work in SRSP. In the report published in December 2016,⁵¹ two dimensions were identified to assess social protection shock-responsiveness: system preparedness and type of response. System preparedness was deemed critical as even mature systems may not be designed to be responsive to shocks. Initially, a typology consisting of three categories was proposed and, based on the work of the second phase,⁵² three more categories were later added to analyze system preparedness. These categories are shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10. SRSP Categories for System Preparedness



Source: own elaboration based on WFP Social Protection Strategy: Latin America and the Caribbean.

34. The other dimension to assess SP shock-responsiveness is the **type of response**. In this regard, OPM identified alternatives that policymakers employ when seeking support in emergency situations through SP: **vertical and horizontal expansion of existing programmes**, as well as **piggy-backing** on elements of existing programmes for separate interventions. Alignment or parallel humanitarian responses were also contemplated, as were design tweaks that resulted in small programme adjustments.

35. In 2016, WFP initiated a **training programme** on social protection for its personnel, integrating SRSP as one of its components. The training consisted of two rounds (English and Spanish) with participants from COs, RBP and HQ. The objective of the programme was to enhance the capacities of staff to promote hunger-smart and nutrition-sensitive SRSP. The three phases of this training programme were online training, in-person training, and an action learning project.⁵³

⁵¹ Rodolfo Beazley, Ana Solórzano, and Kokoevi Sossouvi. (2016). Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review. OPM and WFP.

⁵² WFP. (2019). WFP Social Protection Strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁵³ This training programme had a cost of US\$129,104.

36. Some of these projects were later financed by the **Social Protection Innovation Fund**, a regional fund that provided grants to COs to support strategic SP initiatives at the country-level. It provided seed funding to projects that prioritized technical assistance to governments. In 2016, projects in five countries (Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti) were financed for a total of US\$67,000, which was supplemented with US\$37,000 from COs. In 2017, projects in Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras were approved with a budget of US\$50,000, and in 2018, projects in Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru received a total investment of US\$90,000. Among these initiatives, support was provided to the Government of Haiti in 2016 to design an emergency safety net for crises (that was tested that same year in response to Hurricane Matthew), while in 2017 the Government of Ecuador received assistance to organize workshops on SRSP to build a common vision and develop a country roadmap for SRSP.

37. During the **second stage**, from 2017 to 2019, evidence generation to inform SP decision-making was the main focus. Eight country case studies were developed in countries where SRSP responses were implemented during shocks or where WFP had greater engagement with governments. A summary of findings and policy recommendations were also developed to augment the literature review and framework in respect to factors that enable SP systems to be more responsive to shocks.

38. Based on this evidence and the work since 2015, in 2019 RBP formalized its **Regional Social Protection Strategy, recognizing SRSP as one of four pillars**. In this strategy, nine priority areas of work were identified under the SRSP pillar. These nine areas of work, shown in Figure 11, proposed strategies to attend to the six previously mentioned categories of preparedness. In other words, the priority areas of work suggest *how* to engage, while the categories suggest *what* to work on. To clarify, through South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which is a specific area of work, COs can facilitate the exchange of information. This exchange aims to promote coordination, which falls under the preparedness category, between disaster risk management⁵⁴ and social protection actors. In a similar vein, when developing roadmaps, which is another area of work, the primary objective is to establish a common vision among partners. This shared vision can be focused for example on enhancing targeting mechanisms, which is categorized under preparedness.

Figure 11. SRSP priority areas of work



⁵⁴ The nomenclature for disaster risk management agencies can vary depending on the country, and in many cases, they are known as either civil defense or civil protection. This nomenclature can differ, especially among Spanish-speaking countries.

39. To work closely with countries under these nine areas of work, WFP follows a **three-fold approach**: i) generate evidence to inform practice, ii) foster inter-institutional dialogue at the national level and sharing between countries, and iii) operationalize the six categories of preparedness (targeting, delivery, coordination, etc.) with technical assistance or advocacy to design or implement responses (walk the talk). WFP's evidence generation efforts have facilitated inter-institutional dialogue at the national level and facilitated sharing between countries. In 2017 and 2018, WFP presented its evidence at regional high-level events and seminars, which was followed by work at country level to develop country roadmaps in collaboration with national actors. These seminars to present evidence and foster work, which began in Peru in 2017 (attended by representatives from 16 countries in the region and three from the rest of the world, along with representatives from 14 external actors and 22 staff from the RBP), raised awareness in the region and at the corporate level about the importance of SRSP. They also helped position WFP as a key player in this field, thereby promoting dialogues and garnering support at the country level. Similar events took place in the Dominican Republic, Dominica and Ecuador in 2018. Also in 2018, Peru held another regional event on SRSP as part of the Social Inclusion Week, and a similar regional event took place in the Turks and Caicos Islands for Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries in 2019, building on the previous work of WFP in the region. WFP also provided support to countries in response to a specific emergency with the intention to develop a SP response model, such as in Dominica and Ecuador following Hurricane Maria in 2017 and the earthquake in 2016, respectively.

40. Finally, the **third stage** focused on implementing SRSP measures based on the regional strategy. WFP supported countries in strengthening their capacities with technical assistance and, in some instances, also directly delivered services to people in LAC through existing national SP systems...⁵⁵ Moreover, ten additional country case studies, a multi-country case study about school feeding programmes' adaptation during the pandemic, a synthesis report of the Caribbean country case studies, and a technical note about migrants and their inclusion in SP systems were written during this stage. Developments in 2022 included the creation of position papers in collaboration with **external partners such as ECLAC,**⁵⁶ **FAO, and OAS,**⁵⁷ addressing the role of social protection in responding to complex crises.

41. The WFP Social Protection team in RBP also collaborated with **other WFP technical areas**. In some instances, these areas can serve as a means of delivering social protection programmes during emergencies. For example, although school feeding programmes were not created with the purpose of responding to shocks, they have increasingly been utilized by governments due to their well-established administrative processes and broad coverage. These programmes have been able to respond to crises by quickly adapting their delivery mechanisms, most commonly through the transition to take-home rations in kind or take-home prepared meals for families of school children.

42. Provided that these types of activities are often integrated within wider programmes and areas of work as well as that quantifying inputs and outputs of CCS interventions is complex and may be ambiguous, the exact number of beneficiaries and costs associated with the subject of evaluation are not presented to avoid possible misinterpretations. Ultimately the **main beneficiaries of WFP's support** to SRSP are the women, men, girls, and boys whose lives are improved through strengthened national social protection systems which can respond more quickly, efficiently and with enhanced coverage for those most severely impacted by shocks. While the specific profile of direct recipients of social protection disbursements differs by country, they are typically among the most vulnerable and are therefore placed at greater risk by sudden onset emergencies such as climate-related shocks and public health crises, as well as by slower onset events, such as mass migration, long-term droughts, and economic shocks.

⁵⁵ In the CSP for Haiti (2019-2023), the strategic outcome 1 is referred to meet the basic food and nutrition needs of crisis-affected populations with direct assistance from WFP, but using databases and methodologies developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and channeling the assistance through its safety net when feasible. A similar strategy to attend crisis-affected populations channeling assistance through SP systems could be found in the strategic outcome 2 of the CSP for the MCO in the Caribbean (2022-2026).

⁵⁶ "Towards Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean in Response to the Global Food Crisis." (2022) ECLAC, FAO, WFP.

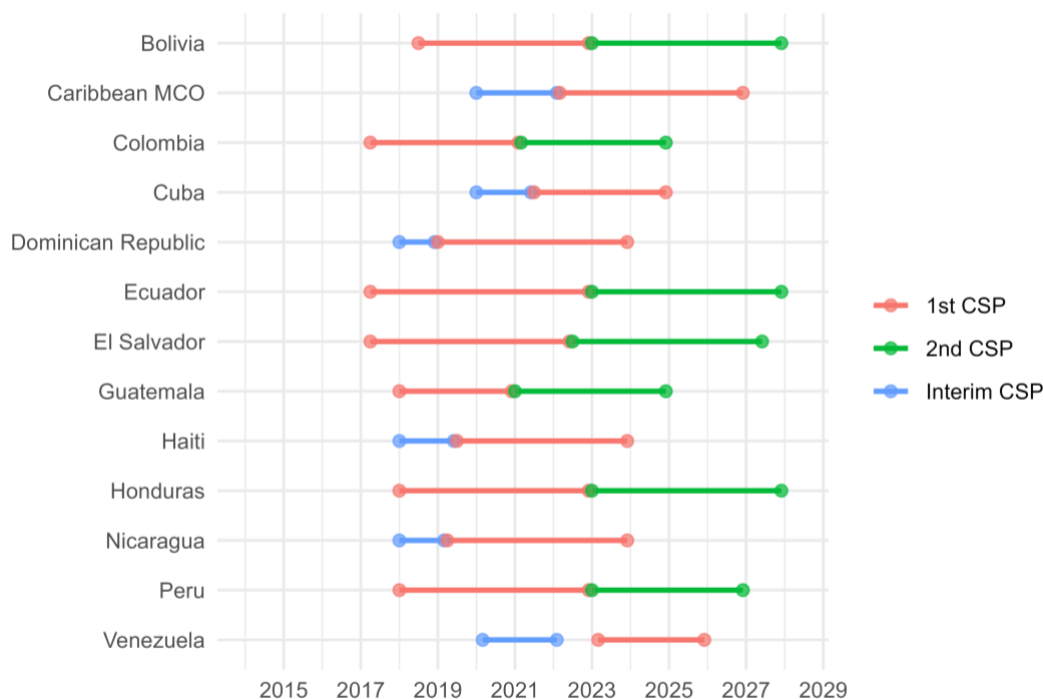
⁵⁷ Confronting Food Insecurity in the Americas: Best Practices and Lessons Learned During the Covid-19 Pandemic (2022). Department of Social Inclusion of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity of the Organization of American States].

SRSP Activities in LAC

43. The social protection strategy was not accompanied neither by a logical framework nor by a set of indicators as specific activities need to be part of the Country Strategic Plans. Moreover, given that this was a novel area of work, there was no pre-existing monitoring framework or dedicated indicators. The SRSP pillar is a general framework for SP system strengthening activities in COs and is therefore not costed at a global or at regional levels. However, the WFP Country Capacity Strengthening (CCS) framework facilitated the identification of SRSP activities related to capacity strengthening at the country level. The document review has revealed 43 activities in 12 COs and the Caribbean MCO. It should be noted that the Country Strategic Plans (CSPs) do not cover the entire evaluation period, as indicated in Figure 12, and there may be additional activities, including those related to emergency situations such as COVID-19, that are not reflected in the plans.

44. To fund SP activities (including those with a SRSP component), RBP allocated through the Social Protection Investment Case and later “PSA budget” a yearly sum of US\$400,000 from 2017 to 2021, allowing for the coverage of salaries, events, and studies. This funding was bolstered by additional financial sources including Bottom-Up Strategic Budgeting Exercises from 2022 on. WFP invested US\$685,000 solely in events and trainings focused on SRSP, not accounting for those conducted by the MCO. Some trainings were also funded by the Social Protection Innovation Fund, which allocated grants to strategic country-level social protection initiatives, totalling US\$67,000 in 2016, and increasing to US\$90,000 by 2018 for projects across several countries. Furthermore, between 2016 and 2020, RBP invested US\$600,544 by contracting OPM to develop case studies and theoretical/conceptual documents in the field of SRSP.

Figure 12. Timeline covered by CSP in WFP LAC offices



Source: Own elaboration based on the information contained in the Country Strategic Plans for each office.

Theory of Change

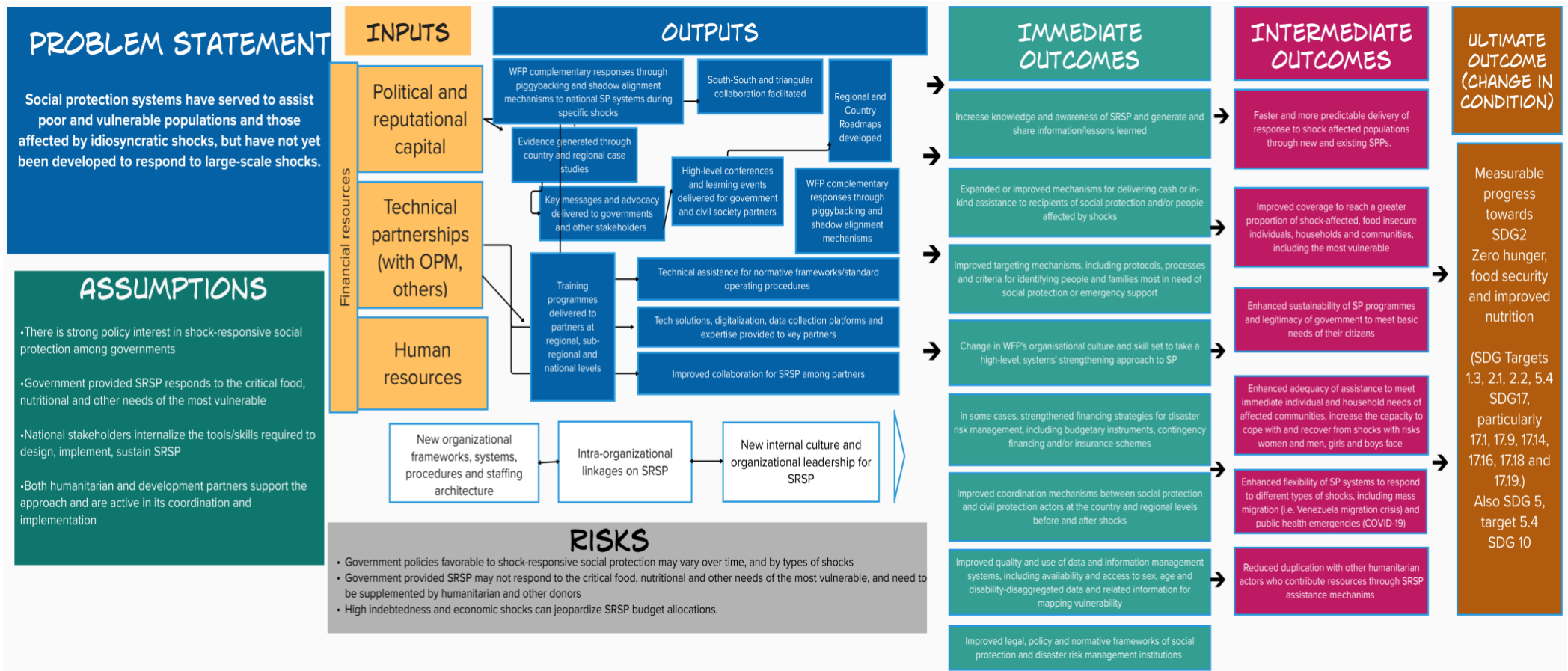
45. At regional level, WFP's engagement in SRSP is not organized as a programme or project with clearly delineated inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes, but it is part of the broader work on social protection, and linked to specific support at country level, embedded within the Country Strategic Plans. The precise inputs and activities have varied from one country context to another. SRSP has evolved as an approach to SP system strengthening within LAC, with a specific focus on the capacity of SP systems to be developed and utilized as a way for governments to respond in a timely manner to shocks.

46. The ET therefore constructed a theory of change (ToC) based largely on the 2019 RBP Social Protection Strategy, in which SRSP is one pillar of WFP SP work (see Figure 13). This was done in consultation with WFP Social Protection staff in the LAC region. Also, the ET used country-level experiences with SRSP to identify input, outputs, and intended outcomes. While support to social protection systems is a separate pillar of the Regional Social Protection Strategy, a portion of the work that has been carried out by WFP in LAC under the umbrella of SRSP falls also under this pillar.

47. The ToC outlines **several assumptions**, such as that governments are receptive to the implementation of SRSP actions and can provide financial assistance to their citizens through sustainable financial mechanisms, as well as the availability of support from within WFP, donors, and partners...⁵⁸ If these assumptions are accurate, it is possible to achieve various outputs through the provision of political and reputational capital, technical partnerships, and human and financial resources. These outputs may include South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), roadmaps, trainings, digitalization, advocacy, conferences, and evidence generation, and the strengthening of external capacity of partners, as well as the internal capacity of WFP in the field of SRSP. These outputs, in turn, are expected to lead to immediate outcomes, such as the strengthening of delivery mechanisms and the creation of financing and coordination mechanisms. These immediate outcomes will facilitate the attainment of intermediate outcomes: improved delivery speed in times of crises, enhanced accessibility and inclusiveness, increased coverage and adequacy of responses, and reduced duplication of activities leading to improved value for money. These advancements will be reflected in progress towards the SDG2 of zero hunger and improved nutrition. Ultimately, it is noteworthy that the initial ToC did not encompass any outputs or outcomes pertaining to gender. In discussions at the ToC Workshop with WFP Social Protection staff, it was communicated that gender was not initially prioritized when formulating the strategy.

⁵⁸ WFP closely engages with social protection, finance, disaster management ministries, along with statistical units, population info units, and, at times, education ministries for emergency purposes. Collaboration with regional bodies like CDEMA, CCRIF, and the World Bank is evident, particularly in the Caribbean region. The engagement also extends to UN Country Teams (UNCTs), particularly with UNICEF and UNDP. Moreover, donors like DFID, ECHO, BHA, USAID, Canada, Norway, and the World Bank, along with OPM, play crucial roles in supporting WFP's SRSP work and model development since 2015. For a description of stakeholders, see Annex 3. Stakeholder analysis.

Figure 13. Constructed Theory of Change for SRSP in LAC Region⁶⁰



⁶⁰ In the first draft of the constructed Theory of Change, the Evaluation Team (ET) had mainstreamed gender and inclusion into various outcomes, for example, 'gender-sensitive and inclusive targeting mechanisms' and in the improvement of coordination mechanisms, including with "key players supporting gender empowerment and inclusion". In the ToC validation meetings, however, these components were requested to be removed as not part of the original strategy and would therefore be considered more as unintended or unplanned outcomes.

WFP Engagement in Safety Nets and Social Protection

48. WFP has a **documented history of engagement in safety nets and social protection dating back to 1998**, and its role was first formalized in 2004. In response to a 2011 strategic evaluation of WFP's role in social protection and safety nets⁶¹ that highlighted the need to institutionalize processes and systems for safety nets and social protection, WFP released the 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update which identified two pathways for WFP's support: the "provision pathway" for the direct implementation of activities, and the "support pathway" for WFP's support of nationally-led safety nets. This also led to changes in the organizational structure and increased staff resources for the Social Protection and Safety Nets Unit. The 2019 Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy Evaluation found that RBP is driving work in the region as part of its role in strengthening capacity for SP, with at least 11 LAC/RBP COs supporting SP-related initiatives, serving approximately four million direct beneficiaries, primarily through school feeding programmes.

Previous evaluations and evidence

49. Several evaluations and thematic papers offer **evidence, lessons and good practice related to WFP's SRSP work**. The Evaluation Synthesis of evidence and lessons on CCS interventions⁶² expands on the potential long-term positive impact of CCS interventions globally – including in the area of social protection – but identifies shortcomings in the monitoring and reporting of related achievements, including GEWE outcomes, recommending a mix of qualitative and quantitative reporting to better demonstrate results. Evaluations also highlight that interventions have **focused mostly on the individuals and institutional domains** rather than the enabling environment, and that limited attention has also been given to promoting gender-responsive and disability inclusive SP systems. At the same time, some evaluations related to WFP's system preparedness work also highlight lessons and good practice of interest on targeting, delivery mechanisms, coordination, information systems and data management. Additionally, lessons highlight the importance of WFP's support to national governments in their own SRSP efforts through advocacy, evidence generation, support for policy development, inter-institutional coordination and capacity strengthening to reduce fragmentation of national SP systems through system preparedness.

1.4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY, LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

50. The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach and followed a **utilization-focused and theory-based approach**, using outcome mapping to assess WFP's contribution to strengthening shock-responsive SP systems in LAC. The evaluation also incorporated elements of a developmental approach to reflect the complexity of WFP's SRSP work in LAC. Further details on the methodology are provided in Annex 4. Methodology. No major changes were implemented from the version outlined in the inception report.⁶³ These methodological approaches allowed for answering the four evaluation questions (Figure 14) centred on the criteria of: **effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, gender and inclusion** that are detailed in Annex 5. Evaluation Matrix The criteria of relevance and impact were not prioritized with respect to intended-use and evaluability. According to the ToR, the impact criterion was omitted because WFP is not the sole actor operating in the field, making it challenging to attribute system-level changes solely to

⁶¹ WFP (2011). "WFP's Role in Social Protection and Safety Nets: A Strategic Evaluation".
<https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/reports/wfp235864.pdf>

⁶² WFP (2021). "Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons on Country Capacity Strengthening from Decentralized Evaluations".
<https://www.wfp.org/publications/synthesis-evidence-and-lessons-country-capacity-strengthening-evaluations>

⁶³ The only additional activity during data collection involved the direct observation of "Cocina en Vivo" in Ecuador, a practice conducted by WFP and implementing partners with female beneficiaries of the CBT. This activity aims to educate them on preparing local, nutritious food, with the objective of maximizing the benefits of CBT.

WFP's efforts. Additionally, the relevance criterion was not given priority by the anticipated users of the evaluation.

Figure 14. Final evaluation criteria and questions

Criteria	Evaluation Questions
Effectiveness, Gender and Inclusion	EQ1. To what extent has WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region contributed to stronger, more equitable and inclusive national social protection systems?
Effectiveness and Sustainability	EQ2. What are the key factors that have influenced WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region in general and with regards to the sustainability of the achievements?
Effectiveness and Efficiency	EQ3. Which modalities of engagement deployed by WFP were the most effective and efficient in support of positive outcomes in SRSP in view of different contexts?
Coherence	EQ4. To what extent did WFP's role in advancing SRSP programming in the Latin American and Caribbean region contribute to WFP's corporate vision and approach to Social Protection and wider discussion on the subject?

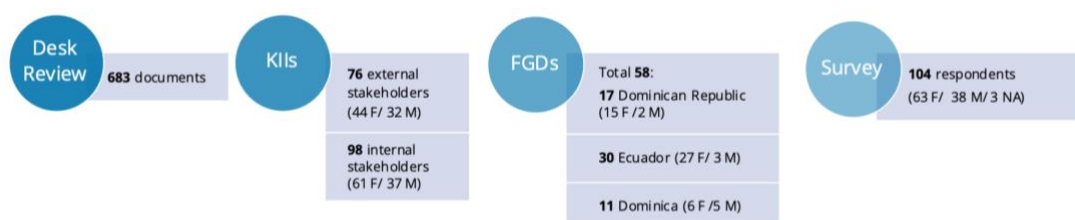
Evaluability Assessment

51. Both the desk review and inception interviews indicated that most elements of the Regional Evaluation of WFP's contribution to SRSP in LAC (2015 – 2022) were evaluable as data could be obtained to answer the main evaluation questions. However, the lack of a theory of change and relevant corporate indicators (including those to understand differentiated results for men, women, boys and girls), some gaps in data (including that necessary for undertaking a value for money analysis) and potential contextual challenges (primarily due to the long period of time covered by the evaluation) were noted, as well as opportunities to mitigate them. Consequently, the ET recommended some **adjustments to the initial evaluation questions** which were made in the evaluation matrix guiding this evaluation's scope and methodology. More details are provided in Annex 4.

Data collection methods

52. The evaluation combined both qualitative and quantitative methods. This approach facilitated a robust triangulation process, strengthening the evidence base for all evaluation questions and sub-questions, ensuring the reliability and validity of the key findings. These methods are summarized in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Methods overview



53. **In-depth desk reviews:** The ET reviewed 683 documents, including evaluations, strategies, and financial data; the ET also examined country case studies, roadmaps and CSPs.

54. **Individual and group KIIs:** The ET interviewed WFP CO staff in LAC, the WFP RBP, WFP social protection staff in other regional bureaus,⁶⁴ government stakeholders, UN partners, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), academia, and beneficiaries of the interventions. It employed a purposeful sampling approach to identify relevant stakeholders for consultation during data collection. The ET utilized a snowballing approach, where stakeholders referred by initial participants were identified and included during the data collection process. The number of persons interviewed is presented in Table 1, with a complete list of interviewees included in Annex 9.

55. **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** The ET arranged FGDs with direct and indirect beneficiaries in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Dominica.

Table 1. Number of stakeholders interviewed

Group	Organization	Female	Male	Total
WFP	COs in LAC	35	18	53
	RBP	15	10	25
	Headquarters	9	3	12
	Other Bureaus	2	4	6
	Other COs	0	2	2
External	UN Agency	10	10	20
	Government Representative	19	12	31
	Other	15	10	25
Beneficiaries		46	12	58
Total		151	81	232

Source: own elaboration.

56. **Online survey:** The survey was designed in English, Spanish, and French and covered all LAC countries engaged in WFP's SRSP work. The invitation was **sent to 274 individuals**. A total of **104 individuals responded**, either partially or fully submitting the survey (61% females; 37% males; 2% preferred not to answer/non-binary). **Response rate was 38%**, considering all responses. Details by group of respondents are summarized in Table 2. The survey tool is provided in Annex 6, and survey responses can be found in Annex 15.

Table 2. Survey respondents

Group	Total answers (including partial) ⁶⁵	Complete answers
WFP staff	61	40
Government	24	16
UN partners	12	7
IFIs	0	0
CSO partners	3	1
Donors	2	2
Other	2	1
Total	104	67
Response rate	38%	24%

Source: Own elaboration.

⁶⁴ The ET planned to consult with all regional bureaus, but in the end was only able to consult with RBB, RBD and RBN. RBC was partially covered through an interview with a staff from the WFP Office in Lebanon.

⁶⁵ **Partial Response:** If the respondent clicks Next on at least one survey page but doesn't click Done (or Submit) on the last page of the survey, it is considered a partial response. **Complete Response:** If the respondent clicks Done (or Submit) on the last page of the survey, it is considered a complete response. However, it is possible for the respondents to skip questions without answering if there are questions that are not mandatory. The ET considered both partial and complete answers. When survey is mentioned under findings, N may vary as respondents might not have answered ALL non- mandatory question.

57. **Qualitative data** was gathered through:

Three field visits (Dominican Republic, Ecuador and the Caribbean MCO), which each included in-depth document review as well as KIIs and FGDs with multiple stakeholder groups.

Three desk review+ (Colombia, Nicaragua and Peru), where in-depth document reviews were conducted along with remote KIIs, primarily involving WFP staff and government partners. In addition, **two desk review+ were conducted for thematic case studies in digitalization and CCS.**

One further desk review (Haiti), which involved an in-depth document review.

58. In addition to the main evaluation report, the ET developed country case study summary reports for each of the countries covered. Two thematic studies were defined in agreement with the EM: technology and country capacity strengthening. All deliverables were reviewed and commented on by the ERG.

Sampling

59. The final selection of countries for data collection was determined through discussions with the Evaluation Manager (EM) and informed by inception interviews. The selection criteria were based on factors such as the diversity and richness of experience, various country and geographical contexts, availability of data and stakeholders, and recommendations from the inception interviews. The sample also ensured the inclusion of different types of shocks (e.g., COVID-19, climate-related shocks, migration flows).

60. As part of the in-country field visit to the Caribbean MCO, a stop in Barbados was included to consult with sub-regional stakeholders and gain an understanding of the work that was undertaken at the sub-regional level in the Caribbean (e.g., with CDEMA and CCRIF). Additionally, a visit to Dominica was conducted to inquire about the work at the country level. The number of people interviewed by country is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Number of people interviewed for case studies

Type of case study	Country	Female	Male	Total
Field Work	Dominican Republic	18	7	25 (+17 B*)
	Ecuador	16	18	34 (+30 B)
	MCO/Dominica	21	4	25 (+ 11 B)
Desk Review+	Colombia	4	2	6
	Nicaragua	4	3	7
	Peru	3	5	8
Desk Review	Haiti	0	1	1
Total		66	40	106 (+ 58B)

Source: own elaboration. *B stands for Beneficiaries.

61. Additionally, **participatory validation meetings were conducted in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and the Caribbean MCO following in-country data collection.** These meetings served as a platform for stakeholders to review and confirm the emerging evaluation findings, address data gaps, and contribute additional information or perspectives. An **online regional debriefing meeting** also took place after data collection with a sub-set of the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG).

Data analysis

62. **Content analysis** was used to convert content from the documents and interview notes into quantitative data according to the evaluation matrix. The developed codebook, closely aligned with the evaluation matrix, allowed the ET to answer evaluation questions, as well as to extract lessons, good practices, and recommendations. The analysis was done according to evaluation questions and sub-questions. The ET used DeDoose for coding the data. For qualitative data cleaning, the ET carefully reviewed interview notes to ensure their completeness and clarity. For quantitative data collection, raw data was exported and cleaned in Excel, looking for duplicate observations, missing data, or possible outliers.

63. **Quantitative/ statistical analysis** was used to generate descriptive statistics from the survey and the available M&E data.

64. **Comparative analysis** was used to study and contrast findings emerging from the country field visits, documentary review, and the views expressed by different stakeholders (including groups at higher risk of vulnerability) to assess differential results.

65. **Triangulation** was used throughout to ensure the reliability and quality of information to arrive at credible, reliable, and unbiased findings. The ET utilized a mixture of primary and secondary sources of data so that individual findings are based on several lines of inquiry and data sources.

Gender, diversity, and inclusion

66. Gender, diversity, and inclusion are primarily and substantially considered under evaluation sub-question 1.6. The evaluation measured WFP's progress in this regard, utilizing various frameworks such as the "2017 Gender-Sensitive Social Protection for Zero Hunger: WFP's role in Latin America and the Caribbean", "Disability Inclusion Road Map (2020 - 2021)", "Disability Inclusion in CSP Programme Guidance", "Key Messages for Social Protection", and the WFP Gender Policy 2022. More information about the use of these frameworks and the steps taken by the ET to address the limitations presented in analyzing the extent to which WFP contributed to gender transformative change is provided in Annex 4. Methodology.

Ethical Considerations

67. WFP decentralized evaluations must conform to WFP and UNEG ethical standards and norms. The contractors undertaking the evaluations are responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. 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. Further details are provided in Annex 4.

Limitations and assumptions

68. Table 4 presents the main limitations faced during the evaluation, their effect on the evaluation, and the mitigation measures followed.

Table 4. Limitations and mitigation measures

Limitation	Mitigation measures
No ToC nor logical framework to capture WFP's engagement in SRSP in LAC	This limitation was addressed by constructing a ToC during the inception phase. The outcome mapping approach was also well suited to identify outcomes and what contributed to them in the absence of a ToC or results framework.
Gaps in monitoring data and measurement tools	This challenge was addressed by the evaluation team through the collection of primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data. For example, the absence of monitoring data on gender and social inclusion was bridged through the analysis of previous evaluations, as well as the gathering of Gender and Age Marker (GaM) reports for case study countries and activities. Additionally, the absence of corporate indicators on social protection – and particularly country capacity strengthening – posed difficulties in assessing contributions to capacity strengthening and shock-responsiveness of SP systems. This was mitigated using the WFP CCS framework as an analytical framework. However, the ET was not able to have access to a full set of financial information, as costs related to SRSP cannot be easily tracked using WFP systems, which affected its ability to conduct a financial analysis.
Staff turnover within WFP and governmental counterparts	To overcome gaps, the evaluation team relied on outcome mapping using retrospective methods and extensive qualitative data gathering. The ET also worked closely with the EM to arrange interviews with stakeholders who had left their positions but who had critical historical and institutional knowledge.

Quality assurance

69. The evaluation followed WFP's Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community. Annex 11 describes how validity, utility, credibility, and independence were addressed as part of the quality assurance process throughout the evaluation.

2. EVALUATION FINDINGS

2.1 EFFECTIVENESS, GENDER AND INCLUSION

EQ 1. TO WHAT EXTENT HAS WFP'S ENGAGEMENT IN SRSP IN THE REGION CONTRIBUTED TO STRONGER, MORE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS?

EQ 1.1 To what extent has the evidence generated by WFP contributed to raising awareness on social protection and preparedness, and strengthening social protection systems; and what is the level of implementation of the policy recommendations identified in the regional study and country specific case studies?

Finding 1: WFP's evidence generation initiatives have made substantial contributions at both regional and country levels, strategically positioning WFP as a thought leader on SRSP. Through high-level events, South-South and Triangular Cooperation, and partnership building, WFP has successfully created a space for enhancing its credibility and impact, which was notably absent during the outset in 2015-16. This achievement aligns with the overarching Theory of Change.

Evidence generation

70. WFP's primary evidence generation on SRSP consisted of the development of 17 country case studies in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management (OPM). These studies were published over a span of five years, during which the COVID-19 pandemic took place. As a result, for some countries, a second case study was conducted focusing solely on the emergency response to COVID-19 through the social protection system (Colombia, Dominican Republic, Peru – see Figure 16).

Figure 16. Timeline of country case studies WFP-OPM on SRSP and SRSP-COVID-19, 2017-2021



Source: Own elaboration.

71. The process of conducting country case studies proved highly beneficial for WFP in promoting the subject among diverse counterparts. It involved interviews with key stakeholders from emergency and social protection-related agencies and ministries, fostering their interest and involvement in WFP's proposal on the benefits of the use of social protection system for emergency responses. As a result of these dialogues initiated by WFP, the organization successfully positioned itself as a leader in advocating for shock-responsive social protection.

72. As expressed by government KIs and WFP staff, the innovative approach taken in developing these case studies and organizing seminars garnered recognition from various actors, as it allowed WFP to establish a prominent presence in a thematic area in which it had not previously been directly involved. It was a significant first step for WFP to comprehend, analyze, and assist governments in emergency preparedness, particularly in bolstering the shock-responsive aspect of the national social protection schemes. The studies also explored the potential to establish operational coordination mechanisms with WFP, especially when governments' capacity to respond to diverse shocks are compromised or overwhelmed by the scale of a shock.

73. Based on the evaluation survey, 63% of external stakeholders (n=30) are aware of publications, case studies, or other evidence generated by WFP on SRSP.⁶⁶ According to diverse stakeholders, both internal and external, the series of case studies conducted by WFP in collaboration with OPM was the first of its kind in the region. Stakeholders recognized that evidence generation efforts and events conducted by WFP informed discussions and debates regarding the implementation and potential benefits of SRSP. The process of generating evidence has proven to be just as significant as, if not more than, the actual outcomes achieved. WFP successfully established relationships with government stakeholders, particularly within social protection ministries. This helped strengthen partnerships and collaboration for advancing SRSP initiatives.

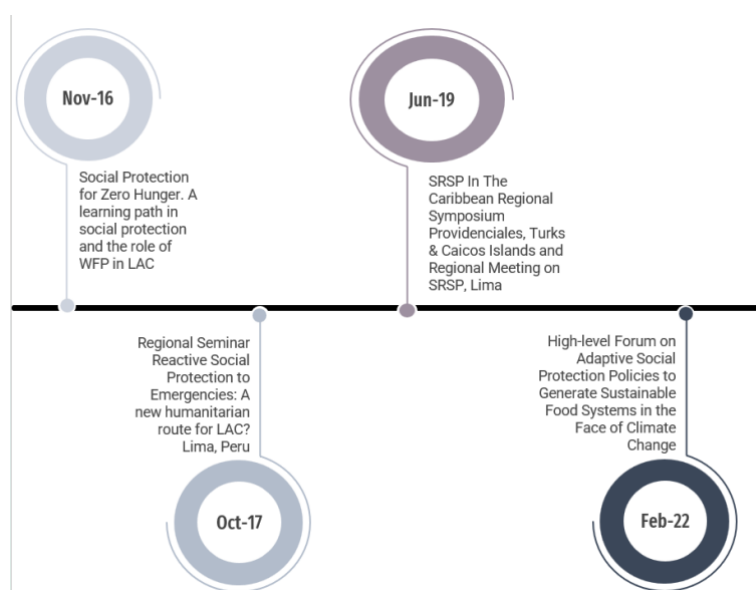
Finding 2: While the extent to which the evidence generated has been embraced and utilized by COs, government counterparts, and partners differs by country, it has played a crucial role in creating a comprehensive framework for SRSP and drawing the attention of numerous stakeholders to the concept of SRSP. This has led to extensive discussions and debates on its implementation and potential advantages. The process of generating evidence has been vital in convening social protection and disaster risk management actors, fostering relationships with government stakeholders, and identifying country-specific opportunities and priorities to enhance social protection systems and their shock-responsiveness.

74. Case studies have played a pivotal role in the Caribbean MCO and Ecuador, among other countries. In the Caribbean, the case studies identified gaps in social protection systems of the sub-region and were a key part of the work supported by the office in Barbados after it was created in 2018, leading to an important collaboration with CDEMA for a research agenda on SRSP. In Ecuador, the first-of-its-kind case study explored social protection systems' use in emergency response, contributing to a framework for Preparedness, Social Protection, and Response to Emergencies. The study informed discussions with the government, incorporated partner perspectives, and offered insights for enhancing social protection systems and readiness for future shocks, particularly after the 2016 earthquake.

“When WFP opened its office in 2018 [in Barbados], one of the initial steps related to shock-responsive social protection was to establish an advocacy, evidence, and learning agenda”- WFP staff

⁶⁶ Also including WFP staff respondents and other UN staff 73.5% (n=98) are aware of the evidence generated. It is important to note that 58.6% of survey respondents were WFP staff (n=60)

Figure 17. Seminars organized/co-organized by WFP on SRSP 2016 - 2022



Source: Own elaboration

75. According to diverse stakeholders, no other actor had put forward the term “shock-responsive social protection”, nor had the topic been discussed and disseminated in the manner WFP did. In fact, the evidence generated by WFP influenced and informed the work of other organizations. World Bank (WB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and UNICEF, for instance, highly value the evidence generated by OPM country case studies as a point of reference for their work and investments.

76. In addition to the OPM country case studies, WFP organized regional learning events that facilitated knowledge exchanges between governments on the utilization of social protection in response to shocks. These events included panels, webinars, and symposiums. According to the survey, 70% of respondents (n=23) participated in online and in-person seminars, webinars, and other exchanges organized or co-organized by WFP. Figure 17 identifies some of the high-level events that were frequently mentioned by stakeholders at the regional level; although due to the extensive timeline of the evaluation (2015 - 2022), some interviewees, both internal and external, could not recall with exactitude their attendance at WFP-organized events during key informant interviews.

77. Overall, the efforts of WFP in bringing key national actors together around shock-responsive social protection have been recognized by stakeholders. A primary outcome of WFP’s SRSP work in the LAC region during the review period is that it positioned WFP as a key player in the field of social protection, which was not previously the case. This transformation played a crucial role in achieving the ultimate goals as per the Theory of Change (see Figure 13 above).

78. Furthermore, WFP has successfully built practical knowledge on SRSP among government staff involved in responses through social protection and disaster risk management lenses. In 2017, the Ministry of Development and Inclusion (MIDIS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) of the Peruvian Government, in collaboration with WFP, organized the first Regional Seminar on Shock-Responsive Social Protection during Emergencies. ⁶⁷ The seminar contributed to building a shared vision on the topic among countries in the region. In the Caribbean, the culmination of these research efforts resulted in the publication of the Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean Handbook in November 2021. ⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Comunicado Final. Seminario Regional Protección Social Reactiva ante Emergencias ¿Una nueva ruta humanitaria para América Latina y el Caribe? Lima, Perú, 30 y 31 de octubre 2017.

⁶⁸ Rodolfo Beazley, Solorzano, Ana, and Kokoevi Sossouvi, “Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean Theoretical Framework and Literature Review” (Oxford Policy Management and World Food Programme, December 2016).

The handbook was translated into an online learning module; webinars and trainings were then conducted in English with multiple governments of the English-speaking Caribbean, and later into Spanish for governments in Latin America. Looking ahead, WFP is considering further capacity-strengthening initiatives in SRSP in the region. This includes the development of a degree programme or diploma in Shock-Responsive Social Protection with the University of the West Indies, based on the SRSP Caribbean Handbook and the learning modules developed with the University of Wolverhampton. This approach aims to ensure trained professionals familiar with this strategy are available within the sub-region itself, promoting sustainability.

Roadmaps and evidence appropriation

79. Although there was no specific objective to create a roadmap for each country, the OPM case studies served as the basis for developing roadmaps in some countries, while others, specifically Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti, did not formally establish such documents. In the Caribbean, roadmaps were developed in Belize and Saint Lucia only, bringing a wider range of government stakeholders and other emergency actors, such as the Red Cross, together to exchange on recommendations and steps to enact them. However, these roadmaps were developed just prior to COVID-19, which prompted WFP to adopt a more operational approach, with several governments having responded positively to WFP's offer for technical and financial support for cash transfers through social protection. In this process the roadmap development concept became less important and the "implementation of country case study recommendations" was superseded by the urgency of supporting countries in their COVID-19 emergency responses.

80. In Peru, for instance, although the OPM study laid the foundation for the discussion on SRSP, the case study alone was not sufficient. As such, the WFP CO conducted several additional studies to further strengthen the evidence base and identify gaps and opportunities for making social protection systems responsive to shocks. Moreover, the findings from the studies also informed the development of "WFP Information Notes", which highlighted key priority areas for WFP's support to the Government in the field of SRSP. The study further served as a foundation for developing a National Roadmap for Social Protection. The government showed strong ownership of the roadmap, and it was fully implemented, reflecting the commitment to enhancing the shock-responsive elements in the country's social protection strategies. To a certain extent, the notes served as strategy for the WFP CO to accompany and engage with the government in the implementation of the roadmap.

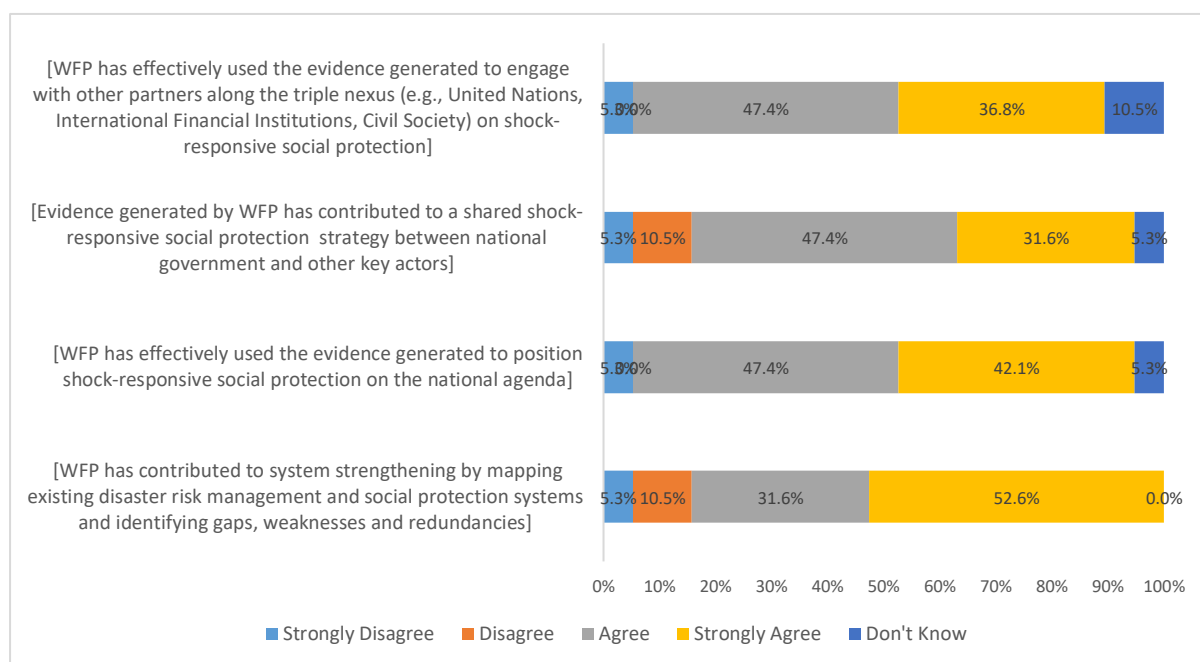
81. For the case of Ecuador, the high-level event in Lima, Peru in 2017 was instrumental for WFP. Following the first Regional Seminar on Shock-Responsive Social Protection during Emergencies held in Lima, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) in Ecuador and WFP organized a workshop in November 2017. The objective of the meeting was to align the knowledge on shock-responsive social protection during emergencies to define the next steps in strengthening Ecuador's social protection system. The workshop "presented the theoretical framework related to targeting mechanisms, data management, response, coordination, and financing, as well as the findings and recommendations from case studies conducted in Ecuador and other countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region."⁶⁹ As a result of the event, participants established work lines between various institutions and committed to continuing efforts to mitigate the impact of climate-related disasters on vulnerable populations.

82. Overall, the specific recommendations from the OPM country case studies were not directly pursued by WFP with government counterparts, as these studies primarily focused on providing recommendations to the government. Nevertheless, the studies themselves played a crucial role in raising awareness by presenting systematized evidence and forming a foundation for country-level priorities in strengthening social protection systems to better respond to shocks. As a result, WFP's evidence generation efforts have solidified its position as a thought leader and facilitator in advancing the topic of shock-responsive social protection.

⁶⁹ WFP, "Programa Mundial de Alimentos llevó a cabo el Taller Protección Social Reactiva ante Emergencia: Lecciones aprendidas y siguientes pasos en Ecuador" November 30, 2017. <https://es.wfp.org/noticias/programa-mundial-de-alimentos-llevo-cabo-el-taller-proteccion-social-reactiva-ante>

83. In line with the above, Figure 18 illustrates the level of agreement regarding WFP's evidence generation and its contribution. Based on responses from external stakeholders (n=19), in sum 84.2% agreed and strongly agreed that WFP has made significant contributions to system strengthening by mapping existing disaster risk management and social protection systems, identifying gaps, weaknesses, and redundancies. Additionally, 89.5% concurred, expressing agreement and strong agreement, that WFP has effectively utilized the evidence generated to promote the role of shock-responsive social protection on the national agenda.

Figure 18. Survey responses from external stakeholders on WFP's evidence generation



Source: own elaboration.

EQ 1.2 To what extent has WFP contributed to strengthening national social protection and disaster risk management systems through: (a) direct delivery of social protection programme/system components in response to shocks (downstream work), and (b) technical advice, capacity strengthening, advocacy and public policy/legislative support (upstream work)?

Finding 3: Overall, WFP has contributed to strengthening national social protection systems to respond to shocks at institutional and individual levels. It has also contributed to the enabling environment in some countries, especially through policy work, but there is limited evidence of successful advocacy work to influence the fiscal space and national budgets for social protection. Finally, contribution to strengthening national systems through direct delivery has been mixed.

84. The analysis of the extent to which WFP has contributed to the strengthening of national social protection systems is anchored in the WFP CCS framework, which is structured around **three domains**: the enabling environment, institutional capacity strengthening, and individual capacity strengthening. Overall, **greater contributions have been made towards strengthening the individual and institutional capacities, while more limited progress has been made in terms of an enabling environment.**

85. **Enabling environment:** Some of the most notable contributions of WFP to the enabling environment are in the Dominican Republic and Peru. In the Dominican Republic, WFP advocated for the enactment of a presidential decree that designated Supérate⁷⁰ and formalized an emergency bonus as an integral component of the social protection mandate. This accomplishment had a cascading effect, bolstering the authority and impact of the Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) Working Group. Furthermore, their diligent work and frequent engagements with government officials in the initial stages of the pandemic led to the creation of the Technical Guide for the Emergency Bonus. In Peru, the OPM country case study identified that MIDIS lacked the institutional mandate to respond in emergencies, with the National Institute of Public Defence (INDECI) being the only national institution legally mandated to respond when a shock occurs. As a result of WFP's advocacy efforts, an executive decree was approved in 2018 giving the MIDIS such mandate. During the COVID-19 crisis, WFP provided additional legislative support for the adoption of norms and regulations that allow the different social protection programmes operating under the MIDIS to adapt their systems and procedures to respond to emergencies. In Haiti, WFP helped develop two essential policy elements of the social protection system which enabled a WB project to move forward: a social protection strategy and a social registry. In Ecuador, WFP contributed to the issuance of a Presidential Decree allowing for the delivery of cash transfers to respond to COVID-19. Still, gaps remain in the normative framework, which does not allow Ecuador's MIES to issue transfers to individuals outside the social registry system, apart from the "Contingency Bonus for people affected by events of natural or anthropic origin", created in 2022. However, this bonus excludes vulnerable groups that already receive the "Human Development Bonus", which is a limitation in addressing the needs of those most affected by shocks. Regarding the use of advocacy to influence the fiscal space and national budgets, which is included as a key activity in the CCS framework, the ET found little evidence of this work across countries under review. KII data suggest that this could be because of **limited expertise for budgeting processes within WFP and limited relationship between WFP and ministries of finance**. In addition, limited fiscal space for social protection programmes is an external factor hindering progress in this area.

86. **Institutional capacity strengthening:** WFP's contribution to institutional capacity strengthening has been fairly strong. For example, in the Dominican Republic, WFP helped institutionalize the Emergency Bonus, achieving a significant milestone in partnership with Supérate. They worked intensively to design technical guidelines for the bonus implementation, going through a validation process. In Peru, WFP provided technical advice to Qali Warma,⁷¹ the national school feeding programme, to adjust their Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and logistics and supply chain mechanisms to deliver food baskets during COVID-19. Similar support was provided by WFP to the national school feeding programme in Guatemala in response to the COVID-19 pandemic where technical assistance was provided to identify products from family farming that had a longer shelf life and allowed for easy handling.⁷² In terms of targeting systems and management information systems, WFP COs have provided support, including to promote inter-linkages between the social registry and databases from disaster management agencies, but gaps remain in terms of management information systems and their interoperability.

87. **Individual capacity strengthening:** There is strong evidence from multiple stakeholders during KIIs and desk review that WFP COs have contributed to strengthening individual capacities of government staff, including areas such as targeting and vulnerability assessments, and others. In Colombia, for example, WFP trained government employees to administer questionnaires to obtain the information required for migrant populations to access national social protection programmes. In the Dominican Republic, WFP also provided nutritional training to government personnel to undertake needs assessments; a needs assessment tool (Ficha FIBE), was effectively employed during the Fiona response to gather information on disaster-affected individuals. In Ecuador, WFP trained MIES staff to conduct edu-communicational campaigns with beneficiaries after they receive their cash transfer. KIIs with government officials provided evidence that the knowledge learned during training has been applied (e.g., to conduct needs assessment, edu-communicational campaigns, etc.)

⁷⁰ Supérate programme aims at targeted social intervention through the integration of conditional cash transfers, socio-educational support, and linkage with government programmes and services. The programme focuses on providing economic assistance and support to families in situations of vulnerability and extreme poverty in the Dominican Republic.

⁷¹ Qali Warma is the national school feeding programme in Peru, in the MIDIS.

⁷² WFP (2021). Respuestas de los programas de alimentación escolar al COVID-19 en América Latina y el Caribe.

88. Though much of WFP's SRSP support has been upstream, providing technical support to governments to strengthen national social protection systems, WFP has also carried out direct delivery (downstream support) to complement the governments' efforts where vulnerable persons could not access national social protection systems. The evaluation looks at the extent to which WFP's direct delivery contributed to strengthening national systems. One of the most notable examples is Colombia, where WFP's direct support led to the identification of migrants, which were later included by the Government in the social beneficiary registry (SISBEN)...⁷³ In Ecuador, the CO has provided through direct delivery, three years of cash transfer to migrants and vulnerable Ecuadorians outside the social registry system. In particular, WFP provided support to the MIES in the design and implementation of the Bono de Atención Nutricional (BAN) during COVID-19, with a deliberate focus on nutritional targeting and objectives through a SP response to a shock. Learning from the BAN experience was used to foster dialogue on the institutionalisation of this type of support through regular social protection (i.e., Bono Toda una Vida), in relation to the contribution to fight stunting in Ecuador, which is a national priority. Still, results linked to the strengthening of national capacities through direct delivery remain mixed: cash transfers for Ecuadorian population affected by the Covid-19 crisis are ending in 2023 and mechanisms are not yet in place to enable horizontal expansion (identification of newly vulnerable groups) or vertical expansion (increasing the transfer amount of existing recipients) in the event of another shock. WFP's direct delivery to migrant populations is expected to continue.

EQ 1.3 To what extent did WFP's engagement in SRSP contribute to improved response to different types of shocks and across diverse country contexts in LAC?

Finding 4: In terms of key outcome indicators, WFP's engagement in SRSP has clearly contributed to expanded coverage, both through temporary "emergency" expansions and in some cases through more permanent expansions to number of social protection recipients, ensuring that national social protection systems were able to include more vulnerable individuals, including migrants, in response to various types of shocks and crises, such as climate-related disasters, as well as economic and public-health related shocks.

89. Based on the constructed ToC for LAC's SRSP work, the evaluation team assessed the extent to which WFP has contributed to the capacity of social protection systems to respond faster, with improved coverage and coordination and with adequate levels of assistance, among other variables.

90. WFP's contributions within the region have helped improve **coverage** significantly, particularly during COVID-19, when many governments were seeking solutions to the mounting crisis (see Finding 5). These achievements, which were primarily driven by WFP's effective mobilization of donor funding, which was then channelled through national social protection systems, were the result of a dual approach involving both vertical and horizontal expansion.

91. In many cases, these were short-term expansions in the form of emergency SP programmes with external WFP funding. For instance, in 2022, WFP provided assistance to the MIES in Ecuador to respond to the earthquake in Esmeralda through the national SP system. There are also examples of more enduring and sustainable outcomes. One such example is Saint Lucia's permanent expansion of its social protection recipients, achieved through collaboration with the World Bank funding enabled by WFP. Similarly, St. Vincent and the Grenadines extended the WFP-supported programme for an additional six months with World Bank funding. Equally with the WB support, the government of Dominica is in the process of establishing a social registry, and plans were underway, prior to a change in government, to roll out the payment reconciliation tool piloted in partnership with WFP. In Belize, the piloting of Digiwallet for fund transfers has received positive feedback from the government, and they are actively pursuing its implementation.

⁷³ SISBEN stands for: Sistema de Identificación de Potenciales Beneficiarios de Programas Sociales.

92. These examples show how WFP has been able to be more catalytic by using its humanitarian funding to achieve longer-term expansion of social protection coverage. Along this trajectory, WFP introduced a range of supplementary solutions encompassing vulnerability assessments, beneficiary targeting, registration processes, information management, payment methods, and payment reconciliation. In Colombia and Ecuador, beneficiaries included migrants who were targeted by WFP. Nevertheless, beyond these two countries where governments were open to inclusion of migrant population through social protection, there were limited initiatives specifically addressing the needs of vulnerable migrants across the region. Some partners perceive this as a gap, particularly given the vulnerabilities faced by migrants in certain Caribbean countries such as Curacao, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago. As WFP's focus in the region has been on technical assistance to governments, the receptivity of these governments to addressing migrant inclusion in social protection systems was either an enabling or a limiting factor for WFP's ability reach these vulnerable populations.

93. Regarding improved **speed of delivery**, the evidence is mixed. The Belize response to Hurricane Lisa in 2022 stands out as a positive example in this regard. After months of preparing systematically to respond during the pre-hurricane season, with the support of WFP, the Belize government was able to roll out a cash assistance programme within 30 days.⁷⁴ According to KIIs, when Hurricane Lisa struck on November 2, 2022, a first cash distribution to impacted households took place in December 2022, followed by a second transfer in February 2023. This was considered to be very quick and efficient not only due to the use of the newly introduced digital wallet, but mainly due to all the preparatory work which had been done with the National Emergency Management Organisation and SP partners in preceding months.

94. Moreover, in the case of the Dominican Republic, certain factors played a significant role in expediting response times. Initiatives like the creation of the Basic Emergency Form (FIBE for its acronym in Spanish) and the Technical Guide for the Implementation of the Emergency Bonus, along with various support efforts during the COVID-19 crisis, proved critical during events like Hurricane Fiona and the COVID-19 pandemic.

95. It is essential to consider that in the case of sudden onset shocks, in-kind assistance is frequently provided first, so the speed at which a new cash programme can be set up does not necessarily imply that the most vulnerable individuals are left without assistance.

96. Yet in most other countries under review, improved response time was not evidenced, in part because SP systems were not yet prepared to respond in emergencies, without needed normative frameworks and SOPs in place and actions well-rehearsed in advance. For example, in Ecuador, it took six months to roll out cash-transfer assistance when COVID-19 hit, because a presidential decree was required to allow the emergency cash transfer to take place. In other cases, WFP's approach was focused on piloting new methods with government partners, which in many cases also included the development of new tools and training of social workers and other types of technical support. The development of these new tools and training required time which may have slowed the actual response to beneficiaries. In other cases, especially during COVID-19, some donor agreements needed to be updated, causing further delays. In addition, WFP-supported cash assistance generally depends on the availability of funds from donors. These funds did not all arrive at once but were staggered over time. The slow pace of donor responses to emergencies is a key factor influencing the speed of the response, leading many informants and experts to suggest that WFP's current focus on "anticipatory action", including putting in place standing emergency funds, is key to overcoming bottlenecks that slow the speed of response.

97. In some COs, such as the Dominican Republic as well as the Caribbean MCO, WFP is currently supporting the development of anticipatory action SOPs, which would enable cash disbursements within 48 hours of an impending disaster, thereby allowing potentially affected households to take preventive measures and stock up on basic necessities. However, this requires, on the one hand, that SP systems have all the elements in place from the normative framework to coordination mechanisms and systems for early warning, targeting and cash disbursements, and, on the other hand, that donors are prepared to make funding available without the certainty of a disaster taking place. In 2022, the Dominican Republic

⁷⁴ By contrast it should be noted that for most other countries reviewed, it can take six months or more for government SP programmes with WFP support to mount a cash-based response to a sudden onset event. In this sense, the Belize response to Hurricane Lisa was considered extremely timely.

implemented the Monte Cristi pilot for Hurricane Fiona. The pilot was the first experience in the Dominican Republic of direct cash transfers by WFP, aiming to reach households affected by climate events such as floods, droughts, and other predictable occurrences through anticipatory action. The goal of this pilot was to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach and how it can assist households before an emergency. One of the main objectives was to encourage social protection agencies to have plans for anticipatory action. While the Caribbean MCO has had some success in mobilising donors such as Canada, ECHO and USAID to support anticipatory action, overall, evidence gathered across countries in the evaluation suggests that system and donor readiness to act in advance of an event may be still be some years away.

98. In terms of the **adequacy of assistance**, the evidence from FGDs and KIIs suggests that given the current context of high inflation and rising food prices within the region, the transfer values set by most national social protection systems are significantly out of date. During the ET visit to Dominica, government officials indicated that the most recent national poverty assessment, serving as the foundation for transfer values of the Public Assistance Programme (PAP), was conducted in 2008. Both WFP and the donor community align supplementary assistance with the government transfer amounts, serving a dual purpose: extending coverage efficiently using donor contributions and safeguarding the transparency of national SP systems. From WFP's vantage point, the emergency cash transfer programmes have been in certain cases seen as opportunities to **pilot new approaches and technologies with potential for scale up**, rather than a chance to re-evaluate transfer values established by national governments. However, recipients affected by major shocks, whether public health emergencies or climate-related shocks, focus on the harsh realities of rising food and rental prices outpacing government and donor transfer values. Furthermore, prolonged shocks like COVID-19 or migration entail longer-term setbacks for households, including job losses, extended economic downturns, and difficulties finding employment. This was mentioned in two FGDs, **where beneficiaries expressed concerns that the assistance provided was insufficient, particularly in the context of ongoing economic impacts from the COVID-19 economic shock**. Moreover, as seen from FGDs, just as well-run emergency social protection programmes can help legitimize and build confidence in the system that provides them, so can cash transfer programmes that are not adequately resourced, communicated or understood by beneficiaries delegitimize such interventions...⁷⁵ Document review and KIIs suggest the value of WFP incorporating into its SRSP work efforts to define and respect social protection "floors"⁷⁶ – including a mapping of inter-connections and relationships between cash and other types of needed health and support services.

99. The timeframe for this work should be understood as a medium to long-term investment by WFP, supported by the donor community, and be taken in the context of broader efforts to modernize social protection systems. Individual interventions by WFP may be part of a very gradual process of systems change or may not be taken forward at all. KIIs emphasized that changing criteria and forms for a one-off emergency cash assistance will not, in itself, transform and modernize the social protection system without governments being committed to improving the system.

⁷⁵ This was also a finding and a recommendation in the WFP & UNICEF, Evaluation of the JP 'Enhancing Resilience and Acceleration of the SDGs in the Eastern Caribbean 2020 – 2022.

⁷⁶ Social protection floors are nationally-defined sets of basic social security guarantees which secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. These guarantees should ensure at a minimum that, over the life cycle, all those in need have access to essential health care and basic income security. According to ILO, which has led on the concepts of 'floors', national social protection floors should comprise at least the following four social security guarantees, as defined at the national level: 1) Access to essential health care, including maternity care; 2) Basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services; 3) Basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability; 4) Basic income security for older persons. See <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/dw4sd/themes/sp-floor/lang-en/index.htm#:~:text=Social%20protection%20floors%20are%20nationally,poverty%2C%20vulnerability%20and%20social%20exclusion.>

100. Overall, several KIs have commented that it is too early to determine the extent to which national social protection systems have been effectively rendered more shock-responsive. **Systems are made up of a multitude of different actors, relationships, procedures and tools** which all need to perform together to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency. While in some countries major milestones have been met and institutionalized – such as in Haiti where WFP helped co-author the national social protection policy which was enacted into law in 2020; in Peru, where WFP contributed to an Executive Decree (2018) giving the MIDIS the institutional mandate to respond in emergencies; and in Saint Lucia, where with the support of WFP, the PAP was permanently expanded through the registration of 1000 vulnerable households, including women-headed households and households with persons with disabilities – in other countries pilots have not yet led to definitive or permanent structural changes in the way that social protection is delivered in emergencies.

“You can change the plug, but unless governments are ready to invest in modernizing and upgrading the system as a whole, changing the plug may not make that much difference.”
– External stakeholder

101. Furthermore, there is not yet an agreed-upon monitoring and performance assessment framework for SRSP, describing the key milestones in systems strengthening and how WFP will know when these are met. A good start is the Caribbean MCO’s Shock-Readiness Index, which describes five levels of SP system “maturity” and associates WFP’s actions which may (or may not) be contributing factors but does not directly measure the effect of WFP contributions to overall changes in system maturity. Overall, as there is no clear and agreed upon indicators and performance measurement framework for WFP’s SRSP work, each CO is generally left to identify its own methods to assess progress.

EQ 1.4 To what extent and how has WFP’s support to preparedness and capacity strengthening contributed to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through Social Protection?

Finding 5: WFP’s response to the global scale of the COVID-19 pandemic entailed a strategic shift of financial and human resources towards assisting governments in rapidly implementing emergency initiatives through their existing national social protection systems. The effectiveness of this response was underpinned by prior investments in understanding these systems, which enabled the identification of gaps and opportunities. However, limitations were exposed in earlier investments, particularly in early-adopter countries like Peru and Ecuador. The response strategies of governments in LAC, which WFP supported, included adaptations to school feeding programmes, vertical expansions of social protection initiatives, and assistance to new beneficiaries. WFP’s pivotal role in introducing operational innovations for beneficiary identification and enrollment, as well as its exploration of electronic cash distribution methods, further highlighted its valuable contribution to addressing the pandemic’s challenges through social protection measures.

102. The global scale of the COVID-19 pandemic prompted WFP to redirect its planned programmes towards assisting governments in swiftly implementing emergency response initiatives through their national social protection systems. The groundwork laid during the pre-pandemic phase, including understanding these systems, identifying gaps, and pinpointing opportunities, proved invaluable for both WFP and governments. However, the pandemic also exposed limitations in prior investments, particularly in countries that were early adopters of emergency measures, such as Peru and Ecuador.

“Generally, we have the attention of government in the immediate aftermath of a shock. This can last for up to 6 months, after which other priorities start to take over the agenda”– WFP staff

103. The response strategies of LAC governments to the pandemic's impact on social protection programmes encompassed three primary approaches, as unveiled through insights from KIs and a comprehensive review⁷⁷ of innovative practices and lessons learned:

- **Adjustments to school feeding and other in-kind national food assistance programmes:** Many programmes, supported by WFP, underwent modifications, replacing traditional school feeding with industrialized food rations or cash transfers. In some instances, countries like Trinidad and Tobago and Colombia opted for direct cash transfers to compensate for the suspension of school meals. Additionally, adaptations included accelerating social pension disbursements (Peru) and suspending conditionalities in cash transfer programmes (Dominican Republic). These adaptations were accompanied by the implementation of health and hygiene protocols to ensure safety within adjusted school feeding or in-kind delivery schemes.
- **Vertical expansions of SP programmes:** WFP collaborated with more than ten countries in implementing temporary increases in allocations for regular social protection beneficiaries. This approach was adopted by countries including Dominica, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Colombia, Jamaica, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Dominican Republic, among others.
- **Assistance to new beneficiaries:** In response to the crisis, some governments – with the support of WFP - introduced new initiatives targeting individuals already enrolled in existing programmes. While there was an increase in horizontal expansion, it predominantly occurred not by extending existing SP programmes but through the establishment of new COVID-19 emergency programmes designed specifically to respond to the pandemic.

104. The inclusion of new beneficiaries, whether through existing or new programmes, required the creation or adaptation of operational systems for timely outreach. WFP played a central role in introducing operational innovations for beneficiary identification, registration, and enrolment, facilitated by social registries and other databases. Online platforms, call centers, mobile applications, and email communication (Belize, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, British Virgin Islands, Ecuador, Peru) were used to enrol large number of people outside of social protection systems and the existing databases, i.e., informal sector workers and migrants, groups that had previously been excluded from social protection databases (Dominica, Belize, St. Vincent and the Grenadines).

105. Significantly, WFP leveraged its expertise in electronic payment methods to explore new cash distribution modalities, particularly with mobile money. This strategic shift aimed to minimize the necessity for human contact, mitigating the risk of virus transmission inherent in traditional cash-in-envelope methods. Pilot projects involving e-money solutions were carried out in countries such as Jamaica, Belize, Saint Lucia, Guyana, and Haiti, facilitating governments' understanding of the potential and challenges associated with electronic cash distribution. WFP's extensive experience in utilizing e-money, cash cards, and supermarket vouchers served as a critical foundation for its contribution to the COVID-19 response. These endeavours, while yielding varying degrees of success, provided invaluable insights for future electronic distribution strategies.

106. In sum, as expressed by KIs and desk review, WFP's proactive engagement in preparedness and capacity strengthening played a pivotal role in effectively addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic through social protection measures. The groundwork laid in understanding social protection systems, coupled with operational innovations, enabled a rapid and impactful response. This involvement, together with the exploration of electronic distribution methods, underscored WFP's valuable contribution to navigating the pandemic's complexities.

⁷⁷ Rodolfo Beazley, WFP (July 2020). La respuesta de protección social a la pandemia COVID-19 en América Latina y el Caribe.

EQ 1.5 What are the emerging effects (positive and negative) of WFP's engagement in SRSP in the LAC region on national SP systems and beneficiaries, particularly for women and other vulnerable populations?

Finding 6: The emerging positive effects include objective, transparent and quantifiable targeting processes, formalization of distribution processes and financial inclusion of excluded groups, and positive spillover effects towards other development goals, such as education outcomes. Emerging negative effects include the absence of clear communication on the rationale for the transfer amount and the perception of arbitrary or insignificant cash transfer values by beneficiaries. Also, specific focus on "shock-responsive" SP can limit more integrated approaches to SP systems strengthening in some cases.

107. A positive emerging effect of WFP's engagement in SRSP has been the strengthening of national social protection systems in the LAC region through more **objective, transparent and quantifiable targeting processes**.

"Now, when a Minister says that so many people in their area are affected by or vulnerable to a certain disaster, we can say 'let's see the evidence'... WFP's help in targeting and vulnerability assessment has contributed a more objective, transparent, and quantifiable basis for determining who gets included in social protection programmes" – External stakeholder

By providing support to the design and/or improvements to the methodology for conducting vulnerability analyses, targeting and registration processes, WFP is contributing to good governance and the transparency of social protection systems which were previously experienced by KIs and beneficiaries as somewhat obscure. In small countries, such as Caribbean small island states, for example, the informality of SP systems increased the risk of clientelism since processes and procedures for targeting were not formalized. This positive shift towards formalization and transparency was suggested by diverse informants. In Nicaragua, the use of the school feeding programme led to enhanced targeting which was done through clearly established social protection programmes.

108. Similarly, digital innovations contributed to the **formalization of distribution processes** and subsequently **financial inclusion**. The use of digital payment methods, such as the Penny Pinch app in Saint Lucia, has provided unbanked beneficiaries with access to financial institutions for the first time, particularly women...⁷⁸ This fosters financial inclusion allowing recipients to access funds quickly, facilitate bill payments, and make essential purchases. Additionally, collaborations with financial entities like MasterCard further incentivized beneficiaries to use the payment app and access discounted rates for low-value transactions.

109. The potential for recipients of social cash transfers to benefit from a broader range of social, health, and educational support services has also been noted. This was noted in the **Final Evaluation of the Joint Programme 'Enhancing Resilience and Acceleration of the SDGs in the Eastern Caribbean' 2020–2022** where focus group discussions revealed that programme beneficiaries expressed being more aware of a broader range of programmes and entitlements...⁷⁹ Similarly, extensive work on gender and financial inclusion in Haiti has resulted in thousands of beneficiaries, mainly women, receiving official government identification documents for the first time in their lives. These results foster not only financial inclusion but broader access to fundamental rights and services. This suggests that WFP's engagement in SRSP could have **positive spillover effects** beyond direct cash transfers, enhancing the overall well-being and resilience of vulnerable populations.

110. In terms of direct assistance, **WFP was agile in its response to climate-related shocks and flooding** (such as in Dominica) and in situations where there was a sudden influx in migrant populations (Ecuador). While for WFP these cash distributions were seen as mainly pilots and proofs of concepts (as in

⁷⁸ WFP & UNICEF. Evaluation of the JP 'Enhancing Resilience and Acceleration of the SDGs in the Eastern Caribbean 2020 – 2022.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

the Caribbean MCO) rather than cash support which would address the full extent of losses incurred, recipients of these transfers have been in great need and not fully aware of the nature or timeline of the assistance. Within FGDs, beneficiaries in Dominica expressed dissatisfaction with the transfer value provided during crises such as COVID-19 and climate-related events, given the high rate of inflation and rising food prices, thus seeing it as too little, too late. They perceived the cash distributions as insufficient to address their losses and lacked clarity on the purpose behind these transfers as intended by the government and WFP. This signals, at the very least a gap in communication with recipients about the intention behind these social cash transfers.

111. Finally, the necessity for WFP to pay for issuing official identification documents to beneficiaries in Haiti raised concerns. While it provided the positive outcome of more people obtaining identification, it also highlighted a negative unintended consequence of dependence on external funding for the government to provide basic services that constitute an essential public service (providing personal identity documents). Provided that this support is transitional and for the purpose of enabling beneficiaries to be served through digital payments, these costs are perhaps justifiable given that WFP COs are generally paying attention to the longer-term sustainability strategy in its dealing with government, as it was in this case.

EQ 1.6 To what extent has the SRSP engagement's design, implementation and monitoring promoted gender equality, equity, inclusion of indigenous populations, people living with disabilities and social inclusion in general?

Finding 7: WFP's initial engagement in SRSP did not have a clear approach to mainstreaming gender and inclusion. However, with time, both on its own and through associating its work with partners, WFP has been exploring these broader dimensions. While some COs have made progress in identifying and addressing gender-specific needs and considering vulnerable populations in the design and targeting, there is room for improvement in terms of systematic and consistent inclusion of all affected groups. Effective and inclusive SRSP initiatives have been demonstrated through collaboration with other organizations and the utilization of objective criteria in targeting.

112. With respect to **gender equality and women's empowerment, equity and social inclusion**, the 2019 Regional Social Protection Strategy⁸⁰ notes that the 2017 paper on Gender Sensitive Social Protection for Zero Hunger⁸¹ (and the gender analysis within) was an integral source informing the regional vision, and Principle Two of the Regional Social Protection Strategy seeks to translate inclusive and gender-sensitive SP from theory to practice. The Strategy also envisages a gender transformative approach would be taken. A gender transformative approach seeks to reduce the existing, sometimes institutionalized, gaps between women and men in accessing social protection systems, having designs and implementation sensitive to these inequalities, and seeks to reverse them by supporting governments in their operationalization.

113. In practice, however, WFP's initial engagement in SRSP did not have a clear and practical approach to mainstreaming gender and inclusion and operationalizing a "transformative approach", and as such, COs have made varied progress in identifying and addressing gender-specific needs and considering vulnerable populations in the design and targeting. The evaluation survey assessed the extent to which WFP's engagement in respondent's country of focus contributed to improving awareness on the gender equality and inclusion dimensions of different types of shocks. Although the feedback on these dimensions was predominantly favourable (with 73% of respondents indicating agreement or strong agreement about such contributions), they received the least favourable ratings compared to other specified contributions. Notably, a lower percentage of women (68%) concurred with this assessment compared to men (81%). These categories were also amongst the lowest scoring in the survey in terms of the assessment of WFP's

⁸⁰ WFP. (2019). Social Protection Strategy: Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁸¹ WFP. (2017). Gender Sensitive Social Protection for Zero Hunger: WFP's role in Latin America and the Caribbean. Panama: WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America.

value addition. In open-ended survey responses on the areas in which WFP did not provide sufficient support, 33% of responses (n= 30) were focused on increasing the awareness and mainstreaming of gender equality, women's empowerment and social inclusion in social protection responses.

114. Ensuring that SRSP activities are based on clear needs assessments and consultations with affected populations was highlighted by key informants, the 2017 Gender Sensitive Social Protection for Zero Hunger⁸² paper, as well as some national social protection policies as a critical first step towards improved responsiveness to diverse individuals' critical needs. For example, Haiti's National Social Protection and Promotion policy framework notes that SP mechanisms should meet individual needs across the lifecycle, and that gender inequalities across the lifecycle and geographic areas and situations of vulnerability can, and need to, be identified through gender analyses.⁸³ Several countries, including Ecuador, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Dominica,⁸⁴ have made specific **efforts to include the needs of women, persons with disabilities and indigenous groups in their SRSP activities**. This includes targeting pregnant and lactating women and providing additional support to women with young children. In Ecuador, pregnant and lactating women and women with children under two years of age who were not in the social registry were identified through targeting efforts of implementing partners at community level. In Nicaragua, inclusion also has been achieved through targeting support in vulnerable areas where indigenous communities reside and implementing programmes in local languages.

115. However, ensuring responsiveness of SRSP activities through **participatory needs assessments** was **recognized mostly as an area of improvement**. This perspective was echoed by a survey participant who mentioned that the targeting of beneficiaries across different programmes should embrace a more participatory and inclusive approach, avoiding distinctions among specific provinces and extending beyond the existing recipients of social services. In some countries, there is a lack of specific gender analyses or gender-focused initiatives in the social protection system, leaving women's inclusion dependent on targeting carried out by the government through existing databases and social protection systems, which can sometimes be outdated. In other countries, such as in Belize, targeting of assistance was noted unsystematic, as it was based on the subjective assessment of social workers. However, key informants highlighted how efforts have been made to introduce vulnerability as part of the selection criteria for any future disasters by developing a tool for collecting and updating critical demographic information and considering a scoring system to develop a more systematic and objective approach for prioritizing the most vulnerable persons in affected areas in future targeting.

116. Some governments face **difficulties in reaching the most vulnerable populations**, such as remote indigenous communities in Peru or migrants lacking official documentation in the Dominican Republic. These challenges may hinder the effective implementation and responsiveness of SRSP initiatives and require additional efforts to address the needs of these vulnerable groups. KIs point out that some countries, like Haiti, have recognized the vulnerability of persons with disabilities and considered them as priority beneficiaries. However, in other instances, persons with disabilities were not explicitly identified as a vulnerable group in the selection criteria, indicating a need for more consistent consideration across countries. In Colombia, for example, the Arauca pilot aiming to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable households' incomes did not initially benefit persons with disabilities, however in the process of delivering cash transfers or food baskets, persons with disabilities were identified and targeted.⁸⁵

"The assistance provided strengthens the awareness of key actors and members of government about the inclusion and care of vulnerable groups that are difficult to access, however assistance is required in places, where due to various governmental limitations, they cannot reach and the role of international cooperation enters."
– Survey respondent

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ WFP (2020). Haiti GaM Monitoring on CSP 2019 Activity #7.

⁸⁴ GAM Reports.

⁸⁵ Econometría SA. "Joint Final Evaluation of the Social Protection Pilot in Response to Emergencies in Arauca, Colombia - May 2020 to February 2021." WFP: Colombia Country Office.

117. There is also broad **recognition that more attention is needed to fully address gender-specific needs and promote women's empowerment**, with stakeholders interviewed emphasizing that consultations may not have been fully exhaustive in identifying the needs of all affected populations, especially with a lens towards intersectionality. The Arauca pilot again provides evidence for this, in which persons with disabilities received assistance, however it was found the level of satisfaction varied, in terms of needs being met, based on the type of assistance (in-kind or cash) and the type of disability (with women also representing the majority of this group)...⁸⁶

118. Collaboration and **joint efforts have proven valuable in SRSP activities**. The Joint SDG Fund Project in Barbados and Saint Lucia exemplifies the benefits of partnering with other organizations. UN Women's involvement in this project brought a different perspective and new strategies, complementing the technical expertise of organizations like WFP. As a result, a more **gender-transformative approach** was achieved in the design of the programme given its specific emphasis on women, children and persons with disabilities. In the Dominican Republic, WFP in close collaboration with UNHCR (within the ASP Working Group) has brought awareness to the situation of migrants and undocumented individuals. The social protection system in the country only covers beneficiaries who are Dominicans with a Dominican ID. However, there is a segment of both Dominicans and foreigners lacking proper documentation, and among them, some Dominicans are not registered with civil or electoral institutions due to various reasons, including their parents' lack of registration. This specific group represents the most vulnerable and excluded population. To address this issue, the ASP Working Group has advocated for including individuals whose parents lack proper documents, aiming to register and integrate them into the social protection system. These above-mentioned examples showcase the **importance of collaboration and the use of more objective criteria, such as vulnerability assessments**, for ensuring more effective and inclusive social protection initiatives reaching those most likely to be left behind.

119. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation play a crucial role in assessing the impact and effectiveness of SRSP activities beyond the initial targeting phase. The Evaluation Synthesis of evidence and lessons on CCS interventions and the 2019 Safety Nets Policy Update both highlight the limited attention to promoting gender-responsive and disability inclusive programming and SP systems, as well as the limited guidance and evidence available on the contribution of safety nets and social protection to gender-transformative outcomes and accountability to affected populations. The CCS Evaluation Synthesis includes a specific recommendation to improve the integration of gender, protection, and accountability to affected populations into CCS interventions. Additionally, it calls for providing technical support to strengthen guidance and advocates for the mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment in CCS. Tools such as Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) reports and the Shock-Readiness Index (SRI) have sought to fill such gaps and provided valuable data for the MCO.

120. However, there is room for improvement in terms of **adequately monitoring gender differences and exclusion of specific groups** in these tools, especially considering needs constantly evolve following a crisis. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic context shifted gender dynamics and vulnerabilities, resulting in women becoming overburdened with workloads, including unpaid care work, and higher rates of gender-based violence, potentially impacting their ability to present themselves to distribution sites...⁸⁷ or to reach them to safely monitor satisfaction...⁸⁸, further "outdating" the available vulnerability mapping data and ability to monitor safety and outcomes of distributions. Ecuador CO was able to later fill this gap by conducting a 'Protection Analysis', which also analyzed risks of food assistance for women. Haiti CO did this as well through a partnership with a local cooperating partner with greater community-level presence, though key informants noted limited financial and technical capacity to specifically measure and address the extent to which raised concerns of GBV were impacting women and households receiving distributions (or not).

"The accompaniment of WFP in the process of designing the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index has been important for the knowledge transmitted to the government and has become one of the fundamental tools of the country in terms of achieving an effective social protection system" – Key informant

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ WFP (2020). Haiti GaM Monitoring on CSP 2019 Activity #1.

⁸⁸ Ibid; WFP (2021). Ecuador GaM Monitoring on CSP Activity #1.

121. In another example of PDM for the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Soufriere Eruption response, which compares assistance recipients in July 2021 with January 2022, while WFP analysis shows that 73% of voucher recipients were women and 27% were men, other variables on PDM were not sex-disaggregated. A particularly intriguing change was that in July 2021, 30% of assistance recipients had no account with a financial service provider, whereas in January 2022, only 14% had no account with any financial service provider. More in-depth analysis and utilization of such data might shed light on whether a significant number of assistance recipients have acquired a bank account since the prior distribution and whether this change is both among women and men, or whether the change is in favor of one gender over the other.

122. Haiti CO, with support from the Gates Foundation, has a robust gender component in the SRSP response. The cash transfer is automatically given to women if there is one adult woman in the household, making them the first beneficiaries. This approach is complemented by additional measures such as E-money training, participation in village credit groups, and financial inclusion training, all directed towards women. This deliberate focus on women has been a significant strength of the response, ensuring that women benefit from various activities associated with the cash transfer. Colombia CO also implemented similar initiatives but with a focus on migrants.

123. Finally, in Barbados, the Joint SDG Fund Project established a coordination mechanism to support social protection training and carried out a comprehensive assessment and reform of the country's SP system to make it gender-responsive and linked to disaster risk management. The evaluation also identified multiple unexpected results of the JP such as addressing domestic violence and developing digital solutions for expanding financial inclusion for excluded groups. These endeavours and findings demonstrate ongoing work to address challenges and **improve financial inclusion amongst vulnerable groups and the measurement of gender-transformative and other social inclusion outcomes.**

2.2 EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

EQ 2. WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED WFP'S ENGAGEMENT IN SRSP IN THE REGION IN GENERAL AND WITH REGARDS TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS?

EQ 2.1 What are the key enablers, barriers, and trade-offs in WFP's engagement in SRSP in LAC?

Finding 8: Externally, national political will and ownership is the main driver, which WFP has played a key role in stimulating. This includes having a clear normative framework that is well conceived and adapted to SRSP as a key factor, as well as SOPs, contingency plans and inter-agency/ministry coordination. Governments must also have identified resources (human and financial) to lead and support the work. Within WFP, enabling factors were a multi-year financial investment by HQ in RBP's social protection capacity, a management perspective in favor of systems strengthening, and appropriate WFP advocacy with the right ministries and trainings and workshops targeting key decision-makers.

124. KIs and respondents to the online survey paint a clear picture of enabling factors both external and internal to WFP. Across countries, government ownership and leadership on SRSP is seen to be the most important enabling factor. It is important to note that this ownership did not exist at the outset, but is itself a result of WFP's engagement, strategic investment in evidence generation, and advocacy for SRSP in the LAC region. The Dominican Republic is consistently cited as a good example which shows how government leadership and active coordination of partners can result in significant changes in the social protection system's capacity to respond to shocks. As emphasized by various stakeholders, one crucial facilitator is the already robust social protection system in the country. For example, its social protection registry (SIUBEN - *Sistema Único de Beneficiarios*) stands out as one of the most highly institutionalized entities in the government, with excellent technical expertise. Another vital factor contributing to the success in the Dominican Republic is the government's openness and recognition of WFP's technical capacities and

leadership as a facilitator. Despite changes in the administration that temporarily slowed down the pace of work, the authorities capitalized on the efforts of the Adaptive Social Protection Working Group, particularly when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. This suggests that **leadership of the SRSP agenda must be strategically placed at a high level within the national government**, not only embedded within Social Protection ministries, which may be unable to bring other key ministries, such as Ministry of Finance and DRM partners, to the table.

125. Recent memory of shocks help governments to defend SRSP as a priority and make needed investments. **Messaging and advocacy can build on collective memory of a recent shock** to drive change. In Colombia, for example, many people still remember the years when Colombians were forcibly displaced and were provided shelter and protection in Venezuela. This has helped to shape a better comprehension of the situation of migrants. On the other hand, countries in the region that do not have the same favourable and reciprocal relationships are not so welcoming to migrants. Enablers also include a strong partnership with civil society in some countries, such as exists in Ecuador, to express solidarity with migrants, and more generally on the rights of citizens to social protection coverage.

126. In the Caribbean, an enabling factor has been the **existence of sub-regional institutions** – such as CARICOM, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and CDEMA, among others. As described elsewhere in this report, these institutions can share messages, good practices and lessons learned between Caribbean states, and provide technical assistance to the development of national legislation which favours SRSP. WFP Caribbean MCO has been developing opportunities to strengthen capacities within these regional organizations so that they can, in turn, provide needed support and advocacy to governments within their jurisdictions.

127. Within WFP, there also exist enabling factors that support strong results. One key enabling factor was the multi-year investment funded by the Social Protection Investment Case and later PSA Funds to the RBP social protection unit for SRSP. Annual amount of US\$400,000 was secured between 2017 and 2021, enabling to generate evidence and engage needed consultants with expertise on SRSP. Another enabling factor that was repeatedly cited by KIs is leadership on SRSP and consistency of presence. In some countries, senior management rotations have weakened relationships with government counterparts and donors. The Caribbean MCO has had the benefit of the same senior management team since the WFP's Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Caribbean⁸⁹ was formally opened in 2018, which have been much appreciated source of stability and confidence for donors, UN partners, government technical staff and permanent secretaries in the countries covered. WFP leadership and coordination was seen as an enabling factor – including leadership of Adaptive Social Protection and Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) working groups at the national level and helping governments to coordinate technical support offered by multiple UN and other partners.

128. A key enabler was also the hiring of personnel with an appropriate level of seniority and expertise to interact with government counterparts, and prior knowledge of the complexities of social protection systems. For example, Peru and Colombia COs succeeded in hiring highly experienced experts from within the national social protection system to facilitate dialogue and open doors for WFP in a field that is relatively new and unknown by government partners. In this sense, the appropriate level of skills, training and experience of staff in COs can favour strategic entry points, based on their prior knowledge of working with social protection systems at a national level. Similarly, WFP's emergency preparedness approach and expertise in procurement, CBT, digitalization and logistics enabled innovation and ensured that government counterparts feel confident in WFP's technical assistance.

⁸⁹ In 2021, it became WFP's Caribbean Multi-country Office.

Finding 9: Barriers and trade-offs include both external factors such as the absence of engagement and competing interests from government ministries, the limited decision-making ability of government technical staff, and the lack of clear articulation of a national SRSP policy with identified roles for both DRM and SP ministries; and internal factors from within WFP including staff turnover and human resource and financial constraints.

129. KIs and online survey respondents mentioned that without strong “political will” and a clear national policy and inter-related SOPs that allow and require disaster risk management actors to cooperate with social protection ministries, scope for success in SRSP is very limited. Therefore, a key barrier to success is a sudden change in government or national policy context that can potentially disrupt WFP’s investments in SRSP. This has recently been the case in Dominica where ministerial changes have temporarily halted technical assistance provided by WFP, as well as in Ecuador where there was significant impetus to move forward the SRSP agenda but a change in government disrupted these processes in their tracks...⁹⁰

130. In 2015 and 2016, when WFP began exploring the concept of SRSP, it was both new and innovative to suggest that DRM and social protection functions should work in a coordinated and collaborative fashion. It has since proved much more challenging than anticipated to bring them both to the same table. Throughout the evaluation, it became evident that while WFP has successfully engaged Social Protection actors, DRM actors appear to be falling behind. While there are a range of explanations provided, the most succinct was expressed by one KI who suggested that what is an expanded mandate for social protection actors is seen as removing DRM’s role in controlling the response and in some cases, providing in-kind assistance through food baskets, blankets, etc. The fact that the DRM function in many countries is under-staffed and with limited means also contributes in some cases to resistance. In contrast, it is worth noting that in much of the English-speaking Caribbean, SP ministries have a more clearly articulated role in last mile delivery within disaster management systems, thus serving as an example that WFP can build from in the region.

“Social Protection’s gain is seen as a loss for DRM”- Key Informant

131. Some KI and survey respondents also noted that in addition to competing interests of government counterparts are non-aligned interests between UN, World Bank and other agencies, each competing with the other for governments’ limited attention. The result can be agencies competing to introduce their own tools, methods and approaches which are mutually incompatible...⁹¹ Other key dimensions are the lack of clear decision-making arrangements, limited fiscal space and financial capacity, staffing and training to translate policies into tools and SOPs to achieve practical actions.

132. The list of key trade-offs identified included the dilemma of expanding the number of households benefiting from the assistance versus providing larger transfer values to fewer people; and WFP’s selection of which entry points to take and which partners and programmes to invest in.

133. Internally, KIs and online survey respondents also highlighted that overall, while exceptions exist, WFP faces constraints to position key themes in the national agenda. This constraint is attributed, on one hand, to what KIs perceive as a lack of a clear methodology and longer-term strategic approach by WFP. Such an approach, they argue, should take into account and complement the efforts of other partners. Instead, KIs identify a tendency towards demand-driven approaches, leading to uncoordinated efforts that consume the time and energy of both WFP staff and partners. In KIIs, seven WFP staff expressed concerns around an ‘ad hoc’ approach to SRSP, where they find themselves responding to a wide range of government needs without necessarily having technical or financial capacity to meet these expectations. Government partners emphasized that their resources to develop and adopt changes in procedures and tools are equally limited. Both staff and partners advocate for a more standardized approach to SRSP,

⁹⁰ It should also be noted that a change in government can be positive for WFP, but in either case, government changes are something that WFP needs to factor into its methodology on SRSP.

⁹¹ As, for example, in Saint Lucia where the World Bank instrument on eligibility assessment was not compatible with WFP’s Vulnerability Assessment. The World Bank tool was the one adopted.

where WFP's methodology and tools are clearer and more consistent. While not a comprehensive solution, the operational SRSP Guidance has made strides in addressing this concern (see Para. 141).

EQ 2.2 To what extent can the achievements propelled by WFP be sustained in time and which factors influence this?

Finding 10: Boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic response, the gains made to date in rendering national social protection systems shock-responsive are significant and varied. They are also fragile, and changes in government or national priorities or fiscal space can lead to backsliding. WFP's work on disaster risk financing may lead to longer-term sustainability. Opportunities exist for WFP to intervene at local/municipal levels to help enhance sustainability of SRSP systems, as well as to standardize approaches to anchor SRSP in national policies and procedures.

134. Social protection responses to climate-related shocks as well as to the COVID-19 pandemic tell a very similar story – that of temporary expansion of social protection programmes – both horizontally and vertically – with the support of WFP and donors, but with limited institutionalization of major systems changes. Two examples illustrate this point. The information collected on Peru highlight both the significance of gains made, as well as their fragility. As noted in paragraph 128, Peru CO has made notable strides in advocating for changes in the legal framework for SRSP, giving the MIDIS the institutional mandate to respond to emergencies and the norms required to adapt social protection programmes. The MIDIS and its programmes gained significant capacity during COVID-19, but this was not fully institutionalized and many of the staff with knowledge on SRSP tools and procedures have left this institution.

135. In Dominica, which has received extensive technical assistance from WFP since 2017, while three emergency support programmes were mounted by the national government with the support of WFP, few lasting changes have been incorporated into the operating procedures of the PAP. Indeed, during the most recent shock event, which was damage inflicted by the Eastern Trough, the government did not apply some of the tools and procedures which had been developed with WFP support during the COVID-19 response. According to key informants, in Dominica, the government changed within a day or two of the signing of the collaboration agreement with WFP. The new Minister was unaware of the advances made by WFP with the previous administration. This indicates that it takes time to consolidate and institutionalise system strengthening efforts.

136. Both examples of Dominica and Peru indicate that, while government changes can lead to SRSP processes becoming stalled or even backsliding, there may be missed opportunities to build sustainability through working at the local level. In the evaluation field work in Dominica, KIs suggested the local Village Councils, which already play a key role in distributing emergency cash transfers, could easily be strengthened to ensure grassroots disaster preparedness and response – this includes being provided with lifesaving equipment and emergency communications equipment. Having SRSP knowledge and skills at the local level could further enhance the sustainability of WFP's contributions. Some KIs suggested, however, that limited financial and human resources have constrained WFP's ability to further strengthen the capacities of local authorities.

137. WFP's work on SRSP in the LAC region highlighted the importance of financing as one of its six pillars. WFP's experience in establishing cash-based transfer mechanisms for government has offered many opportunities to explore different types of risk financing, including in the mainstreaming of financial assessment tools to consider financial inclusion, to digitize solutions, and to overall enable more rapid disbursement of funds before and in the aftermath of a shock.

138. In the Caribbean MCO, macro-level risk financing instruments represent an important finance solution that can support government's ability to provide social protection to the most vulnerable and food insecure populations directly through social protection programmes, in case of a payout. The MCO has been covering the cost of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) premium top-ups in Dominica and Belize and will soon be adding other countries. In these agreements, WFP contributes US\$100,000 to 200,000 in exchange for a policy that allows for a proportional payout that will go through

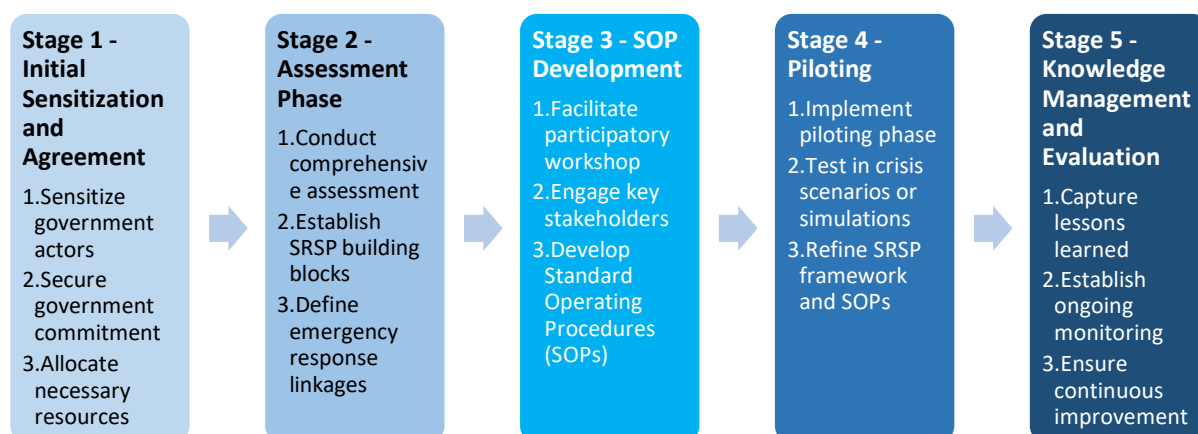
social protection system, and directly to households impacted by the catastrophic event. While this approach may be questioned by governments who do not receive a payout, it is also important to bear in mind that WFP's contribution to CCRIF, as a not-for-profit insurer, is in reality contributing to the viability of the entire risk insurance system. If not one country, then another country will benefit once a major event triggers a payout. In addition to contributing to the greater viability of the entire risk insurance system, these measures also serve to embed awareness about the role of social protection in responding to shocks within Ministries of Finance. Finally, it also serves as a springboard to facilitate disaster risk contingency and operational planning within various ministries.

139. In Nicaragua, similarly to the Caribbean MCO, WFP increased the Government of Nicaragua's macro insurance policy between the Government of Nicaragua and the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) by 7%. In October 2022, Hurricane Julia impacted nearly four million people in Nicaragua, triggering the sovereign insurance policy. As a result, CCRIF provided the Government of Nicaragua with US\$8.9 million in compensation. Of this amount, WFP directly received US\$640,000 to support the coordinated response with the Government of Nicaragua with priority on shock-responsive social protection programs. In response to the emergency, during the first weeks, priorities included food distribution through a second hot meal to school children of affected areas and take-home rations for their families for a 3-month period, as agreed upon with the government. Subsequently, WFP supported early recovery efforts with multi-donor funding, including the CCRIF payout, through the provision of agricultural packages containing fruit trees and by strengthening school vegetable gardens.

140. Establishing mechanisms to allow for the rapid disbursement of finance to governments is an effective and sustainable way for the public and private sector actors (government and insurance companies) to come together to offer inclusive risk finance for the most vulnerable and ensure sustainability (see below in terms of good practice of CCRIF top-ups). Meso-level instruments can also help protect aggregators, such as microfinance institutions, farmers cooperatives, community-based organizations, NGOs and international organizations so that they can provide rapid finance in the event of a major shock. These efforts can also allow for more advocacy in the creation of the enabling environment to support inclusive and sustainable risk finance approaches.

141. Finally, in KIIs, donors have also commented that it would strengthen WFP's work to develop a more "standardized" and predictable processes that can be shared and scaled to other countries in the LAC region. Taking positive examples, among these that of Dominican Republic and other countries, in 2023, WFP is implementing an operational SRSP Guidance that offers a clear methodology that WFP can use at country level to support governments to embed SRSP within existing social protection systems. This Guidance was conceived and designed in 2017 based on experiences with SRSP in the Dominican Republic at the government's request. After fine-tuning in response to various shocks in different countries the guidance adopted a more generic approach to facilitate its operationalization in different contexts. Currently it is being rolled out in 16 countries. It provides a complete package defining actors, actions and timeframes for each stage of a five-stage process (see Figure 19) designed to support government in developing clear SOPs, which are subsequently operationalized and tested through simulations exercises.

Figure 19. Five stages



Source: Own elaboration.

142. Presented as a tool and methodology, this guidance aims to tackle key gaps and challenges observed during the 2015-2022 period. It emphasizes securing political support and human resources from the government side to facilitate the institutionalization of key elements of SRSP through the formal adoption, testing, and adjustment of SOPs. While not positioned as a comprehensive solution, it offers a systematic approach. From WFP's perspective, it is considered cost-effective, with an estimated cost of approximately US\$200,000 to complete all five stages of the process within a six-to-eight-month window. However, as evidenced by the diverse contexts analysed during the evaluation, it is important to note that the cost-effectiveness of implementing this guidance can vary depending on factors such as contextual nuances and the time frame in which political and other resources can be mobilized.

EQ 2.3 What are the lessons and good practices that can be drawn from WFP's SRSP work in LAC?

Finding 11: The LAC experience with SRSP has generated a wealth of good practices that can be better shared across WFP operations. Good practices include: working with sub-regional institutions to strengthen capacity on SRSP, working with women directly for gender equality and financial inclusion, strengthening the “business process” for the routine social protection system, supporting government leadership and coordination between key SRSP actors, LAC development of evidence and strategy on Disaster Risk Financing, building resilience and economic recovery through Home-Grown School Feeding programmes, as well as investing in teaching and learning on SRSP to develop regional expertise.

143. While there are many to point to, the key lessons and good practices are presented in the following paragraphs.

144. **Strengthening capacities in sub-regional institutions on SRSP:** Collaborating with sub-regional bodies (CARICOM, CDEMA, OECS) in the Caribbean region enhances the overall capacity for shock-responsive social protection. This collaboration involves significant investments in building the capacity of these institutions to support member states in developing shock-responsive social protection. The focus is on strengthening not only the DRM function in member states, as evidenced by the investment in CDEMA, but also broader frameworks like the OECS, including the rights of migrants within the region.

145. **Empowering women in Haiti for financial inclusion:** Directly involving women in the design and implementation of cash transfer programmes in Haiti, supported by the Gates Foundation, illustrates the importance of gender equality and financial inclusion. The programme, Klere Chimen Social Protection, included consultations with women to understand barriers they face in accessing financial services. This initiative extends its impact by conducting targeted behavior change activities, including successful training sessions, tailored communication campaigns, and effective advocacy efforts toward national authorities and financial service providers. This comprehensive approach aims to create an ecosystem conducive to digital financial inclusion for women.

146. **Strengthening the “business process” for the routine social protection system in British Virgin Islands:** In British Virgin Islands, the Caribbean MCO seized the opportunity to work with the national government to strengthen the routine social protection system, as a first step before attempting to make it more shock-responsive. This included working hand in hand with government social workers on each step of the process, from information available about who is entitled to which social protection programme and the intake process, through to referrals to other complimentary services, through to the exit processes. This gives WFP very detailed knowledge of the complete operation of the system, and the ability to improve tools and procedures at each stage of the process. According to KIs, without this deep understanding of the social protection system as it normally operates, piloting shock-responsive measures would just be “tinkering around the edges”. By deeply diving into the business process of the regular social protection system in the British Virgin Islands, WFP is better placed to understand and recommend improvements for a seamless transition from a normal operating mode to a shock-responsive modality and strengthen overall preparedness.

“We applied UX design approaches - user journeys in particular - to understand women’s pain points throughout their journey with digital financial products and co-ideated on solutions to better meet their needs”- Key Informant

147. **Supporting government leadership and coordination between key SRSP actors:** As highlighted above, government leadership and coordination are a key enabler, and most governments can benefit from support to achieve harmonization between SRSP actors and partners. In the Dominican Republic, WFP has played an important role in coordinating and facilitating processes related to adaptive social protection since 2015-2016. At that time, the concept of SRSP didn’t exist. WFP introduced it to the government and other actors, which became interested. This led to the creation of the Adaptive Social Protection Working Group, involving various institutions including key government ministries and actors. Since then, WFP has been instrumental in coordinating the working group, bringing together government institutions, UN agencies and other key players such as the World Bank. In 2022, the group was specially convened to define the technical guidelines for the emergency bonus programme. WFP has also provided technical assistance, including the implementation of web mapping, to support data democratization efforts by SIUBEN.

148. **Identifying opportunities to strengthen SRSP at the local level:** In many cases, WFP is focused on centralised formal social protection programmes, and the role of local, community efforts to mitigate the impact of shocks can be overlooked. In Peru, during COVID-19, WFP jointly with INDECI provided logistical support for the delivery of food items to the *Ollas Comunes*, which are community kitchens that have played a vital role in helping the most vulnerable households overcome the economic shock. The network of *Ollas Comunes* plans to establish a contingency fund for future crises with electronic cards to be provided to the community kitchens for their procurement of food items.

149. **LAC development of evidence and strategy on Disaster Risk Financing:** KIs clearly indicated a high level of support for WFP’s work in supporting communities and governments with a range of risk financing tools, from macro- to micro-levels, anticipatory finance, and integrated risk management approaches. Evidence supports good practices in micro-level financing in El Salvador and Guatemala, and macro-level parametric insurance through the CCRIF top-ups by Caribbean MCO as explained in paragraph 138 and Nicaragua CO as presented paragraph 139.

150. **Building resilience through Home-Grown School Feeding programmes:** School feeding programmes play a dual role as they have been identified as key but often overlooked form of social protection and safety net which have been mobilised in the LAC region to help communities deal with shocks. At the community level, initiatives promote nutrition education and better eating habits and

encourage the diversification of production with a special emphasis on local crops. The localized approach minimizes environmental impact and involves communities, fostering programme sustainability and allowing for shock-responsive messaging. However, during climate-related disasters, the agricultural production supporting these programmes may be severely impacted. The vulnerability of local supply chain becomes evident, especially when agricultural seasons are disrupted by natural related disasters. Despite this constraint, the effectiveness of Home-Grown School Feeding programmes in responding to shocks, as demonstrated during events like the COVID-19 pandemic, underscores their pivotal role. The success of these programmes is evident, exemplified by WFP Haiti's experience to build their resilience and recover from multiple shocks and plans for implementation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as part of post-shock recovery efforts.

151. **Investing in teaching and learning on SRSP to develop regional expertise:** While WFP technical teams can support the capacity of governments, the sustainability of SRSP work within the Caribbean region (and elsewhere) requires a significant development of expertise within the sub-region to take-up key SRSP-related positions in government and a number of different regional institutions. Doing so requires the development of skills and capacities at the sub-regional level. Recognizing this, and building on the significant investment made in the Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean Handbook³, there are plans to develop an SRSP diploma programme with the University of the West Indies. The combination of the Handbook and the diploma programme, ensures comprehensive capacity strengthening and the cultivation of expertise among national professional, enabling practical application in government positions.

Finding 12: Further lessons emphasize the need for customized strategic digitalization solutions coupled with capacity development. The use of SCOPE as a technological tool underscores the shift towards collaboration and customization for national systems. Lessons drawn from the COVID-19 response underscore the importance of preparedness and flexibility in social protection systems, exposing gaps in coverage and the need for integrated approaches.

152. **Strategic digitalization for financial systems:** The strategic digitization of payment systems for financial inclusion requires a holistic approach that combines tailoring technological solutions to specific needs and aligning them with capacity strengthening. WFP's experience, exemplified in Haiti, highlights the importance of customizing digital solutions to meet the requirements of both recipients and local merchants, ensuring widespread acceptance. Collaborative efforts between WFP and the government in Haiti to distribute free SIM cards, train informal merchants, and address connectivity challenges illustrate the practical implementation of this lesson. This merged lesson underscores the necessity of a comprehensive strategy that integrates customization, collaboration, and capacity building to successfully implement digital payment systems and foster inclusive financial systems.

153. Tailoring technological solutions for sustainable national systems: the use WFP's software SCOPE (System for Identification and Registration of Beneficiaries) as a technological solution aimed at identification and registration of beneficiaries in humanitarian delivery has provided valuable insights. While the initial approach involved sharing this tool, WFP has learned that maximizing the benefits requires a nuanced strategy. Rather than a one-size-fits-all solution, SCOPE serves as a positive tool when used in collaboration with governments, recognizing the need for customization to meet specific national requirements. The use of this proprietary system and its experience in implementing large cash transfer programmes has provided WFP with a significant opportunity to consider digitalization processes and explore if this system could be used to strengthen national social protection system capacities. WFP's new role includes providing advisory services in risk identification, employing matrices to address both micro

“Barriers are now being tackled to make e-money the best option for reaching beneficiaries. By combining digital disbursements with preliminary on-the-ground sensitizations and strong eligibility screenings, WFP managed to successfully transfer payments to over 85% of beneficiaries’ wallets on its first attempt, a percentage much higher compared to similar programmes”. – Key Informant

and macro risks such as data privacy, ghost beneficiaries, or database manipulation. Furthermore, WFP actively assists in identifying suitable technology service providers, acknowledging the necessity of market-based contracting at a certain scale. This approach ensures a collaborative and adaptive use of technology, contributing to the long-term strengthening of national social protection systems.

154. **Essential Insights from the COVID-19 Response:** The response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the LAC region brought forth significant innovations in social protection, but it also revealed substantial challenges. Issues such as overcrowded payment points, difficulties for beneficiaries in adapting to new technologies, temporary failures of web platforms and call centers, and inadequate staffing underscored the complexities faced during this crisis. Two lessons stand out as fundamental. First, that systems preparedness is key, and most social protection systems in the region were not prepared for an impact of this magnitude. Second, that such preparedness includes the development of routine SP systems, processes and capabilities for delivery of regular programme implementation, as well as the capacity to meet the additional demand that arises in times of crisis and to ensure programme continuity. The difficulties encountered were mainly due to the need to design new policies, develop systems, mechanisms and protocols, modify regulations, etc., during the course of the emergency. As identified in the 2020 study of WFP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the LAC region,⁹² countries with existing social registries and information exchange mechanisms, coupled with protocols for natural shock responses, were better equipped to address the pandemic's challenges. The study emphasizes the need to not only develop protocols and capacities but also to instil flexibility in the social protection system to effectively handle crises of varying natures and scales, exposing the fragmentation of social protection systems during the COVID-19 crisis and the resulting gaps that left vulnerable populations, including indigenous communities, migrants, and others, without access to essential coverage.

2.3 EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

EQ3. WHICH MODALITIES OF ENGAGEMENT DEPLOYED BY WFP WERE THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT IN SUPPORT OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN SRSP IN VIEW OF DIFFERENT CONTEXTS?

Finding 13: Countries with pre-existing strong SP systems, have generally required more focus on normative frameworks and coordination to enable the connection between DRM actors; in countries where pre-existing SP systems less developed, WFP is using a range of entry points. Overall, coordination and alignment between actors with a clearly defined process is both efficient and effective.

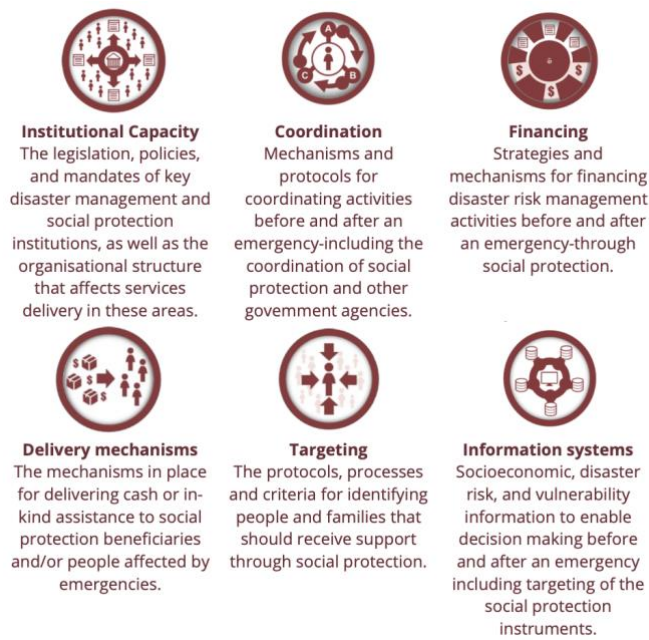
EQ 3.1 How has WFP adapted its strategy on shock-responsive social protection in LAC to different country contexts and types of crises or shocks?

155. Pillar 2 of the WFP's Social Protection Strategy in LAC (2019),⁹³ identifies six main modalities of engagement in SRSP: i. institutional capacity (including normative frameworks); ii. coordination; iii. financing; iv. delivery mechanisms; v. targeting; and vi. information systems. As demonstrated below, **WFP has made important contributions in all six areas**, and the effectiveness and efficiency of these contributions is highly dependent both on the context and the resources available to WFP.

⁹² Rodolfo Beazley, WFP (July 2020). La respuesta de protección social a la pandemia COVID-19 en América Latina y el Caribe.

⁹³ World Food Programme Regional Bureau Panama (2019). Social Protection Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Figure 20. Modalities of engagement on SRSP



156. In the evaluation sample countries, Peru had one of the strongest pre-existing SP systems. Here WFP focused on working on the legislative framework given that the SP ministry (MIDIS) did not have the institutional mandate to respond in emergencies. WFP supported upstream work and focused on building an enabling environment for SRSP. In Ecuador, WFP adopted two modalities of intervention, one through the SP ministry (MIES) for those citizens who were already included in the social registry, but also taking a direct delivery approach to include migrants and Ecuadorians who were not in the registry, in the COVID-19 response. In Haiti, key investments were made in the National Social Protection Policy, which firmly embedded SRSP at

the normative level, and also in the expansion of the national social protection registry. However, Haiti has continued to experience difficulties in bringing DRM and SP actors together, and it is hoped that 2023 will be the first year in which SP will be invited to participate in national disaster preparedness and response simulation exercises. On the other hand, Haiti CO was able to make important advances on cash distribution systems as delivery mechanisms by helping expand and register new users of e-money accounts, particularly among women.

157. Most KIs express concern that while the normative level is strong, Haiti is still not able to fully operationalize all that is contained in the policy due to the many challenges faced by the country. In the Caribbean MCO, the LAC strategy has been implemented using all six entry points, however it has also been adapted as it found new entry points through working with sub-regional agencies, which can play a key role in building effectiveness and efficiency by sharing model legislation and south-south exchange within CARICOM and the OECS member states. This did not happen **in Latin American countries so far due to multiple contextual reasons and as it was not prioritized**. Finally, in other contexts, according to KIs, COs have decided that it was most effective and efficient to stop prioritizing SRSP because the government was simply not open to it and therefore did not want to waste efforts on work that would not bear fruit.

Finding 14: WFP’s SRSP work has also proven to be an effective response to climate-related shocks, as well as public health emergencies, as demonstrated by WFP’s significant contribution to the COVID-19 response through technical assistance and funding support. To a much lesser extent, SRSP has been adapted to provide assistance to migrants, where partners and some donors see a significant gap in WFP’s efforts. This said, the Caribbean MCO and Colombia CO demonstrated the many opportunities that exist to support countries with model legislation and pave the way to operationalize universal social protection coverage for climate and other migrants.

158. The SRSP conceptual framework was largely conceived to address disasters by building bridges and complementarities between national DRM actors and mechanisms and national social protection programmes. However, as identified above, along the way, the COVID-19 pandemic put WFP’s assumptions to the test. Adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic included supporting governments in the region to develop and roll out emergency cash transfer programmes, including the piloting of a range of digital and e-money solutions across the LAC region, which were fully aligned with the urgency of the moment and the public health requirement to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by reducing person-to-person contact.

159. However, SRSP has proven a **less effective strategy for addressing the migratory shock** that hit the region in 2018 and 2019 in the form of migration flows. A range of KIs knowledgeable about WFP’s support to the migration response have expressed concern that WFP could be doing more to address the

hardships that migrants find themselves in various countries. One key factor hindering WFP's CCS work to strengthen national SP systems to respond to the migration crisis is that governments typically shy away from providing social protection benefits to non-nationals in an often already constrained fiscal space. The evidence suggests that only two COs were able to provide a significant response to mass migration, those being Ecuador and Colombia.

160. WFP's work in Colombia is a good example of strengthening SP information systems to enable improved shock-responsiveness. With the arrival of migrants in Colombia, WFP knew that actions to assist this population could not be limited to humanitarian responses but required responses with and through national institutions. In the Arauca pilot project, WFP responded with an alignment strategy. At the onset of the pandemic, the Government of Colombia launched an emergency SP programme for the population that did not receive any other social programme (Solidarity Income). This programme consisted of a transfer of 160 thousand Colombian pesos on two occasions (or a single transfer of 320 thousand pesos). WFP would implement this programme in a region with a high presence of migrants. To target the beneficiaries, WFP used the SISBÉN, the country's social registry that collects information on the population so that it can later determine whether they are eligible for different social protection programmes. Given that not all migrants complied with the legal status needed to be included in SISBÉN, along with the absence of a fixed address, the WFP intervention ended up benefiting more nationals (14,094 households) than migrants (393), making it clear that it was not a risk to host communities if migrants were included in the SISBÉN since they were also benefited. The evidence generated by WFP on this issue has increased the awareness of government personnel on the importance of including migrants into the SISBÉN, generating an environment more conducive for actions in this regard. This resulted in a more structural approach to institutional capacity strengthening through improvements in information management systems.

161. In the case of Ecuador, WFP provided value vouchers to vulnerable migrants. Because migrants in Ecuador are not registered in the social registry, they are not eligible to receive social transfers offered by the MIES and WFP therefore used a direct delivery modality to handout social transfers through implementing partners, including Plan International and HIAS. In this context, WFP tested innovative modalities such as electronic cards considering that migrant populations do not have the required legal paperwork to receive cash transfers through Western Union. In addition, WFP developed a Memorandum of Understanding with *La Favorita*, a private supermarket chain where migrant populations could purchase food items using the electronic card. For the time being, donor funding to WFP for the migration response is expected to continue. However, contrarily to Colombia, migrants have not been included in the national registry, which could pose challenges in addressing their needs through national SP systems should donor funding end.

162. Furthermore, the Caribbean MCO has contributed significantly to knowledge and evidence on SRSP in the context of inter-island migration. In December 2021, WFP and OECS published the document "Migration, Displacement and Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Eastern Caribbean"⁹⁴ which identifies a wealth of opportunities for WFP, OECS and other interested actors to collaborate in support of **universal access to social protection for those OECS citizens forced to displace due to climate change, extreme weather events and other shocks**. Within the context of the OECS normative framework and agreements that allow for the free movement and migration of OECS citizens between island states, there are many opportunities for WFP to advocate for and collaborate with other actors to make social protection entitlements transferable in case that shocks result in a migratory movement between OECS member states.

163. Finally, in 2021 a joint regional study carried out by WFP, together with UNICEF and IPC-IG, focused on understanding SP response pre- and post-COVID-19 to migration in LAC. This evidence was jointly used to encourage action at country and regional level.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ World Food Programme and Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. "Migration, Displacement and Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Eastern Caribbean" December, 2021

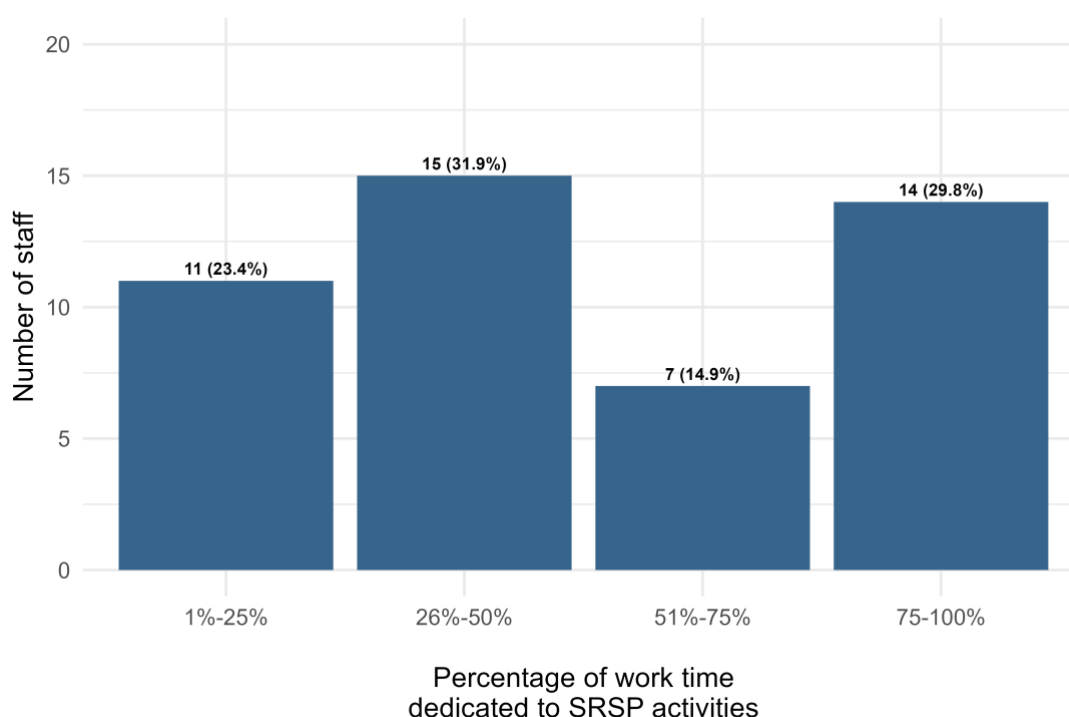
⁹⁵ See: IPC-IG, UNICEF LACRO and WFP. 2021. Research Report No. 58. [\[Online\]](#).

EQ 3.2 How many and which resources were deployed by WFP to implement the different elements for the SRSP framework?

Finding 15: There has been a substantial increase in the number of WFP staff that integrate SRSP elements in their work, including from units beyond social protection.

164. The resources utilized by WFP can be divided into two categories: human resources and financial resources. Regarding human resources and based on the Census of SP workforce in WFP, staff working on over 50% SP-related activities increased from 20 staff in 2021 to 50 in 2023 in RBP and COs. Two thirds of this staff are on short-term contract. The number of people working in the Social Protection and Nutrition in RBP (including both staff and international consultants) has remained consistent over the last three years covered by the evaluation: eight in 2020, nine in 2021, and eight in 2022. Detailed organigrammes of RBP staff for 2020, 2021 and 2022 can be found in Annex 12. Although the number has remained constant, there was a notable increase in the percentage of time dedicated to SRSP. According to a survey conducted among WFP staff (which includes information about staff in RBP and COs, both working on SP and in other units such as Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR), TEC, and Climate Change, 72% of the respondents (n=47) reported that they now spend more time on SRSP compared to five years ago or when they initially began working in this area. As detailed in Figure 21, most people (55.3%) working on SRSP do not dedicate more than half of their time to this area, which is expected since staff from other units have other matters to tend to. However, 29.8% of WFP respondents working on SRSP dedicate more than 75% of their time to this area.

Figure 21. Percentage of time spent working on SRSP by WFP staff in RBP and COs



Source: ET elaboration with data from the survey conducted for the evaluation.

Finding 16: There has been a clear investment in knowledge generation, events, training, and project seed funding to promote the SRSP agenda. At times, efforts have been made to establish a link between the different investments, enhancing their impact. One of the key enablers was the management-level prioritization to establish a consistent investment fund over several years.

165. One of the factors that accounts for the availability of resources to implement various initiatives in SRSP (as well as in Social Protection in general) was the Social Protection Investment Case and later PSA funds which represented a consistent multi-year investment in RBP from 2017 to 2021. These funds were the result of a managerial prioritization at the regional level, consisting of US\$ 400,000 annually. With these funds, it was possible to cover the costs of staff salaries, events, and studies. These funds were supplemented with additional resources, such as those acquired through Bottom-Up Strategic Budgeting Exercises (BUSBE) to finance activities during the pandemic, as well as funds from the School Feeding roll-out. During this period, documents and events were produced to present information on the intersection between SRSP and school feeding programmes.

166. There has been an RBP investment of approximately US\$685,254 in events (such as seminars, workshops, high-level conferences) and trainings on SRSP, not including the range of seminars and trainings carried out by the MCO.⁹⁶ This investment has been in events and trainings that mainly included topics related to SRSP (US\$325,537) or that were completely dedicated to SRSP (US\$359,717). Investment has been greater in trainings (US\$464,641) than in events (US\$220,613). Some of the most relevant ones were:⁹⁷

- Social Protection 4 Zero Hunger in 2016 (training): US\$129,104
- SRSP Seminar in Peru in 2017 (event): US\$106,613
- SRSP Seminar in Peru in 2019 (event): US\$60,000
- EPRI Trainings: US\$35,000

167. An interesting case is the investment in the Social Protection 4 Zero Hunger in 2016, a training programme on social protection for WFP staff. The training consisted of two rounds (English and Spanish) with participants from country offices, RBP and HQ. The objective of the programme was to enhance the capacities of the staff to promote hunger-smart, nutrition-sensitive, and shock-responsive social protection. This training had two knowledge course phases, and a final phase in which participants developed a project where they could apply this new knowledge. **Some of these projects were later financed by the Social Protection Innovation Fund**, a regional budget that provided grants to COs to support strategic SP initiatives at country-level. The fund provided seed money to projects that prioritized technical assistance to governments for SRSP in the total amount of US\$244,000 (see paragraph 44 for more details).

168. Furthermore, between 2016 and 2020, RBP invested US\$600,544 in contracting OPM to develop case studies and theoretical and conceptual documents in the field of SRSP. This investment is disaggregated by three phases (US\$171,264 in phase 1⁹⁸; US\$148,370 in phase 2; and US\$280,910 in phase 3) and an additional case study for Dominica (US\$20,340).

169. The BUSBE funding in 2022 amounted to US\$2,102,000, which financed activities in SP that included elements of SRSP. One such activity was the Social Protection Learning Journey, which an allocation of \$US80,000. This new training programme draws on the expertise of the previous EPRI training and is tailored to government counterparts as a mechanism for capacity strengthening. A similar training, aimed at WFP regional staff specializing in SP, also received a comparable investment.

⁹⁶ It was not possible to obtain detailed and comparable information related to SRSP from other COs.

⁹⁷ In other events, such as the School Feeding Seminar in Barranquilla (with an investment of US\$80,000, SRSP experiences were shared.

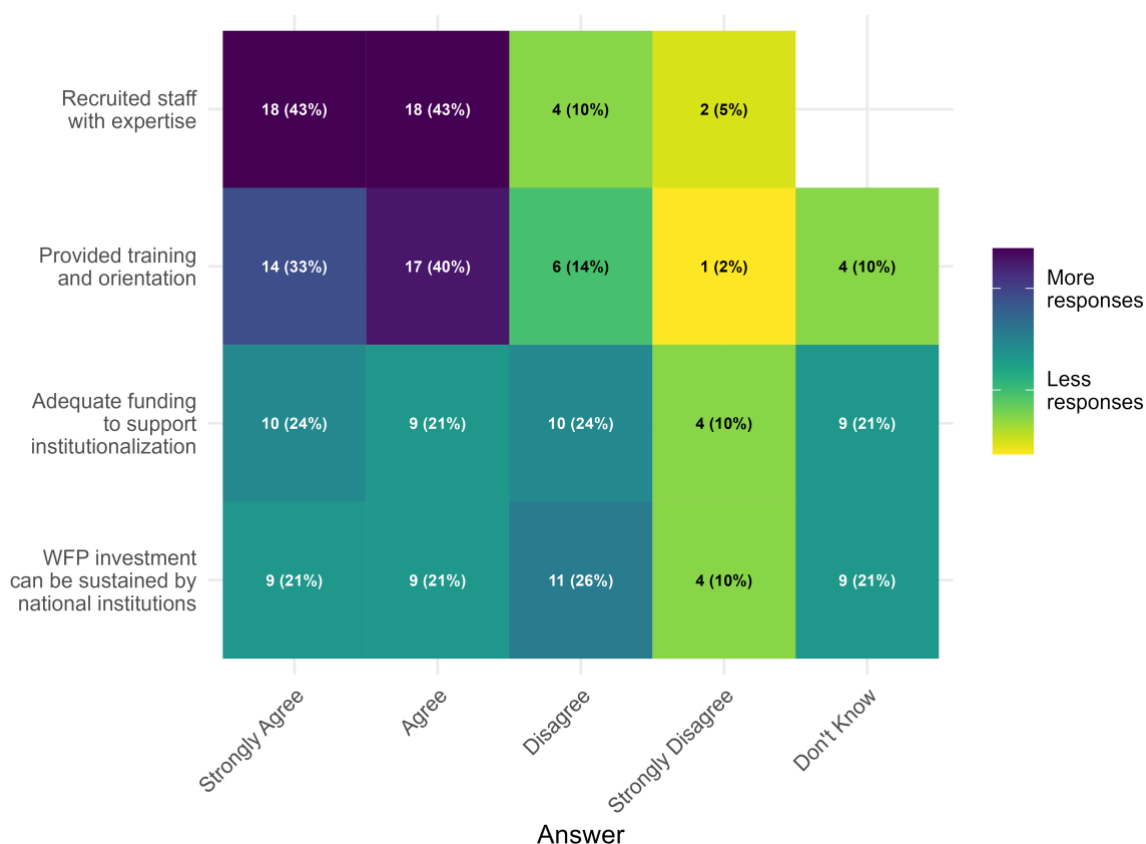
⁹⁸ There was a payment of \$US3,883 for staff in Ecuador to support a country study with OPM that is not included.

EQ 3.3 To what extent were the deployed resources adequate to reach the intended results (including to strengthen internal capacities of WFP)?

Finding 17: WFP has made significant strides in recruiting and training staff for SRSP activities. However, the nature of these contracts has resulted in many individuals not staying for extended periods, leading to the loss of institutional knowledge and limitations in developing long-term plans. There are also perceived gaps in the adequacy of financial resources and sustainability of investments, posing challenges for the effective implementation and institutionalization of SRSP.

170. WFP made efforts to deploy resources to reach the intended results in SRSP. The recruitment of staff with expertise to contribute to national systems strengthening received positive feedback within WFP with most survey respondents expressing agreement that **WFP effectively provided the necessary personnel** (87%). Even though women's perception remains positive regarding recruitment of staff, it is lower than that expressed by men: 76% vs. 100%. Additionally, the provision of training and orientation for staff involved in SRSP was generally perceived as adequate (77% in total, with a percentage of 60 among women and 93 among men). Overall, however, there was **less positive feedback regarding the adequacy of financial resources and the sustainability of WFP's investments in SRSP**. Only 45% of survey respondents considered that there was adequate funding to support institutionalization SRSP (with 36% among women and 67% among men), while only 42% considered that the investment can be sustained by national institutions. Detailed survey results are presented in Figure 22.

Figure 22. WFP efforts to deploy resources to reach the intended results in the area of SRSP



Source: ET elaboration with data from the survey conducted for the evaluation.

171. Moreover, the KIIs revealed a pressing need for WFP to strengthen its internal capacity-strengthening efforts. It was noted that **WFP relies on technical staff contracted on consultancy contracts, with limited opportunities for career development**. This has led to the departure of several skilled professionals, impeding the retention of valuable knowledge within the organization. This said, **drawing on consultants has also had advantages**, including that WFP has been able to tap into highly technical expertise that is not available within the organization. In addition, WFP has been able to attract talent relatively quickly – therefore increasing its agility to respond to shocks – as professional staff recruitment processes can take up to one year, considering that a position must first be opened internally before being advertised to external candidates. On the other hand, while WFP's mobility policy for staff members facilitates knowledge exchange, it has also created challenges regarding institutional memory and continuity. The loss or mobility of these profiles has sometimes severed long-term connections with governments, which are often established through personal networks. In addition to complicating long-term relationships with governments, the early departure of certain profiles has hindered the implementation of longer-term work plans, as it becomes impossible to plan beyond the short-term. Consequently, **there is a dearth of senior national staff members with the requisite expertise to advance the agenda effectively**.

172. While WFP demonstrated commendable efforts in recruiting and training staff, there is a clear gap in terms of financial resources and the sustainability of investments. The survey was answered by two donors, neither of whom agreed that WFP has built an investment case convincing them to support its work on SRSP. In general, KIIs considered that **it is challenging to convince donors to invest in capacity strengthening** since emergency responses that directly benefit affected populations are prioritized, along with strengthening efforts in regions with lower capacities worldwide. Additionally, WFP staff members considered in the interviews that **there is insufficient personnel in COs to address partnership-related matters, which hampers the dissemination of WFP's work and accessing further funding opportunities**.

173. In various KIIs, it was mentioned that **WFP is still primarily perceived as an actor that operates in the short-term in emergency response**, rather than being recognized regionally or within countries as an actor with the vocation to strengthen SP systems. This has limited the allocation of donor resources to the latter type of activities. Furthermore, according to several WFP KIIs, donors prefer to allocate resources directly to affected populations, further reinforcing this trend. However, there are cases where financing through IFIs was secured to strengthen social protection systems, relying on WFP's expertise. Specifically, projects aimed at strengthening social registries or information systems in Colombia, El Salvador, and Ecuador were funded by the World Bank. It is important to note that some of this funding was provided in the context of the pandemic to address its socio-economic effects. Nevertheless, as the impact of the pandemic diminished, there was a reduction in funding.

2.4 COHERENCE

EQ4. TO WHAT EXTENT DID WFP'S ROLE IN ADVANCING SRSP PROGRAMMING IN THE LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGION CONTRIBUTE TO WFP'S CORPORATE VISION AND APPROACH TO SOCIAL PROTECTION AND WIDER DISCUSSION ON THE SUBJECT?

EQ 4.1 To what extent has WFP's Regional Social Protection Strategy and work in LAC aligned with the Global Social Protection Strategy and contributed to internal strategies, initiatives, and tools at different levels across the organization? [internal coherence]

Finding 18: There is alignment between the regional and corporate social protection strategies on the use of social protection to address shocks; however, the corporate strategy has steered away from using the SRSP terminology. WFP's approach to this work, organizationally, has been influenced significantly by the RBP experience, though this is not the only factor. Still, the robustness and scale of the SRSP work in RBP has legitimized WFP's mandate in this area for other regions. Lessons learned have to some extent informed the work beyond LAC, although the sharing of experiences across regions remain ad hoc.

Alignment between the regional and corporate social protection strategies

174. There is a **good level of alignment between the Regional Social Protection Strategy (2019) and the Corporate Social Protection strategy** on the use of social protection to respond to shocks. Although the Corporate Strategy has explicitly avoided the use of the terminology ‘shock-responsive social protection’, this approach is clearly reflected in the twelve building blocks underpinning the corporate strategy. For example, as for the SRSP pillar of the regional strategy, the corporate strategy focuses on the delivery of social protection to those affected by crises and the use of anticipatory action. In line with RBP, the corporate strategy also emphasizes linkages between social protection and disaster risk management as well as the conduct of needs assessments in the event of a shock. Central to both strategies is also the application of evidence to advocate for the use of social programmes to support persons affected by shocks, although the **corporate strategy puts a greater emphasis on advocacy to influence national budgeting processes**. As explained in Finding 3, the ET found little evidence of WFP in LAC successfully advocating for greater the fiscal space and national budgets allocations for SRSP.

175. Several stakeholders internal and external to WFP expressed concerns about **confusion that the term ‘SRSP’ has generated**, especially considering that other organizations use different terminology to refer to the same type of work, including the World Bank (Adaptive Social Protection). When WFP started working on SRSP, the World Bank had not yet formalized its own terminology, with both terms developing in parallel, and it has since then been difficult for WFP to move away from using SRSP. Still, governments have had difficulties understanding the difference between the two, pointing to the importance of using a common terminology to foster a sense of trust that development partners are working together around a common issue. Multiple stakeholders also noted that the **term ‘shock-responsive social protection’ is often misunderstood**, especially when translated in Spanish and French, where the terminology conveys the false idea that social protection should focus solely on the aftermath of a shock, rather than on social protection systems that are responsive to shocks at any point in the shock cycle. This does not adequately represent WFP’s thinking in this area, which has increasingly been considering aspects of resilience and anticipatory action in its work around social protection. In certain cases, the ET observed there is government resistance to using the term SRSP. For example, in the Dominican Republic, the Government has formally adopted the terminology ‘adaptive social protection’, while “social protection adaptive to emergencies and disasters” is used in Peru.

RBP contribution to corporate level approaches and in other regions

176. WFP in Latin America and the Caribbean is often referred to as the region that has pioneered “shock-responsive social protection” in WFP. This said, several WFP stakeholders acknowledged that **WFP has been addressing shocks as part of social protection for many years**, although this work may not have carried such label. The evaluation team found that elements of shock-responsive social protection have been circulating across WFP COs globally, even though such work was not fully conceptualized into the approach that is known today as SRSP. In 2014, the Philippines CO experimented with SRSP in response to typhoon Haiyan, which came to the attention of RBP staff. It was in fact a junior EPR consultant who worked in RBP at the time and saw an opportunity to use this approach in LAC. Together, the consultant and the RBP SP team pitched this idea to RBP management, which showed openness and supported the development of a concept note for the Department for International Development from the UK Government (DFID at that time) for further funding to support this work. Similarly, several OPM staff were hired by WFP, thereby allowing SRSP expertise to permeate the organization. While some OPM staff had worked on the WFP dossier in LAC, others had not; therefore, **factors contributing to WFP’s thinking around social protection and shocks are multi-causal**. For example, the current Senior Adviser of Social Protection at WFP Headquarters is a former OPM staff, with her previous professional experience contributing to shaping thinking at corporate level. Stakeholders also recognized the important contribution that RBP has had in fuelling corporate discussions when developing the Corporate Social Protection Strategy in 2021.

177. The extent to which **WFP’s work in SRSP in LAC has influenced WFP’s Social Protection agenda in other regions has varied**, depending on country context. Regional social protection advisors mentioned that RBP’s work in strengthening national social protection systems can and has informed the thinking in some countries of Africa and Asia, but that social protection systems in some of the least developed

countries simply do not have the building blocks to learn from systems that are as advanced as those in LAC. Still, social protection advisors in other regional bureaus believe that the robustness and scale of WFP's approach to SRSP in LAC, including efforts to generate a strong evidence base of this work, has **contributed to legitimizing WFP's mandate in this space beyond LAC**. Examples of RBP's influence in other regions, include:

Building on the LAC experience with OPM, RBB undertook a series of country case studies, with an intent to generate evidence and identify key entry points for WFP's social protection work in DRM. There is also strong interest from RBB to replicate the SRSP Handbook that was developed by the Caribbean MCO for CDEMA.

- The MCO in Fiji has engaged with the Caribbean MCO to learn about the experience of macro-insurance and anticipatory action in the Caribbean. This has resulted in a workshop attended by 18 agencies of the Pacific Islands region.

The ET has also found evidence of a few governments wanting to learn from the LAC experience, namely through SSTC. In 2019, a Lebanese delegation visited the MIDIS in Peru. This contributed to the introduction of a mixed modality complementing existing e-vouchers with new cash transfers as well as the expansion of the overall cash transfer programme in Lebanon, although this SSTC did not specifically address SRSP. Similarly, SSTC between the Dominican Republic and Mozambique focusing on the use of anticipatory action is currently being planned. Also in the Dominican Republic, Supérate has recently received a request from the Ivory Coast through the World Bank, which wants to learn about the SIUBEN experience.

178. Experiences shared by the RBP at the Annual Social Protection Retreat and other events have also generated interest from other regional bureaus, which noted, however, that more detailed exchanges would be required for them to be able to apply lessons learned. For instance:

- The integration of migrants in the SIUBEN is of particular interest to regions like Eastern and Southern Africa, as well as West Africa, which also grapple with issues of forced displacement.

There exists, in West Africa, a regional financial institution similar to the CCRIF (the African Risk Capacity) which is looking into the use innovative and predictable financing. Although a payout has never been done, there is interest to learn from the experience of the CCRIF's payouts in Dominica and Nicaragua.

179. While RPB has deployed efforts to share experiences at annual retreats and webinars, regional social protection advisors mentioned that there is **limited space for more active engagement**, and that exchanges have been more ad hoc than systematic.

EQ 4.2 What has been WFP's value added vis-à-vis other SRSP actors in LAC in supporting better preparedness, response, and resilience to shocks through national systems? [external coherence]

Finding 19: WFP is recognized for its strong comparative advantage in cash-based transfers and in-kind assistance, climate-financing schemes, digitalization, and school feeding. Its value added also lies in its agility, logistics and supply chain capability, and capacity to identify vulnerable groups through vulnerability assessments. However, its local presence appears to have been utilized more to support the emergency response than to build the capacity of local authorities. WFP also has a natural comparative advantage in supporting linkages between social protection and DRM, which has been exploited to a varying extent across the region.

180. The value added most frequently recognized by external stakeholders is **WFP's strong expertise in cash-based transfers and in-kind assistance**. WFP has contributed to piloting a variety of CBT modalities, including cash and the use of e-vouchers, among others, for different types of crises and beneficiaries, including migrants who do not have access to the banking system. This has also entailed exploring the development of innovative, large-scale partnerships with financial institutions (e.g., Western Union), banks, and supermarkets. When asked about WFP's value added, survey respondents provided the highest scores for the distribution of cash and in-kind assistance in the event of a shock (see Figure 23).

181. The survey results also indicate **positive views regarding WFP's value added in climate financing schemes**, which has been widely corroborated by KIs not only in the Caribbean sub-region but also at headquarters and in other regions, where the interest to further exploit this niche is strong. In KIs, WFP's **comparative advantage in anticipatory action** was also emphasized by both internal and external stakeholders, who recognize that other organizations have not typically focused on this area of work. Both the survey and interviews also point to **WFP's value added in the digitalization of social protection systems and tools**.

"The digitizing of CDEMA's logistics system, and again in the supply chain, has been tremendous!"

-External stakeholder

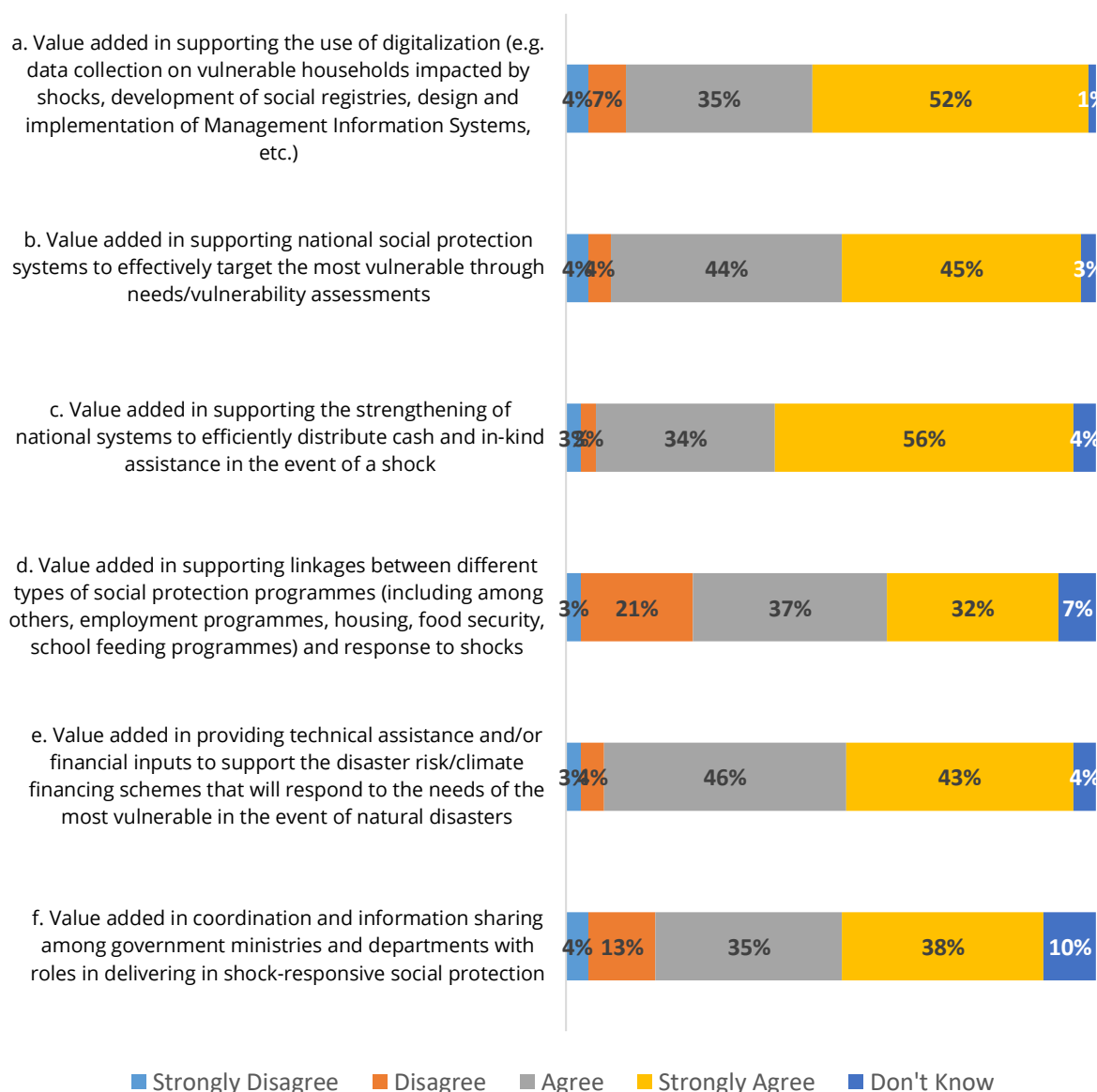
182. There is also strong consensus among consulted partners that WFP is **very agile and highly operational**, allowing it to quickly intervene in crises. WFP is notably recognized for its **strong expertise in supply chain management and logistics**, which has enabled it to provide advice to governments on the distribution of in-kind assistance in crises, for example, or on how to adapt the supply chain management and logistics of school feeding programmes to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. WFP has also provided significant capacity strengthening support to CDEMA's regional logistics hub.

183. Furthermore, WFP is recognized for its **strong local presence**, for example in Peru where it supported the community-based *Ollas Comunes*, and in Ecuador where it worked with civil society organizations to identify the needs of, and deliver cash transfers to, vulnerable Ecuadorian populations and migrants. This is consistent with survey results, where WFP's comparative advantage in **targeting vulnerable groups through needs assessments** is strongly recognized. However, interviews also indicate that **WFP's local presence is sometimes underutilized to support capacity development of local authorities** for a comprehensive government response to shocks. WFP has also established presence in small islands of the Caribbean, which is considered a value added for less decentralized organizations. For example, the World Bank does not have presence in many of the small Caribbean countries and has used data generated by WFP to inform its own work on Adaptive Social Protection in the sub-region.

184. WFP has also provided value added in **promoting linkages between social protection and other key sectors**, although survey results and interviews indicate that this has been underexploited in some countries. Organizations such as UNICEF and ILO have strong relationships with the social protection sector, but WFP is the only actor with strong linkages and **expertise in DRM**. KIs in multiple COs indicate that this has facilitated discussions between these sectors at country level to enable the use of social protection programmes to respond to shocks, though gaps remain in some countries. WFP has, for instance, promoted collaboration between **social protection and disaster risk management** in Peru and the Dominican Republic.

185. There is also a consensus among partners that WFP has a **well-defined niche in supporting school feeding programmes**, which builds on decades of WFP's work in the region. Linkages between these programmes and SRSP were not fully recognized in the early stages of WFP's work in SRSP, in part because they are often managed by Ministries of Education – apart from Peru and a few other countries. However, the use of school feeding programmes has been particularly effective at responding to large-scale crises (namely the COVID-19 pandemic) given their wide geographic coverage and speed. Evidence generated by WFP and OPM during the COVID-19 crisis has confirmed their linkages and solidified the organization's niche in this area. Survey results point to weaknesses in WFP supporting linkages with social protection programmes of other sectors. This can be explained by the fact that, while WFP has supported linkages with the education sector through school feeding programmes, **no such linkages were observed for other sectors such as employment, housing or health**.

Figure 23. Evaluation survey results on WFP Value Added in SRSP



Source: own elaboration.

Finding 21: WFP has engaged with other development partners around SRSP in LAC. At the regional level, WFP has played an important role in inter-agency working groups, though the absence of a formal coordination mechanism on SRSP is a limiting factor. The extent of UN collaboration has varied at country level, with WFP’s engagement in the Adaptive Social Protection Working Group in the Dominican Republic seen as a good practice. Collaboration with IFIs has also been increasing, with room to explore these partnerships more widely.

186. The evaluation team found evidence of **WFP engaging in partnerships with UN actors and the humanitarian community on SRSP**. For instance, before conducting the OPM case studies, WFP had already established a cooperation agreement with ECLAC to start exploring the concept of social protection in emergencies. ECLAC was then called upon to reflect on this in lectures and conferences spearheaded by WFP.

187. In 2021, UNDRR launched an initiative to create thematic groups on topics that are relevant for ECHO partners in the LAC region, with the intent to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction. One of the four thematic groups focuses on ‘shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing’, a topic that was identified because of its strong relevance for the region and lack of existing capacity. **WFP was asked to assume leadership of the group** because of its demonstrated thematic expertise. Members of this group, which include donors, UN agencies and civil society, identified a **common set of priorities** to address regionally, including **disaster risk financing and anticipatory action, SRSP within the climate change crisis, and the migration crisis**.

188. WFP in LAC has also played an active role in other inter-agency coordination mechanisms. For example, external partners note that WFP actively shared evidence for the Ecuador earthquake and other shocks in meetings of the **Cash Working Group**. WFP has also engaged with IOM and UNHCR as part of the R4V. However, external stakeholders noted that WFP is still seen as “a good implementer, but less of a convener and coordinator”, also adding that **a comprehensive regional coordination platform for SRSP in LAC is still missing**.

189. At country level, there are some **examples of good collaboration** between WFP and organizations like the World Bank and UNICEF. The Dominican Republic is the most salient example of inter-agency coordination achieved through the Adaptive Social Protection Working Group. For instance, in the Dominican Republic, the World Bank has worked on the development of guidelines and protocols for cash transfers while WFP has focused on digitalization of social cash transfer systems. Both organizations are currently working on complementary studies addressing adaptive social protection, with WFP focusing on processes and results and the World Bank on impact. National government-led coordination mechanisms have also been established in Saint Lucia. This case was recognized in the Joint SDG fund evaluation and has been critical to bringing the World Bank and multiple UN agencies together under the SP ministry's leadership. However, internal and external stakeholders have also pointed to the **lack of collaboration and duplication in some countries**, and that existing coordination mechanisms such as those observed in the Dominican Republic and Saint Lucia are generally lacking.

190. Finally, KIs indicate that RBP is increasingly establishing **partnerships with IFIs on SRSP**. For example, WFP was contracted by the Government in Haiti to implement a component of the Social Protection programme financed by the World Bank. In Peru, there are initial discussions for WFP to provide technical support on a US\$60 million World Bank loan to improve the social registry. However, the evaluation team also found room to further expand the partnership base with IFIs. In addition, the IDB has started working on adaptive social protection; while there have been discussions about establishing a formal partnership with the IDB on SRSP, this has not yet materialized and engagement with the bank is currently limited to a handful of countries. Considering the lack of funding for CCS in many countries, partnering with IFIs may represent an opportunity, especially on issues that require significant resources (e.g., social registry).

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

191. **Conclusion 1 - Results, Challenges and Opportunities in SRSP Implementation:** WFP's engagement in SRSP in the LAC region has shown positive effects in enhancing coverage, transparency, and financial inclusion, while contributing to the SDGs and broader goals such as ensuring a seamless transition between humanitarian and development programming (Nexus-type programming) as well as other development goals such as women's empowerment and improved education outcomes. WFP has clearly been able **to build on its comparative advantages which comprise its experience in CBT and in-kind assistance, climate-financing schemes, digitalization, school feeding,** as well as creating **links between social protection and DRM** government entities and partners.

192. The support provided during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated WFP's ability to mobilize resources and deliver emergency assistance to vulnerable populations. **As a result, affected populations could meet their food needs,** which was appreciated in many cases and mitigated the effects of shocks, though only for a short time. Especially in the case of prolonged crises such as COVID-19, many beneficiaries still found themselves in precarious conditions, highlighting the need to ensure linkages between SRSP and regular social protection. **Digital innovations have formalized distribution processes and facilitated financial inclusion for previously excluded groups.** Some notable good practices across countries include working with sub-regional institutions to strengthen capacity on SRSP, promoting gender equality and financial inclusion through engagement with women in Haiti, strengthening routine social protection systems in the British Virgin Islands, supporting government leadership and coordination in the Dominican Republic, developing evidence and strategy on Disaster Risk Financing, leveraging school feeding platforms for shock response, and investing in teaching and learning on SRSP to develop regional expertise and professional cadre. While WFP has made significant strides in SRSP, it faces both **external and internal challenges.** National political will and ownership have been the main drivers of success in SRSP, with governments leading and supporting the work and having a clear normative framework and coordination mechanisms in place. In the Caribbean, collaborating with **sub-regional institutions,** such as CARICOM and OECS, has facilitated sharing of good practices and technical assistance across Caribbean states. As such, internal barriers include factors like **staff turnover and resource constraints.**

193. However, these challenges also present opportunities for WFP to refine its strategies, strengthen collaborations, and advocate for more coherent and integrated SRSP normative frameworks at the national and sub-national levels. Finally, WFP's operational SRSP Guidance appears to offer a number of solutions to the challenges raised by stakeholders in the course of this evaluation. Despite the evident necessity to tailor SRSP support to different needs, **past work would have benefitted from a more systematic approach.** Considering the diversity and, at times, adverse contexts, this Guidance helps to address these issues by offering a methodology for **embedding shock-responsiveness within government normative frameworks and procedures** – elements that proved to be a key enabler for enhancing systems shock-responsiveness. **A clear area of opportunity for future engagement is related to advocacy for national budgets to be allocated to social protection, which is also in line with WFP's Global Social Protection Strategy (2021).** In this regard, the engagement in Disaster Risk Financing appears promising for contexts where such approach is relevant.

194. **WFP's Corporate Results Framework does not include indicators** that enable it to capture the short, medium and longer-term results of its investment in SRSP work in the LAC region or at the global level. As the operational SRSP Guidance and further work are rolled out, **a clear set of indicators becomes key to allow the short-, medium- and longer-term results to be captured and help build a strong case for donor investment in the future.** It is important to note that this is a common issue related to overall

WFP's engagement in SP work, which needs to be urgently addressed at the HQ level (Findings 3,4,5,8,9, 10, and 11).

195. **Conclusion 2- Harmonizing SRSP Strategies:** The evaluation findings indicate a good level of alignment between the Regional Social Protection Strategy (2019) and the Corporate Social Protection strategy, particularly in the use of social protection to address shocks and emergencies. Findings suggest that the use of competing terminologies – WFP uses Shock-Responsive Social Protection, and the World Bank uses Adaptive Social Protection, which are basically describing a similar set of concepts and intended outcomes – results in confusion, particularly for government partners. The term 'shock-responsive social protection' has been rightly avoided in WFP's corporate strategy and the essence of SRSP is reflected in the twelve building blocks supporting the corporate approach. The LAC region, particularly RBP, has played a pioneering role in advancing SRSP within WFP, influencing the organization's thinking and approach at corporate levels, yet many WFP regional bureaus and COs are unfamiliar with these experiences and good practices. Moreover, WFP as the first UN organization within the region to be actively engaged in and investing in SRSP, has meant that today it is recognized by partners as a thought leader and innovator, not only on SRSP per se, but a range of other related areas, including Disaster Risk Financing and Anticipatory Action. The experiences and good practices from LAC have had varying degrees of influence on other regions, with some adopting and replicating successful approaches, while others face challenges due to differing country contexts and system capacities. The evaluation team found that there have been missed opportunities for Headquarters to further promote exchanges among regions. (Finding 12).

196. **Conclusion 3 - Evidence-based leadership, relationship-building and coordination:** WFP's evidence generation efforts have played a significant role in **raising awareness** on social protection and shock-preparedness and response, leading to **improved coordination and partnerships** with governments and other key stakeholders. Through the development of OPM country case studies and national and regional learning events, WFP has successfully engaged diverse stakeholders, fostering interest in shock-responsive social protection. These evidence generation initiatives not only facilitated the **identification of gaps and opportunities in social protection system strengthening** but have also played a vital role in **convening and relationship-building between social protection and disaster risk management** actors, as well as in some cases with Ministries of Finance, fostering relationships with and between government stakeholders, and establishing WFP's position as a thought leader and facilitator in advancing the concept of SRSP. In recent years, WFP has increasingly been engaging in partnership with IFIs in some countries, and there are opportunities to continue building on these partnerships across the region. In addition, findings suggest that as more stakeholders – in particular UN agencies, World Bank and other IFIs – have begun to engage in SRSP, there is a growing **demand for more coordination and alignment between partners**, in order to foster synergies and avoid duplication, redundancies, and conflicting demands on the time and resources of government partners. Supported by positive experiences in several countries, government partners and other stakeholders are looking to WFP to play a stronger role in coordination and harmonisation of initiatives to avoid overloading government partners (Findings 1, 5 and 10).

197. **Conclusion 4 - Organizational adaptability and capacity strengthening:** There has been a substantial increase in resources deployed by WFP for SRSP activities, including staff recruitment and training, knowledge generation, events, and project seed funding. In addition, there is evidence of an increasing number of WFP staff integrating SRSP elements into their work, even from units beyond social protection. This shift indicates **WFP's organizational adaptability** and its recognition of the growing importance of SRSP. Furthermore, substantial WFP's investments in knowledge generation, events, training, and project seed funding underscore its commitment to capacity strengthening and promoting the SRSP agenda. These investments, combined with strategic collaborations, have enhanced the impact and reach of SRSP initiatives. However, the evaluation team has found that a trade-off has been the use of a high percentage of short-term consultancy contracts, rather than fixed-term staff, resulting in high staff turnover. The evaluation team identified as key the **need to strike a balance between retaining staff with the right skills and seniority, while ensuring financial sustainability**. Existing examples in Colombia, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Haiti, among others, demonstrate the **importance of tapping into senior national professional staff to support country capacity strengthening and strategic partnerships, and to promote an enabling environment for social protection, including SRSP**. At the same time, drawing on consultants has some advantages, including the ability to access highly qualified expertise in a very niche field such as SRSP, and being able to do so relatively quickly compared to

recruitment of fixed-term staff. As WFP further develops its workforce to support its SRSP work, it will be important to carefully consider an appropriate mix between national professional staff, consultants and international professionals (Findings 13 and 16).

198. **Conclusion 5 - Integration of gender and inclusion towards enhanced effectiveness:** WFP's SRSP engagement has made efforts to promote gender equality, equity, and inclusion of indigenous populations, people living with disabilities, migrants, and socially marginalized groups. While there have been positive strides in some areas, there are still opportunities to improve gender-focused and inclusive initiatives, to systematically consult women's organizations, and to consider the specific vulnerabilities of various groups in SRSP. **Tailoring assistance and expanding partnerships with diverse organizations can enhance the overall impact of SRSP initiatives in promoting inclusion and addressing the needs of vulnerable populations across countries.** WFP's SRSP engagement has been effective in responding to different types of shocks across diverse country contexts in LAC, to a large extent expanding coverage and inclusivity in social protection measures. Still, there is need for more **systematic and consistent inclusion of affected groups**, including persons with disabilities. The evaluation team identified room for improvement in effective two-way communication with the beneficiary population about the modalities and entitlements of a planned SP response to shocks. Collaborating with other organizations and enhancing monitoring and evaluation tools can improve effectiveness in this regard. This is particularly true for instances where WFP provides direct assistance, as inclusion rests directly within its sphere of influence, whereas in cases where WFP provides technical assistance, this responsibility lies with governments. There are clearly **opportunities for WFP to further advocate for the importance of inclusive approaches to SRSP.** (Findings 3, 5, 6).

3.2 LESSONS LEARNED

199. The LAC experience with SRSP has generated a wealth of learnings that can be better shared across WFP operations. Although some key lessons learned were already explored in-depth in section 2.3 above, this section summarises the overarching lessons learned that can be applied by WFP at the regional and global levels.

200. **Lesson 1. Build on a solid foundation:** SRSP work needs to rely on the strengthening of national SP systems to be effective and sustainable, or at least on a solid understanding of the national system. The evaluation has highlighted cases, such in British Virgin Islands, where WFP's investment in strengthening the routine delivery of social protection, outside of an emergency, provided a strong basis for enhancing shock-responsiveness later on. On the other hand, piloting shock-responsive measures without a solid understanding of the workings of the routine social protection system may lead to missed opportunities and lack of sustainability.

201. **Lesson 2. WFP's Investment in SP system strengthening takes time to operationalize and show results:** Unlike humanitarian programming which progresses at a rapid pace, WFP's SRSP work happens at a slower pace against the backdrop of government's competing objectives, interests, actors and priorities. Changes in governments, leadership and policies can up-end months of investment. WFP needs to anticipate and plan for the high likelihood of having to respond to such changes in its approach and guidance for SRSP.

202. **Lesson 3. Working through regional standard setting bodies:** Lessons learned from the experience of the Caribbean MCO in working with sub-regional institutions to strengthen capacities on SRSP, suggests that regional institutions can be an effective and efficient mechanism for building capacity, normative frameworks (model legislation) and standard setting on SRSP. This is something that RBP can explore further at the LAC level and that can also be explored by WFP regional bureaus in other regions.

203. **Lesson 4. Coordination is key:** As WFP's thought leadership and other factors have led to more and more actors engaging in SRSP, coordination becomes more important. Most governments benefit from support with coordination to achieve harmonization between the range of actors involved in SRSP, and also

between the government and partners. WFP contribution can be strengthened by focusing on coordination, and by supporting the institutionalization of coordination platforms.

204. **Lesson 5. Engaging governments to support ownership:** Advocacy efforts that clearly demonstrate the advantages of responding to shocks and emergencies are key to placing the topic on the agenda of different partners including governments. Furthermore, effective engagement with national partners may also consist of testing new approaches (e.g., payment systems) and providing evidence on their effectiveness and efficiency. Addressing the emerging needs of the partners is a powerful approach to fostering ownership enhancing uptake of new solutions. This has proved valuable in many country contexts including for example Peru, where the WFP CO has conducted additional studies in collaboration with both the MIDIS and INDECI, while testing new approaches – such as the use of electronic cards in COVID-19 – and feeding back the results to the government for their uptake.

205. **Lesson 6. Diversify opportunities to strengthen SRSP through varied institutions, programmes and at the local level:** Although in many cases, WFP is focused on supporting flagship, formal, non-contributory social protection programmes, the evaluation has identified lessons about the importance of diversifying this approach. The role of local, community efforts to mitigate the impact of shocks can be further strengthened. WFP's field presence, satellite offices and operational capacity can be working to ensure sustainability of SRSP measures by enhancing shock-responsiveness at the local level through community-level preparedness and response mechanisms in contexts where this is relevant. Similarly, school feeding programmes have been demonstrated to be key, but often overlooked, form of social protection and safety nets that can be further mobilised to help communities deal with shocks.

206. **Lesson 7. Address gender and inclusion aspects of SRSP during programme design, and in a participatory way:** An overarching lesson learned is that while gender and inclusion did not figure as part of WFP's initial conceptual framework on SRSP in the LAC region, with experience gained in operationalising SP system strengthening, these have emerged as key variables that WFP is consciously taking into account. This starts at the outset of designing support to SP systems, through consultative and participatory assessment techniques where WFP teams are gathering information on how CBT systems can be designed to best meet the needs of women and men, girls and boys at different points in their lifecycles – including children, migrants, the elderly and those with disabilities, and how to overcome institutional and systemic barriers affecting access to SP programmes and CBT by indigenous and rural people. From the experience in Haiti and other countries, lessons have been learned on how to support women heads of households and women as traders and workers in the informal sector to diversify cash delivery methods to reach vulnerable people before, during and after emergencies and crises. Finally, WFP and national governments are **never just delivering cash or food; they are contributing to shaping local economies and who they work for**. By focusing on gender and financial inclusion from the outset, WFP is better able to ensure that those who are marginalized and economically vulnerable are receiving information and assistance that can not only off-set the impact of emergency but can further empower them and expand their opportunities in a regular, stable setting as well.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

#	Recommendation	Recommendation grouping:	Responsibility	Other contributing entities (if applicable)	Priority	By when
Strategic recommendations						
	<p>Recommendation 1. WFP should establish more structured platforms for knowledge sharing and exchange both internally among WFP country offices and regional bureaus as well as externally among partners, while also providing support to strengthen capacities in less-advanced regions with a view to promote their uptake of lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1 Internally, regular activities (e.g., workshops, webinars) should be organized to facilitate in-depth discussions and learning from the experiences of successful SRSP interventions in different regions and among country offices. Sharing of material and exchange between staff should be encouraged by the Regional Bureaux and HQ. • 1.2 WFP should actively support knowledge management to capture lessons learnt and good practices related to supporting SP systems including ensuring that sufficient budget is allocated to knowledge management at different levels. • 1.3 Recognizing that some of the least developed countries may lack the SP system foundational building blocks, WFP at HQ level should provide systematic opportunities for regional cross-learning, inter-regional support and technical assistance to strengthen their capacities incrementally prior and/or in parallel to supporting the shock-responsiveness of these systems. Lessons from LAC could be systematised, adapted and tailored to the specific contexts of each region, considering their existing systems and capacities. 	Short to medium term	HQ SP Unit (PROS)	RBP, other RBs and COs	High	Q4 2024

<p>Recommendation 2. WFP should continue positioning itself as a key partner to national governments within the realm of SRSP, as part to its broader contribution to SP system strengthening, for better food security and nutrition outcomes. Building upon the existing SRSP roadmaps and CSPs, WFP COs, working closely with governments, should persist in revising well-defined strategies with measurable objectives in SRSP based on lessons learned to date, while maintaining flexibility to address emerging needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.1 WFP should continue adopting a proactive role as a coordinator and facilitator in SRSP initiatives, fostering collaboration among key stakeholders, including UN agencies (UNICEF, WB, etc.), NGOs, and IFIs at both regional and country levels. WFP should build on the existing regional and country coordination platforms for SRSP and advocate for establishing them with strong national leadership where they are absent. These platforms should also facilitate agreement on common terminology among actors to prevent confusion and align with the terms used by governmental actors. • 2.2 WFP should continue strengthening its role as a thought leader in SRSP, in LAC and globally. In doing so, it should continue to spearhead regional and international conferences, high level South-South collaboration events, in partnerships with other UN agencies and relevant stakeholders to enhance the impact and reach of these initiatives. • 2.3 The COs should continue developing country-specific strategies and priorities for the strengthening of SP systems, capitalizing on insights derived from the evaluation’s country case studies. These strategies should be developed in close collaboration with governments and key partners, recognizing the need for adaptability and flexibility in modality to best match the unique country context and priorities for strengthening SP systems based on the value-added, mandates and available resources. The CSP’s formulation phase provides an opportune moment for engaging in participatory consultations at the country level and embed SRSP in strategic planning processes. • 2.4 RBP should continue supporting further roll out of the existing operational SRSP Guidance developed by HQ. It should be used as a menu, adaptable to each specific context, rather than as a rigid kit, supporting Cos in the development and implementation of their SRSP strategies. 	Medium to Long term	RBP	COs and HQ, Governments, UN agencies	High	Q4 2024
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<p>Recommendation 3: WFP should continue generating robust evidence on its engagement in strengthening SP systems and contribute to enhancing the monitoring and evaluation capacities of these systems. It shall further develop its ToC and performance measurement framework (PMF) for SP, describing the key milestones and how WFP will know when these are met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1 WFP should develop a ToC that identifies key outcomes and impact pathways, drawing on SP activities undertaken by a range of country offices. Based on this ToC, develop a PMF with SMART indicators for each outcome. This framework should build on the existing guidance and the WFP Corporate Results Framework (CRF). The ToC should equally lead to clarifying and harmonizing terminology within WFP. • 3.2 WFP should continue systematically generating evidence and supporting national monitoring and evaluation systems to allow to better understand how both national governments and WFP's investments in strengthening SP lead to changes at different levels, including related to gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as further identify possible unintended effects (positive and negative) to ensure accountability to the populations most in need and at risk of marginalization. 	Short to medium term	HQ SP Unit (PROS)	RBP RAM, and other RBs	High	Q4 2024
Operational recommendations					
<p>Recommendation 4. Recognising the significant investment to date in internal and external capacity strengthening in SRSP as part of the broader capacity strengthening efforts on SP in LAC (Caribbean SRSP e-learning, EPRI training among others) and to ensure sustainability of investments in SP systems, WFP should continue these efforts internally and externally. Further capacity development should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.1 Training and support to WFP personnel among others related to: i) opportunities for fostering longer-term collaborations with governments including alignment between SRSP work and the CCS Framework, tools and approaches; ii) disaster risk financing (see recommendation 6 below); iii) gender-sensitive and gender-transformative approaches and strategies to reach and include marginalised groups within SP systems. • 4.2 Sustained capacity development with partners and governments through training partnerships with universities, south-south cooperation, and conferences. • 4.3 In contexts where it is relevant, WFP should focus on increased engagement and capacity strengthening at sub-national level, to ensure sustained availability of trained personnel familiar with shock-responsive SP at these levels, promoting long-term sustainability and furthering the integration of SRSP into national-level advocacy, policies and procedures at different levels of governance. 	Medium to Long term	RBP in coordination with COs (For 4.3, RBP, in collaboration with COs)	Government s, local authorities	Medium	Q4 2024 (For 5.3, Q4 2025)

<p>Recommendation 5. The evaluation recognizes the innovative and pioneering nature of WFP’s investments to date on disaster risk financing (DRF). WFP should continue to expand its evidence generation and investments in disaster risk financing where it is relevant, to contribute to sustainable financing models of response to shocks through strengthened SP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.1 WFP should generate evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, about the usage and potential benefits of these mechanisms at institutional and individual level (for women and men, and obstacles to engagement experienced by possible marginalized groups). • 5.2 RBP should support COs to carry out a mapping of existing DRF mechanisms available at the individual, national, and regional levels, building on existing lists and identifying the finance mechanisms that are linked to SRSP, as well as with climate change issues. This mapping should identify current gaps in the DRF landscape and areas where WFP or other partners can bring added value from which greater investments could be obtained. This evidence shall be used for advocacy and training. • 5.3 WFP’s efforts in risk financing should be continued and expanded taking a comprehensive approach to increased engagement in the sector. In this continuation and expansion, WFP should be advocating for a risk-layered approach in its work in DRF including ensuring that the impacts on humans are prioritized by governments in their allocations after emergencies and for anticipatory action, as well as that resources are allocated to actions that support vulnerable impacted persons. 	Short to long term	RBP (SP & Nutrition Team and Climate Change Team)	HQ SP, CC, EPR and RAM teams, and COs	Medium	Q4 2024
<p>Recommendation 6. Recognizing its innovative contribution in digitalization processes, WFP should continue exploring opportunities in supporting governments of the region in to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of SP delivery. Particular emphasis should be placed on registries, monitoring, payment and delivery systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.1 To ensure success, WFP should prioritize technical assistance, capacity strengthening and advocacy for the adoption of digital solutions by governments, beneficiaries, and partners, including local merchants. The development of these digital solutions needs to be tailored to specific governmental needs and demands, building on existing national systems. WFP should adopt a strategic approach, involving testing and piloting new mechanisms and collaborating with a diverse range of providers to address the needs of government SP systems. Previous experiences in digitization must be contextualized to national realities, considering capacity gaps at all levels. In this work, WFP should continue to invest in evidence generation and monitoring of the opportunities and barriers to access and inclusion faced by women and men, as well as particular vulnerable groups. 	Medium	RBP (SP & Nutrition Team in collaboration with TEC)	COs	Medium	Q4 2024

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.2 In any digitization strategy, and/or support provided to governments in digitalizing processes and systems, WFP must consider the inclusion and access of both women and men, and populations with limited connectivity. Planning for digital solutions must also provide for offline benefit options for specific cases where power or internet may be cut off. WFP could take advantage of its working relationships with telecommunication companies and relevant financial service providers to expand coverage in rural areas with limited connectivity. 					
<p>Recommendation 7. WFP should seize the opportunity when assisting governments in strengthening SP systems and emergency preparedness and ensure that it also contributes to enhancing inclusion, gender-sensitivity and potentially their transformative attributes. This will allow to continue building on its strategic thinking on gender sensitive SP from an intersectional perspective, ensuring the needs of the most vulnerable populations are systematically considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.1 Expand on the gender-sensitive SP paper to provide more clear and actionable technical guidance for country offices on gender-sensitive approaches to SRSP, including analysis and identification of persons who may be left out. • 7.2 In line with the above, WFP should identify a clear strategy for how to engage with the governments on gender, inclusion, and intersectionality. WFP could consider conducting policy and institutional capacity analyses at the country-level, defining the support required to assist governments in ensuring the needs of the most at-risk and vulnerable to shocks are considered. This may include, for example, advocating for updating out-of-date poverty data through an intersectional lens and considering the prolonged nature / effects of such crises. • 7.3 To mitigate any potential unintended negative effects on social cohesion and confidence in national SP systems, WFP should prioritize information campaigns, community feedback mechanism, and social behavior change communication strategies to support two-way communication and ensure transparency and understanding of the assistance provided. This will help build trust and avoid perceived preferential treatment for certain groups. 	Medium	RBP	n/a	High	Q4 2024

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. SUMMARY TERMS OF REFERENCE

Link to full ToR: [ToR RBP SRSP Evaluation Final.pdf](#)

Rationale

The evaluation of Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is driven by several reasons. First, SRSP has gained importance due to its alignment with years of policy engagement and technical assistance in social development and risk management. The COVID-19 pandemic showcased SRSP's adaptability beyond conflict and climate-related shocks. The evaluation aims to achieve these objectives:

Understand the outcomes of implementing the SRSP framework, considering the initial study in 2016.

Assess direct implementation of WFP's shock-responsive interventions in social protection programmes in terms of speed, coverage, adequacy, and value.

Identify enablers and barriers, both internal and external to WFP, that impacted progress and the establishment of an evidence base.

The evaluation will inform future WFP engagements in the LAC region for building social protection systems responsive to shocks and will contribute to the global understanding of SRSP. The evaluation pursues dual objectives of accountability and learning, emphasizing gender equality, diversity, human rights, and equity. Stakeholder analysis includes a range of WFP internal and external stakeholders, ensuring the involvement of beneficiaries, including marginalized groups. The evaluation encompasses WFP offices, regional bureaus, headquarters, National Governments, UN entities, and partner organizations. These stakeholders seek alignment with priorities, harmonization with partners' actions, and achievement of expected results in the SRSP initiatives.

Scope

The evaluation's scope encompasses WFP's activities related to shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region from January 2015 to December 2022. The evaluation will conduct a comprehensive desk review and initial briefings to outline major activities across different countries and types of initiatives. This overview will guide the selection of case studies during the data collection phase. The evaluation will primarily focus on 12 WFP country offices, the Eastern Caribbean multi-country office, and will also consider work in non-presence countries.

While a significant portion of WFP's SRSP work concentrated on enhancing national systems, the evaluation will delve into the specifics of direct implementation, including various beneficiary groups such as men, women, children, indigenous populations, and individuals with disabilities.

Methodology

The evaluation's methodology is both formative and summative approaches, aiming to inform both strategic decisions and learning. The key questions to be addressed shall be refined in a detailed matrix during the inception phase. Gender, equity, and inclusion considerations in interventions design and alignment with WFP commitments shall be analyzed. The methodology shall be participatory and employ mixed methods,

including desk review, surveys, interviews, and participatory workshops. It shall employ outcome mapping and contribution analysis for effectiveness measurement, guided by specific evaluation criteria.

The methodology should focus on ensuring participation from diverse stakeholder groups, including men, women, children, indigenous populations, and persons with disabilities. It shall employ innovative approaches, such as the EvaluVision methodology, and aim to overcome access limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It shall yield practical strategic and operational recommendations, considering changing contexts.

The methodology shall emphasize impartiality and bias reduction through triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data sources. It should map WFP's work during the inception phase and later conduct in-depth studies in 7 to 8 country offices, considering richness of experience and geographical diversity. The approach will include producing brief case study reports for each country.

The methodology is expected to underscore gender and diversity sensitivity, outlining how perspectives of diverse groups shall be sought and integrated throughout the evaluation process. It shall highlight the importance of collecting disaggregated data by sex, age, and disability status. Gender and equity considerations shall be woven into findings, conclusions, and recommendations, emphasizing lessons and challenges for gender-responsive work.

ANNEX 2. TIMELINE

This annex presents the detailed timeline for the evaluation, from inception to report writing and dissemination. Additional deliverables agreed with EM have been added to the timeline (country and thematic case studies).

Phases, deliverables and timeline	Key dates
Phase 2 - Inception (6-Jan to 30 March 2023)	
Brief core team	6-Jan-2023
Desk review of key documents	8-28 Jan 2023
Inception interviews	16- 27 Jan 2023
Draft inception report	30- Jan to 10 Feb 2023
Quality assurance of draft IR by EM and REO using QC, share draft IR with quality support service (DEQS) and organize follow-up call with DEQS	11-22 Feb 2023
Review draft IR based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	23 Feb to 6-Mar 2023
Share revised IR with ERG	6-Mar 2023
Review and comment on draft IR (ERG)	6-15-Mar 2023
ERG presentation and IR discussion workshop	16-Mar 2023
Consolidate comments	17-Mar 2023
Review draft IR based on feedback received and submit final revised IR	17-23 Mar 2023
Review final IR and submit to the evaluation committee for approval	24-27 Mar 2023
Approve final IR and share with ERG for information	30-Mar 2023
Phase 3 – Data collection (3 Apr – 8 June 2023)	
Data collection Phase 1: Desk review and virtual KIIs/field work	3-Apr to May 19 2023
Data collection Phase 2: Survey implementation	22 May- June 19 2023
Regional debrief	June 15 2023
Phase 4 – Reporting (9 June – 21 Aug 2023)	
Draft evaluation report	June 16 to 20 Jul 2023
Draft country/thematic case studies	20 Jul to 4 Aug
Quality assurance of draft ER by EM and REO using the QC, share draft ER with quality support service (DEQS) and organize follow-up call with DEQS	21 Jul – 4 Aug 2023
Review and submit draft ER based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	7 Aug to 21 Aug 2023
Circulate draft ER for review and comments to ERG, RB	22 Aug 2023
Review and comment on draft ER (ERG) and case studies	22 Aug to 21 Sep 2023
Internal and External stakeholder learning and recommendation validation workshop	20 Sep 2023
Consolidate comments received	22 Sep 2023
Review draft ER based on feedback received and submit final revised ER	25 Sep to 2 Oct 2023
Review final revised ER and submit to the evaluation committee	2 Oct – 5 Oct 2023
Approve final evaluation report and share with key stakeholders for information	15 Oct 2023

ANNEX 3. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The Inception phase has allowed for the identification of a wide range of stakeholders – both internal and external to WFP – as shown in Figure 24.

Internal to WFP: At the level of RBP, HQ, and Cos, there are several technical sections that have collaborated on initiatives related to SRSP, and these have specific interests in demonstrating what has gone well, where there is a growing demand for their services, and how internal and external collaborations can be improved. Senior management and social protection officers both at regional and country-office levels are key, but also other sections and units, including CBT, Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR), Gender, CCS, and School Feeding (SF), as well as support functions like Technology Division (TEC) and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). Representatives of these sections have already been engaged in the inception phase and will be again during the data collection phases through key informant interviews (KIIs), as well as through the online survey.

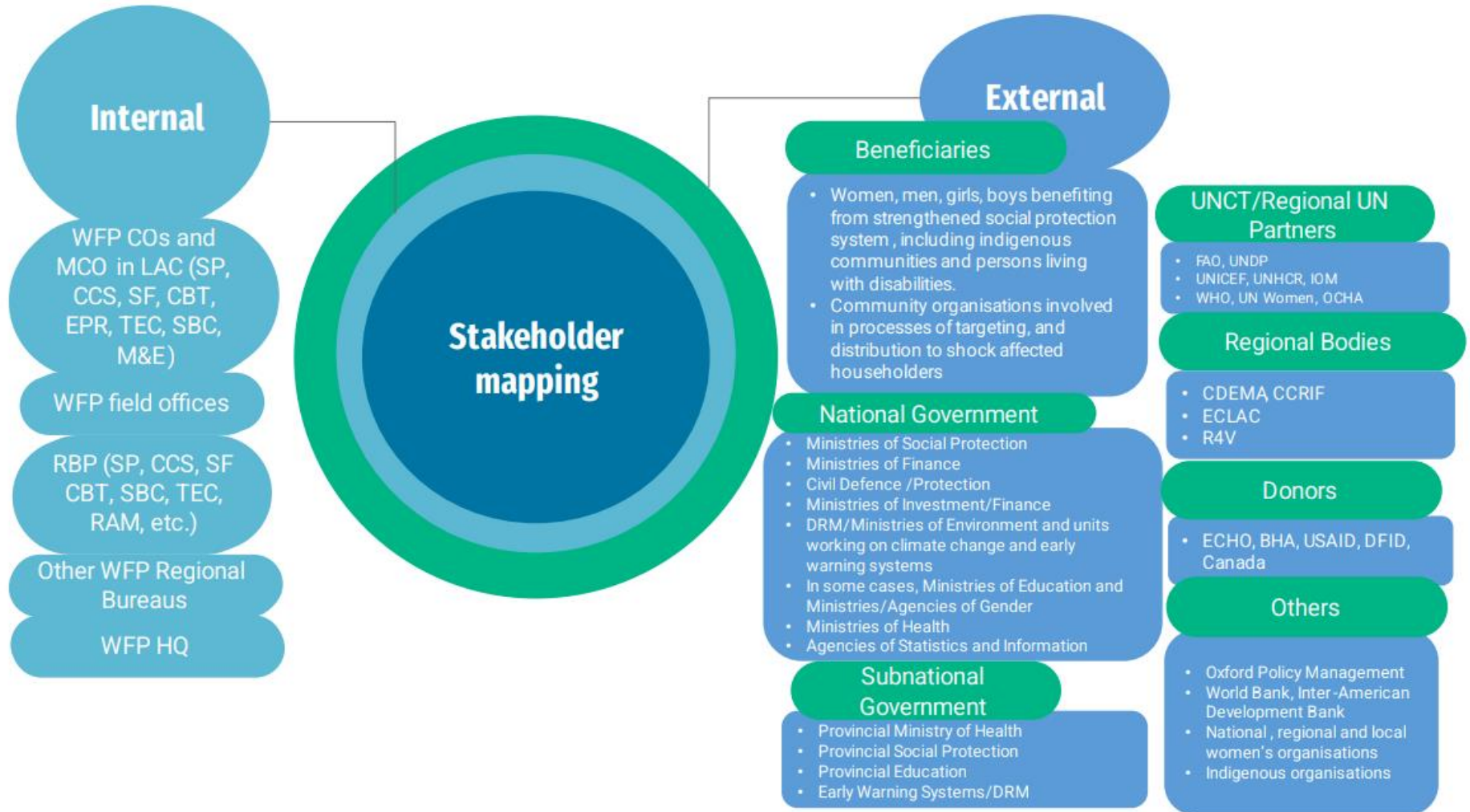
External to WFP: WFP efforts to contribute to SRSP have focused on strengthening the capacities of governments, as duty-bearers, to use social protection systems as a tool for preparedness and response to climate-related disasters, public health crises, and economic shocks. This has meant a close engagement with social protection ministries, but also ministries of finance, disaster risk management actors, national statistical and population information units, as well as in some cases with ministries of education where school feeding programmes have been leveraged for social protection purposes in emergency response. In the Caribbean, considerable work has been done with regional bodies such as CDEMA and the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) on disaster risk financing, as well as in partnership with the World Bank.

There has also been WFP social protection engagement with UNCTs at the country level. UNCTs are important stakeholders as they contribute to the realization of the government development objectives, while also coordinating on humanitarian and emergency response. Various UN agencies are also direct partners of WFP at policy and programme levels and collaboration in the field to enhance the shock-responsiveness of social protection will ultimately affect how emergency assistance can be most effectively and efficiently delivered. The evaluation is thus relevant for several UN agencies, especially UNICEF as a close partner with WFP in several countries, but also UN Women as the lead agency advocating within the region for gender equality and transformative approaches. The evaluation will engage with UN partners both through KIIs and surveys at regional and national levels.

Other stakeholders in the evaluation are donors, including DFID, ECHO, BHA, USAID, and the Governments of Canada and Norway, as well as the World Bank, who have been supporting the work of WFP on SRSP, as well as OPM, which has collaborated with WFP since 2015 to develop the current model.

Rightsholders are the women, men, girls, and boys that national SP systems are intended to serve, largely because they are already among the most vulnerable or are suddenly put at risk in the case of major shocks. The upstream work done by WFP to strengthen national SP systems may make it difficult to identify specific groups. Nonetheless, the selection of country studies will ensure that opportunities are created to engage with direct beneficiaries through group discussions, as well as to interview representatives of the civil society organizations working to enhance the reach, speed, and adequacy of assistance for women, of indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities impacted by shocks.

Figure 24. Stakeholder analysis



Source: own elaboration.

ANNEX 4. METHODOLOGY

This section describes in more detail the methodological approach carried out, which was informed by an evaluability assessment. The section also describes the evaluation framework and evaluation questions, methods of data collection and analysis, as well as the ethical approach and risks/mitigation strategies deployed.

Evaluability challenges and opportunities

Evaluability refers to the extent to which an intervention can be evaluated in a reliable and credible manner. Evaluability assessment calls for the early review of a proposed evaluation to ascertain whether its objectives are adequately defined and its results verifiable...⁹⁹ The DFID Working Paper on Evaluability Assessment...¹⁰⁰ identified these dimensions of evaluability: I. Evaluability in principle, focusing on the project design and theory of change, II. Evaluability in practice, given the availability of relevant data and the capacity of management systems able to provide it and III. Utility and practicality of an evaluation, given the views and availability of relevant stakeholders.

The desk review and inception interviews indicated that most elements of the Regional Evaluation of WFP's contribution to Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (2015 – 2022) were evaluable as data could be obtained to answer the main evaluation questions. However, some gaps in data and potential contextual challenges were noted, as well as opportunities to mitigate them. Consequently, the ET recommended some **adjustments to the initial evaluation questions** which were made in the evaluation matrix guiding this evaluation's scope and methodology. Figure 25. Evaluability Assessment Checklist identifies the main challenges and opportunities associated with evaluability. These are summarized here as follows:

Evaluability in Principle: A challenge was that no ToC or logical framework existed that identified a fixed set of outputs, outcomes, or standardized indicators by which the specific contribution of WFP to SRSP could be measured. An opportunity existed during the inception phase to develop a provisional ToC, based on the information provided in the Regional Social Protection Strategy (2019) as well as in the Global Social Protection Policy (2021). Further challenges were that the design of the contribution of WFP to SRSP had been evolving over the period as had the corporate strategic plan and results framework. In addition, WFP's role at CO level was highly subject to country context. SRSP contributions formed a loose set of constructs that different country offices may or may not have taken up. The evaluation provided an opportunity to compare these CO-level responses to determine the potential enablers and obstacles to SRSP.

Evaluability in Practice: There were important gaps in monitoring data given the limitations of the Corporate Results Framework (CRF). Nevertheless, there was a wealth of descriptive case studies discussing major engagements of WFP in SRSP. This provided an opportunity to develop a methodology that would include the qualitative components needed to mitigate this gap. Primary quantitative data was also collected during the data collection phase. A challenge was noted in this regard as the period covered by the evaluation was quite long (2015-2022) and corresponded with changes in the WFP strategic plans, as well as corporate results and indicators. WFP had, for the first time, identified specific results and indicators on Social Protection in the 2022-2025 Corporate Results Framework. However, in the 2017-2021 CRF, there were results associated with Country Capacity Strengthening, which on a country-by-country basis in the LAC region may or may not have been associated with SRSP results and activities. An opportunity existed to utilize internal data, such as the Annual Performance Plans of Social Protection and other related units (EPR, CBT, SBCC, TECH, RAM, etc.) within WFP to reconstruct actions taken in the areas of advocacy and technical assistance to governments. A challenge here was that the period covered by the evaluation also

⁹⁹ DAC-OECD, "Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management" (The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2010).

¹⁰⁰ Rick Davies, "Planning Evaluability Assessments: A Synthesis of the Literature with Recommendations" (Cambridge: Department of International Development, 2013).

increased the likelihood that staff rotated, and participants in conferences and upstream work initiated by WFP may have been difficult to reach. Another challenge was the limited financial data which hindered the ET's ability to perform financial and value-for-money (VfM) analysis.

Utility of an evaluation at this time: Inception phase interviews highlighted a great level of interest in the evaluation to gain a broader picture of what WFP, RBP, and COs in the region had achieved through a focus on SRSP. In particular, internal stakeholders were interested in having a clearer picture of what the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the investment in SRSP had been over the period, as well as how the experience of RBP on social protection systems strengthening may have influenced the work of WFP more broadly, at HQ and in other countries and regions of the world.

Figure 25. Evaluability Assessment Checklist

		Yes	No	Challenges/Opportunities
Results Framework				
1	Is the results framework or theory of change clearly defined?		✓	It is a challenge that there is no theory of change to guide the contribution of WFP to Shock-Responsive Social Protection. It is an opportunity for the evaluation to contribute through a constructed ToC that can be validated by staff and partners.
2	Are the indicators clearly stated in the results framework?		✓	A challenge is that there is not a clear set of indicators specific to SRSP over the period. An opportunity is to review indicators in the new CRF as well as past indicators for CCS, to identify some common indicators, and, where possible, adopt indicators from the OPM SRSP Toolkit. The evaluation can also draw on the WFP CCS framework as a proxy for indicators on country capacity strengthening.
Key Evaluation Stakeholders				
3	Is the planned evaluation relevant and useful to key stakeholders?	✓		Inception phase interviews indicate that all stakeholders to date are interested and engaged in the evaluation process.
4	Are the stakeholders committed to supporting the evaluation?	✓		All stakeholders have indicated their commitment to supporting the evaluation, including country office teams.
Key evaluation questions				
5	Are the evaluation questions feasible given the: (1) project design, (2) data availability, and (3) resources available?	✓		For the most part, the evaluation has identified data to support answering the EQs. However, the EQ on WFP emergent return on investment methodology appears problematic, both because the methodology is not ready and because the data needed to utilize it are not available or may be difficult to reconstruct.
6	Are the evaluation questions of interest to key stakeholders?	✓		An opportunity is that the EQs are well aligned with the interests of key stakeholders. A challenge is that the expectations of internal stakeholders are high regarding the traceability of results at the outcome level. The ET will endeavor to reconstruct, through KIIs and document review, the contribution of WFP to macro-level changes and systems strengthening at national and subnational levels.
Data				

7	Is there sufficient data collected to answer the evaluation questions?		✓	A challenge is that during the inception phase the ET has not seen any data linked to financial expenditures by RBP or at CO levels, and the return on investment methodology is not available yet for the ET to utilize. The ET proposed to remove EQ 3.3. While the ET does not propose a reformulation of EQ 3.1 and EQ 3.2 on the deployment and adequacy of financial resources, the availability of the ET to complete a financial analysis is highly contingent upon the availability of financial data. Similarly, it is a challenge that the ET does not have access to information about all SRSP related staff positions and consultancies. This data will be mapped at CO and RBP levels during the data collection phase.
8	Was such data collected at baseline and consistently collected at various intervals?		✓	An opportunity exists to use the large amount of evidence collected through SRSP country case studies as a form of baseline data. A challenge is that only in a few cases have the country case studies been revisited at later points. The ET will rely on interviews, internal and external social protection working group minutes, and a review of annual work plans to reconstruct the actions taken at COs and RBP level.
9	Is there sufficient data disaggregation (e.g., age, sex, disability, ethnicity, migratory status, and geographic location where relevant)?	✓		It is a challenge that data from social registries and social protection disbursements has not yet been made available to the ET. Once received, it is an opportunity to explore this data and it is assumed that it will include data on the sex, age, locality, ethnicity, disability, and migratory status of social protection recipients. There is some data presented in case studies, data is expected to be provided, as available at least from vulnerability mapping activities and possibly from national databases.
10	If data, particularly baseline data, is not available, are there plans or means available to collect and disaggregate the data?	✓		As noted above, the ET will take the opportunity to reconstruct the baseline from the evidence related to the prior capacities of government SP systems generated through the SRSP country case studies, and the methodology proposed will compare current responses and capacities with previous ones.
Risk Identification and Analysis				
11	Will physical, political, social, economic, and organizational factors allow for an effective conduct and use of evaluation as envisaged?	✓		An opportunity is that the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be over and there are no travel restrictions to any of the proposed fieldwork countries. A challenge identified is that Peru has been experiencing limited social unrest, but it has been validated during inception interviews that this would not impede a field visit to that country.
Evaluation Timeline				
12	Is there sufficient time for the evaluation?	✓		A challenge is that the timeframe for the evaluation is very tight, and the data collection requirements appear significant. As noted in the section on limitations, this may hinder the ET's ability to conduct the evaluation using a phased approach.

Source: format adapted from UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2018 Update).

207. The final evaluation criteria, questions and subquestions are included in Figure 26 below.

Figure 26. Final evaluation criteria, questions and subquestions

Criteria	Evaluation Questions and Subquestions
<p>Effectiveness, Gender and Inclusion</p>	<p>EQ1. To what extent has WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region contributed to stronger, more equitable and inclusive national social protection systems?</p> <p>EQ 1.1 To what extent has the evidence generated by WFP contributed to raising awareness on social protection and preparedness, and strengthening social protection systems; and what is the level of implementation of the policy recommendations identified in the regional study and country specific case studies?</p> <p>EQ 1.2 To what extent has WFP contributed to strengthening national social protection and disaster risk management systems through: (a) direct delivery of social protection programme/system components in response to shocks (downstream work); (b) technical advice, capacity strengthening, advocacy and public policy/legislative support (upstream work);</p> <p>EQ 1.3 To what extent did WFP's engagement in SRSP contribute to improved response to different types of shocks and across diverse country contexts in LAC?</p> <p>EQ 1.4 To what extent and how WFP's support to preparedness and capacity strengthening contributed to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through social protection?</p> <p>EQ 1.5 What are the emerging effects (positive and negative) of WFP's engagement in SRSP in the LAC region on national SP systems and beneficiaries, particularly for women and other vulnerable populations?</p> <p>EQ 1.6 To what extent has the SRSP engagement's design, implementation and monitoring promoted gender equality, equity, inclusion of indigenous populations, people living with disabilities and social inclusion in general?</p>
<p>Effectiveness and Sustainability</p>	<p>EQ2. What are the key factors that have influenced WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region in general and with regards to the sustainability of the achievements?</p> <p>EQ 2.1 What are the key enablers, barriers, and trade-offs in WFP's engagement in SRSP in LAC?</p> <p>EQ 2.2 To what extent can the achievements propelled by WFP be sustained in time and which factors influence this?</p> <p>EQ 2.3 What are the lessons and good practices that can be drawn from WFP's SRSP work in LAC?</p>
<p>Effectiveness and Efficiency</p>	<p>EQ3. Which modalities of engagement deployed by WFP were the most effective and efficient in support of positive outcomes in SRSP in view of different contexts?</p> <p>EQ 3.1 How has WFP adapted its strategy on shock -responsive social protection response in LAC to different country contexts and types of crises or shocks?</p> <p>EQ 3.2 How many and which resources were deployed by WFP to implement the different elements for the SRSP framework?</p> <p>EQ 3.3 To what extent were the deployed resources adequate to reach the intended results (including to strengthen internal capacities of WFP)?</p>
<p>Coherence</p>	<p>EQ4. To what extent did WFP's role in advancing SRSP programming in the Latin American and Caribbean region contribute to WFP's corporate vision and approach to Social Protection and wider discussion on the subject?</p> <p>EQ 4.1 To what extent has WFP's Regional Social Protection Strategy and work in LAC aligned to the Global Social Protection Strategy and contributed to internal strategies, initiatives, and tools at different levels across the organization? <i>[internal coherence]</i></p>

EQ 4.2 What has been WFP's value added vis-à-vis other SRSP actors in LAC in supporting better preparedness, response, and resilience to shocks through national systems? <i>[external coherence]</i>

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Overall Approach

The evaluation was primarily formative in nature. The evaluation adopted a utilization-focused and theory-based approach that used outcome mapping to assess WFP's contribution to strengthening shock-responsive SP systems in LAC. The evaluation also adopted elements of a developmental approach to reflect the complexity of WFP's SRSP work in LAC, which required strong adaptability to affect systems change in varied contexts. In line with good evaluation practice and the ToR, the methodology was also gender-responsive and integrated aspects of inclusion and disability. The evaluation adopted a phased approach – to the extent possible given time constraints – to ensure that early data collection from desk review informed field data collection, which in turn informed the survey.

Utilization-focused Approach

The evaluation team (ET) applied the principles of a 'utilization-focused' evaluation to provide the most effective response to the needs of the evaluation's primary users (as defined in Section 1.1 of the IR), built a strong collaborative relationship between the ET and internal/external stakeholders, and achieved learning and uptake of lessons related to SRSP strategies in LAC. The term 'utilization-focused' referred to the aim of the evaluation being to provide a joint learning process and produce recommendations for actions that could build on the successes of previous and ongoing work, as well as lessons for future work. This approach dictated that all primary intended users were clearly identified and directly engaged at the beginning of the evaluation process to ensure the process was participatory and considered the intended evaluation uses.

It is envisioned that users will use the evaluation by reflecting on key issues/findings in several phases: 1) in iterating on issues emerging from the inception interviews and evaluability assessment to inform the sampling and data collection tools; 2) in validating findings from the field visits and regionally through remote workshops using the participatory EvaluVision methodology¹⁰¹; 3) using the findings, conclusions and recommendations to support the strengthening and expansion of SRSP work in alignment with diverse country contexts and needs. National governments, and more specifically social development and finance ministries, are also primary users as key partners in the design and implementation of SRSP activities, as well as being beneficiaries of capacity development support. Accordingly, building on the stakeholders identified in the ToR, the evaluation team conducted a detailed stakeholder mapping exercise (in Annex 10. Detailed Stakeholder Analysis of the IR) through the inception interviews and preliminary document review. This helped to ensure that there was adequate representation of the range of stakeholders in the evaluation process, as further detailed in Section 3.3 of the IR.

Theory-based Approach and Outcome Mapping

The outcome-based approach responded to the evaluation's secondary purpose for accountability. As indicated in the ToR, the evaluation utilized outcome mapping to build on and draw from existing theoretical frameworks and the Regional Social Protection Strategy of WFP's engagement in SRSP in LAC to identify how change happened. In order to do so, the ET constructed a preliminary ToC (refer to Figure 15 in the IR) since it did not exist, and this ToC were subject to revisions and elaboration based on the evaluation findings. The ToC reflected linkages between interventions and expected or emerging outcomes, as well as

¹⁰¹ EvaluVision is a methodology to improve the utilization of evaluation. It filters content, technical language, theories, and organizes them into comprehensible graphics. See <https://www.evaluvision.org> for more details. It is also referred to as scribing, which team member Reilly Dow is an expert in.

underlying assumptions that laid the groundwork for the evaluation. The initial draft was not meant to be definitive but exploratory, identifying intended results as defined by the documentation and providing a basis for validation, as well as possible identification and addition of emerging effects.

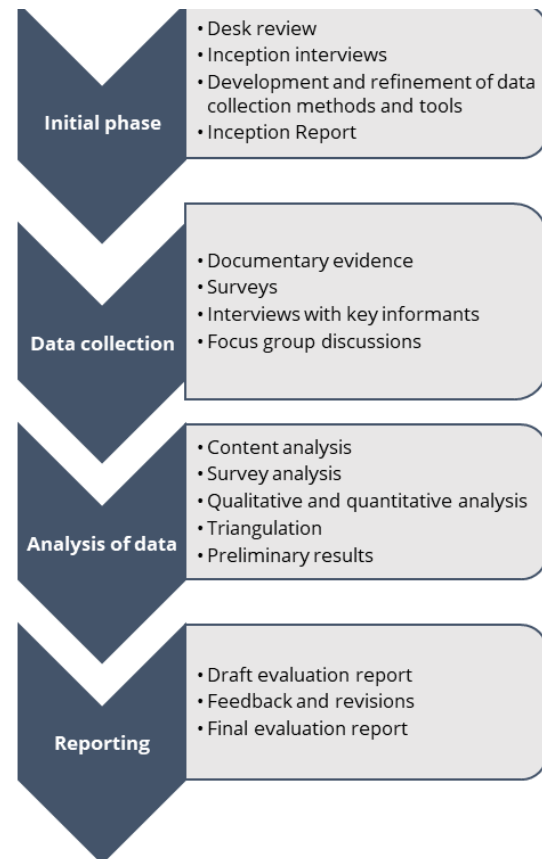
The ET sought to identify WFP's contribution to strengthening SRSP systems by conducting outcome mapping, utilizing the WFP CCS framework as an analytical framework. Outcome mapping, an approach often used when there is limited reporting data or unclear linkages between outputs and outcomes, was employed to identify, describe, and validate a set of outcomes. The ET worked backwards to understand how WFP's programmes and interventions might have contributed to those outcomes. In the early stages of data collection, the ET consulted with SP staff in country study and conducted desk reviews to develop a set of outcome descriptions. These outcome descriptions were then validated with government/CSO/affected populations during the data collection process. Given the lack of WFP corporate indicators to measure CCS efforts, the outcome mapping exercise was anchored in the WFP CCS framework (refer to Annex 7: Capacity Strengthening: Retrofitting Template in the IR) to gain a better understanding of the domains in which WFP made the most significant contributions to results (i.e., individual, institutional, enabling environment) and to assess whether there was an appropriate balance between these levels based on country needs.

Developmental Evaluation

Although not originally requested by the ToR, the ET integrated elements of developmental evaluation into the methodology and evaluation questions. This integration aimed to reflect the complexity of WFP's SRSP in LAC, which involved a broad regional engagement framework that required tailoring by COs based on diverse contexts and shocks. The goal was to facilitate SP systems change and enhance preparedness, response, and resilience to shocks. The evaluation questions were revised to emphasize elements such as 'adaptation to contexts' and 'systems change.' Additionally, the ET included a question on 'emerging effects' and an analysis of 'unintended results' to capture the complexity of the effects, both positive and negative, that SRSP engagement could have on the functioning and sustainability of SP systems.

The stakeholder analysis, evaluability assessment, SRSP framework, and the constructed ToC all directly fed into the elaboration of the Evaluation Matrix (for more details see Annex 5)

Figure 27. Evaluation methodology process



Evaluation process: This evaluation was conducted in four distinct phases: inception, qualitative data collection and analysis, quantitative data collection and analysis, and reporting. The Inception Phase commenced with a kick-off meeting involving the evaluation reference group, where the ToR, work plan, and data collection timeline were discussed.

The second phase entailed qualitative data collection and analysis, involving interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders. Triangulation of information from interviews and collected evidence ensured a rigorous analysis, offering valuable insights into stakeholders' perceptions and experiences.

In the third phase, quantitative data was collected through surveys with stakeholders and subjected to preliminary analysis, facilitating the integration and comparison of results. This analytical process played a pivotal role in synthesizing quantitative findings and supporting the evaluation's overall conclusions and recommendations.

The fourth and final phase focused on reporting and validation of findings and recommendations. A preliminary draft of the evaluation report was reviewed and commented on by the EC before being shared more widely for feedback and comments by the ERG. A final evaluation report was provided as the principal output of the evaluation process, along with 8 brief country case studies and 2 thematic case studies: technology and country capacity strengthening. Reporting has been in line with DEQAS, UNEG guidelines, UNEG Ethical Standards for Evaluations, and UN SWAP standards.

Data collection methods

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach to data collection, which combined both qualitative and quantitative methods. These methods included: 1) in-depth desk review; 2) individual and group KIIs; 3) FGDs; and 4) online surveys. Additionally, participatory validation meetings were conducted following in-country data collection (Dominican Republic, Ecuador and MCO). These meetings provided an opportunity for stakeholders to review and confirm the evaluation findings, fill any data gaps, and collect additional information or perspectives. By using this mixed-methods approach, the evaluation was able to capture a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, combining qualitative insights with quantitative data to provide a more robust analysis and validation of key findings.

Overall, a wide range of stakeholder groups at all levels were consulted to elicit multiple perspectives, including those of vulnerable groups (including men and women, the elderly, indigenous populations, people living with disabilities, and other marginalized groups) or organizations that could speak on their behalf. This ensured a robust triangulation process to generate a strong evidence base across all evaluation questions and subquestions. The methods are described as follows:

In-depth desk reviews: The ET thoroughly reviewed and analysed WFP interventions in SRSP across the region by reading provided documents such as evaluations, strategies, and financial data; the ET also examined country case studies, roadmaps, Country Strategic Plans (CSP), Annual Country Reports (ACR), and Gender and Age Marker (GAM) reports, as well as relevant documents that were suggested during KIIs. The total number of documents reviewed 683 documents.

Individual and group KIIs: The ET interviewed WFP COs in LAC, the WFP RBP, WFP social protection staff in other regional bureaus, government stakeholders, UN partners, CSOs, academia, and beneficiaries of the interventions. It employed a purposeful sampling approach to identify stakeholders for consultation during data collection. With assistance from the EM and members of the ERG, an initial list of stakeholders was created. For country visits and desk reviews, the ET relied on country-level documentation to develop an initial stakeholder list, which was then validated by WFP staff in the respective country. Additionally, the ET utilized a snowballing approach, where stakeholders referred by initial participants were identified and included during the data collection process. The number of stakeholders (as well as beneficiaries) interviewed is shown in Table 1. Number of stakeholders interviewed, with a complete list of interviewees being presented in Annex 8.

FGDs: The ET arranged focus group discussions in Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Dominica with direct and indirect beneficiaries. With WFP staff in country offices, the ET drew a sample of focus group participants from existing lists of targeted SP recipients, including, to the extent possible, women and men of different ages and profiles, including persons with disabilities.

Online survey: The survey was designed in English, Spanish, and French to cover all LAC countries engaged in WFP's SRSP and was open for 5 weeks (from May 18th to June 26th, 2023). The invitation was **sent to 274 individuals**. A total of **104 individuals responded**, either partially or fully submitting the survey (61% females; 37% males; 2% preferred not to answer/non-binary). The groups targeted by the survey, and their statistics, are included in Table 2. Survey respondents. See survey tool in Annex 5.

Sampling for Field Visits, Desk Review+, and Desk Review

The survey included a mix of closed and open-ended questions, with the latter limited to a few questions only to lessen survey fatigue and enhance response rates. A 30% response rate was sought, and **24% of complete responses was achieved and 38% considering all responses** (including incomplete surveys). The survey remained open for five weeks. Closed questions combined multiple choices and statements using a Likert scale. The survey was implemented through the Zoho platform. It focused largely on operational aspects, expanding on the inception phase mapping of interventions, including assessing which priority activities had been operationalized and effective (national system preparedness, tools, guidance and roadmaps, knowledge management, learning and regional cooperation, etc.), understanding constraints and supportive factors to implementation, and analyzing possible effects and contributions to outcomes such as nutritional status and food security, resilience to shocks, social inclusion and gender equality, and institutional strengthening. The survey also included questions on WFP's value added in SRSP and partners' coordination. See Annex 5: Data collection tools for the survey questionnaire.

The only additional activity during data collection, not planned in the inception report, involved the direct observation of "Cocina en Vivo" in Ecuador, a practice conducted by WFP and implementing partners with female beneficiaries of the CBT. This activity aims to educate them on preparing local, nutritious food, with the objective of maximizing the benefits of CBT.

Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion

The ET measured WFP's progress in gender, diversity, and inclusion, utilizing various frameworks such as the '2017 Gender-Sensitive Social Protection for Zero Hunger: WFP's role in Latin America and the Caribbean,' 'Disability Inclusion Road Map (2020 - 2021),' 'Disability Inclusion in CSP Programme Guidance,' 'Key Messages for Social Protection,' and the WFP Gender Policy 2022. These frameworks provide guidelines and expectations for mainstreaming gender, diversity, and inclusion in SRSP planning and responses. In summary, these frameworks define: 1) principles, including diversity, participation, and accessibility; 2) levels of accountability, covering leadership and strategic planning, projects/ programmes/ evaluation, employment, partnerships, procurement, capacity development, and communications; 3) approaches/actions, such as gender and social inclusion analyses in design, collection, and reporting of disaggregated data, allocation of human and financial resources, and consideration of protection and leave no one behind principles in targeting and delivery modalities; and 4) expected outcomes, focusing on equality and empowerment. In the context of WFP's system preparedness work across countries, the ET

considered and assessed the extent to which these gender, diversity, and inclusion frameworks are implemented and integrated into WFP's SRSP efforts.

Although data availability and evaluation scope limited the systematic assessment of the contribution of WFP technical assistance to improved equity and inclusion outcomes among Tier 1 beneficiaries, the ET considered and provided preliminary examples of transformative change through the following processes:

Integration of explicit and prioritized questions corresponding to the four priority areas in the above-mentioned frameworks

Collection of demographics within the survey, including sex and age

The inclusion of Dominican Republic, Dominica and Ecuador as country studies. In these countries, end beneficiaries were accessed through in-person data collection. In Dominica, the ET was also able to consult with representatives of the Kalinago (indigenous) Village Council representing Affected Populations.

The gathering and analysis of select Gender and Age Marker (GAM) reports tied to SRSP activities in LAC countries, which consolidate evidence on gender mainstreaming in CSPs.

Analysis of differential results and emerging unintended outcomes of SRSP activities on men and women, boys and girls, the elderly, indigenous populations, people living with disabilities, and people living with HIV (though data availability was limited).

By employing these methods, the evaluation ensured that the perspectives and voices of these groups were considered during data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Ethical Considerations

The ET rigorously adhered to the ethical standards and norms set by UNEG. Throughout the evaluation process, the ET prioritized the safeguarding of informants and beneficiaries by consistently and explicitly obtaining their informed consent. This ensured that individuals fully understood the purpose and scope of the evaluation and willingly participated.

Furthermore, the ET took extensive measures to uphold privacy and confidentiality. All information collected from participants was treated with the utmost discretion, and data was anonymized whenever necessary to prevent the identification of individuals. This approach helped create a safe environment for participants to share their insights and experiences without fear of exposure.

In addition to consent, privacy, and confidentiality, the ET demonstrated a deep commitment to cultural sensitivity. Recognizing the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of informants and beneficiaries, the team took proactive steps to understand and respect the cultural context within which the evaluation was conducted. This approach facilitated open and respectful communication, enhancing the quality and reliability of the data collected.

ANNEX 5. EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question					Criteria
EQ1: To what extent has WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region contributed to stronger, more equitable and inclusive national social protection systems?					Effectiveness, Gender & Inclusion
Subquestions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation	Evidence availability/ reliability
EQ 1.1 To what extent has the evidence generated by WFP contributed to raising awareness on social protection and preparedness, and strengthening social protection systems; and what is the level of implementation of the policy recommendations identified in the regional study and country specific case studies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of WFP staff who attended the staff SRSP training (internal awareness) • Evidence of application by WFP staff of new knowledge and skills (internal awareness) • Degree of integration of shock-responsive elements in WFP social protection programming (Evolution 2016-2022) • # and type of stakeholders who attended WFP high-level conference / events on SRSP (external awareness) • Evidence of application by partners of new knowledge and skills (external awareness) • Integration of shock-responsive elements in national social protection agenda (evolution 2016-2022) • Level of implementation by countries of regional study recommendations • Perception of WFP staff on feasibility/usefulness of country case study recommendations • Level of implementation of country case study recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Survey • Desk review • Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP staff (social protection and other technical areas; and RBP management) • Government/UN/CSO representatives • Training manual • Post training assessments, attendance records, etc. • Recordings of regional events • Country case studies • Annual Country Reports (ACRs) • Government strategies • UNSDCFs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToC analysis / assumption testing • Content analysis 	Strong

<p>EQ 1.2 To what extent has WFP contributed to strengthening national social protection and disaster risk management systems through: (a) direct delivery of social protection programme/system components in response to shocks (downstream work); (b) technical advice, capacity strengthening, advocacy and public policy/legislative support (upstream work);</p>	<p><u>Downstream work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of countries where WFP delivered assistance through national social protection systems (2016-2022) • Type and amount of WFP assistance delivered through national social protection systems (2016-2022) • Type of capacity strengthened through WFP delivery, as per the SRSP framework (institutional capacity, coordination, financing, delivery mechanisms, targeting, information systems) • Evidence of capacity strengthening per CCS domain (individual, institutional, enabling environment) <p><u>Downstream work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of strengthened social protection systems, according to the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional capacity ▪ coordination ▪ financing ▪ delivery mechanisms ▪ targeting ▪ information systems • Appropriate balance of three levels of CCS – i.e., individual/institutional/enabling environment (focus on case study and desk review + countries) according to needs • Evidence of capacity needs assessments • Degree of implementation of country roadmaps (hojas de ruta) (focus on case study and desk review + countries) • Extent of SSTC on SRSP / evidence of application of good practices from SSTC to strengthen social protection systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Survey • Desk review • Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP staff • Governments • UN/CSO partners • WFP evaluations • Annual workplans • ACRs • Country roadmaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive analysis • Analysis of SRSP conceptual framework • Analysis of CCS framework (individual, institutional, enabling environment – household/community • Outcome harvesting • ToC analysis / assumption testing 	<p>Fair</p>
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<p>EQ 1.3 To what extent did WFP's engagement in SRSP contribute to improved response to different types of shocks and across diverse country contexts in LAC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coverage • Evidence of enhanced (coordinated/integrated response (proxy for VFM) • Perceptions on adequacy of assistance • Perceptions on speed of response • Level of decentralization for decision-making • Enhanced coordination between UN partners/government • Evidence of use of School Feeding programme to respond to shocks • Type of interventions and tools (e.g., CBT, digitalization, etc.) • Disaggregation by type of shock (natural disaster, political/migration crisis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • FGDs • Desk review • Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP staff • Governments • UN/CSO partners • Affected populations • WFP evaluations • Annual workplans • ACRs • Country roadmaps • National quantitative data on emergency response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of SRSP conceptual framework • Analysis of CCS framework (individual, institutional, enabling environment – household/community) • Outcome harvesting • ToC analysis / assumption testing 	<p>Fair</p>
<p>EQ 1.4 To what extent and how WFP's support to preparedness and capacity strengthening contributed to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through social protection?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of assistance • Speed of response • Enhanced coordination between UN partners/government • Evidence of use of School Feeding programme to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic • Type of interventions and tools (e.g., CBT, digitalization, etc.) developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • FGDs • Desk review • Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP staff • Governments • UN/CSO partners • Affected populations • WFP evaluations • Annual workplans • ACRs • National quantitative data on emergency response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of SRSP conceptual framework • Analysis of CCS framework (individual, institutional, enabling environment – household/community) • Outcome harvesting • ToC analysis / assumption testing 	<p>Strong</p>

<p>EQ 1.5 What are the emerging effects (positive and negative) of WFP's engagement in SRSP in the LAC region on national SP systems and beneficiaries, particularly for women and other vulnerable populations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of positive/negative unintended results on SP systems Evidence of positive/negative unintended results on beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs FGDs Desk review Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affected populations Governments WFP staff ACRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome harvesting ToC analysis / assumption testing Content analysis 	<p>Strong</p>
<p>EQ 1.6 To what extent has the SRSP engagement's design, implementation and monitoring promoted gender equality, equity, inclusion of indigenous populations, people living with disabilities and social inclusion in general?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that SRSP activities are based on needs assessment / consultations with affected populations Evidence of gender / equity analysis in outputs (e.g., training materials, country case studies, etc.) Dissemination of evidence on gender-sensitive and inclusive social protection Evidence of partnerships/consultations with women's organizations (also with organizations representing persons with disabilities, and indigenous populations) Degree of gender expertise (and expertise specific to other marginalized groups) of WFP social protection staff Evidence of gender-sensitive and inclusive national social protection systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs FGDs Survey Desk review Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of evaluations (focussing on CCS of SP system) Data from desk review, including regional and corporate normative documents, country case studies, evaluations focused on CCS and SP system, social protection database, country strategic plans and Annual Country Reports, associated Gender and Age Marker Reports Governments WFP Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data Discourse analysis of primary data (interviews, survey) Descriptive analysis (survey) Data disaggregation (sex/ /location/age/disability status/ethnicity/other vulnerability aspects) 	<p>Fair</p>
<p>EQ2 What are the key factors that have influenced WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region in general and with regards to the sustainability of the achievements?</p>					<p>Effectiveness, Sustainability</p>

<p>EQ 2.1 What are the key enablers, barriers, and trade-offs in WFP's engagement in SRSP in LAC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government changes/stability • Degree of government awareness of the importance of SRSP • Turnover/retention of WFP staff working on SRSP • Degree of cross-collaboration on SRSP between WFP working areas (e.g., school feeding, technology, climate change, CBT, EPR, etc.) • Interest of donors to support WFP upstream work in SRSP • Other enabling/hindering factors • Evidence of trade-offs made in implementing SRSP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Desk review • Survey • Country case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of WFP working groups, shared workplans, etc. • ACRs • Donor, WFP, government, UN/CSO representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToC analysis / Assumption testing • Content analysis 	<p>Strong</p>
<p>EQ 2.2 To what extent can the achievements propelled by WFP be sustained in time and which factors influence this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of integration of SRSP elements in national development plans/social protection strategies • Evidence of government funding allocation to implementation of country roadmaps (hojas de ruta) • Existence of functioning country coordination mechanisms (e.g., to facilitate linkages with and between civil defence/social protection; education/social protection; social protection/finance economy, etc.) • Degree of integration of SRSP in agenda of partner CSOs/UN agencies • Degree of integration of humanitarian assistance channelled through national SRSP systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Desk review • Country case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes of coordination mechanisms • National social protection strategies/plans • Country roadmaps • ACRs • Donor, WFP, government, UN/CSO representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToC analysis / Assumption testing • Content analysis 	<p>Strong</p>
<p>EQ 2.3 What are the lessons and good practices that can be drawn from WFP's SRSP work in LAC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of lessons learned • Identification of good practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Desk review • Country case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACRs • Donor, WFP, government, UN/CSO representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of cutting across evaluation questions 	<p>Strong</p>

EQ3: Which modalities of engagement deployed by WFP were the most effective and efficient in support of positive outcomes in SRSP in view of different contexts?					Effectiveness, Efficiency
EQ 3.1 How has WFP adapted its strategy on shock -responsive social protection response in LAC to different country contexts and types of crises or shocks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of engagement mechanisms • Evidence of needs/situation analysis to inform strategic approach to SRSP • Evidence of adaptation to different types of shocks • Use of MEL to adapt approach based on evidence and learning • Other approaches to decision-making and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Desk review • Country case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACRs • Donor, WFP, government, UN/CSO representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis • Comparative analysis 	Strong
EQ 3.2 How many and which resources were deployed by WFP to implement the different elements for the SRSP framework?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in # of Social Protection staff/consultants in LAC between 2016-2022 • % of Social Protection staff/consultants time dedicated to SRSP (measure through staff survey) • Total salaries of Social Protection staff in LAC • Cost of high-level conferences • Cost of case studies and other knowledge products (consultant fees, travel expenses, etc.) • Cost of training programmes • Amount of resources mobilized for SRSP (SPIF, donors, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP staff (survey question to measure staff time) • Staff/consultant contracts • Finance reports • Purchase orders • Investment case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative/statistical analysis • Financial analysis 	Weak
EQ 3.3 To what extent were the deployed resources adequate to reach the intended results (including to strengthen internal capacities of WFP)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived gaps/adequacy in WFP capacity (in terms of staff number and technical expertise) • Ability to mobilize technical expertise (including surge expertise) tailored to varied contexts • Perceived gaps/adequacy in financial resources for SRSP activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP staff • Government partners • ACRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative/statistical analysis • Financial analysis 	Weak

EQ4: To what extent did WFP's role in advancing SRSP programming in the Latin American and Caribbean region contribute to WFP's corporate vision and approach to Social Protection and wider discussion on the subject?					Coherence
EQ 4.1 To what extent has WFP's Regional Social Protection Strategy and work in LAC aligned to the Global Social Protection Strategy and contributed to internal strategies, initiatives, and tools at different levels across the organization? <i>[internal coherence]</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the Regional Social Protection Strategy is reflected in the Global Social Protection Strategy Similarities/differences in concepts/terminology used Alignment between output/outcomes of the regional and global strategies Evidence that SRSP activities influence the work of SP officers in other regions Evidence of knowledge sharing across regions Evidence that SP staff from headquarters and other regions attended regional SRSP conferences supported by WFP Evidence of application of new skills/knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review KIIs Survey Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Social Protection Strategy and Global Social Protection Strategy Terminology documentation WFP social protection staff in RBP and HQ WFP social protection staff in other regions (RBC, RBB, etc.) Former social protection staff in LAC now located in other regions Global/regional WFP evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis Comparative analysis 	Strong
EQ 4.2 What has been WFP's value added vis-à-vis other SRSP actors in LAC in supporting better preparedness, response, and resilience to shocks through national systems? <i>[external coherence]</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFP's comparative advantage in performing its role(s) is recognized and can be articulated by partners / in documents. Analysis of partner's roles in SRSP (downstream and upstream) Government/partner perception of specific skill sets offered by WFP Evidence of synergies/duplication Extent to which different actors express/have similar views on roles, value addition and opportunities for collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs Survey Country field visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN/CSO partners/Government representatives (e.g., World Bank, UNICEF, CDEMA, UNHCR, UNDP, CCRIF, CEPAL/ECLAC, OCHA) (KIIs) UN/CSO partners/government representatives WFP Social Protection staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative analysis Content analysis 	Strong

ANNEX 6. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Guidance

- The following discussion points will be used to guide interviews with WFP staff, government officials, and other institutional partners/stakeholders engaged in SRSP at the regional and country levels. Questions will be adjusted according to the stakeholder type, country, and area of expertise/focus of the stakeholder being interviewed, in terms of their responsibility or familiarity with aspects of SRSP.
- For interviewers, evaluator will introduce self and the evaluation process.
- Mention that the interview is voluntary, and that the information provided will be kept confidential. Data will be triangulated, and information cannot be traced back to individuals. Data will not be attributable.
- Mention that the interviewee will not be quoted, and that their name will not be provided in the report (only the organization and the gender of the respondent will be given). They can decline to participate or answer any question, at any time.
- Ask if they (respondent) have any questions about the process, and at the end of the interview, ask the interviewee if they have anything to add or share.

Interviewee name	
Function / title	
Organization	
Stakeholder Type	
Gender	
Date of interview	
Location (City, Country)	
Team members present	
Mode of interview	

The table below includes the questions to be asked during the KIIs. A star has been added alongside each stakeholder that will be asked a particular question. The legend for stakeholder type is as follows:

- W = WFP Country Offices and Regional Bureau
- G = Government Partners
- C = Civil Society and non-governmental organizations/partners
- U = UNCTs/UN partners
- D = Multilateral, bilateral partners, and donor agencies
- B = Beneficiaries

Of note, to ensure that the KII questions are well connected with the evaluation questions, the ET has included in this guide several of the sub-evaluation questions. However, these will not be asked to the respondents, and the interviewee will instead focus on the more detailed interview questions that have been added as sub-bullet points.

Please also note that an additional KII guide will be developed for beneficiaries once the evaluation has spoken with the country offices and have more information on their profile. However, a star was added to the type of questions beneficiaries will help answer.

Interview Questions	Stakeholder type					
	W	G	C	U	D	B
I. Background Information						
1. What is your current role? How long have you been in this role?	*	*	*	*	*	
2. How does your role support and interact with Shock-Responsive Social Protection strategies/areas of work?	*	*	*	*	*	
3. Which type of crises have you been affected by? What type of support have you received from WFP (if direct assistance) or the government (if not direct)?		*				*

II. Effectiveness, Gender and Inclusion						
EQ 1. To what extent has WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region contributed to stronger, more equitable and inclusive national social protection systems?	W	G	C	U	D	B
4. To what extent has the evidence generated by WFP contributed to raising awareness on social protection and preparedness, and strengthening social protection systems; and what is the level of implementation of the policy recommendations identified in the regional study and country specific case studies?	*	*	*	*		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over the period that we are looking at [2015 – 2022], how has SRSP evolved in [country]? What role has SRSP played as an emergency response/safety net? What have been the strengths and challenges generally in relation to SRSP implementation? ○ Are you familiar with the regional studies (theoretical/conceptual framework, multi-country studies or synthesis of evaluation) on SRSP that WFP generated in partnership with OPM? How relevant and useful have the conclusions and recommendations been? Can you highlight any progress made against their recommendations? <i>[ET to show PPT slide with key relevant recommendations]</i> ○ Are you familiar with the country case studies on SRSP that WFP generated in partnership with OPM? How relevant and useful have the conclusions and recommendations been? Can you highlight any progress made against their recommendations? <i>[ET to show PPT slide with key relevant recommendations per country]</i> ○ Has [country] developed a roadmap on SRSP? If so, could you please describe this process (actors who participated, work dynamics and main elements on which actions were proposed). What has been the progress in the implementation of the roadmap? Could you share this with us? <i>[Provide e-mail and record follow-up action for team]</i> ○ Have you attended any high-level conference or event on SRSP? If yes, what was the focus of this conference/event and what have been the outcomes? 	*	*	*			
	*	*				
	*	*		*	*	

<p>5. To what extent has WFP contributed to strengthening national social protection and disaster risk management systems through direct delivery of social protection programme/system components in response to shocks [downstream work]?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could you provide examples for how WFP has used national SP systems for direct delivery. How has WFP's direct delivery support contributed to the strengthening of these systems? What has been offered in terms of support to institutional capacity, coordination, financing, delivery mechanisms and targeting for SRSP preparedness? ○ When channeling its support through national systems, to what extent has WFP built national capacities across levels (individual, institutional, enabling environment)? Please provide examples. ○ What lessons and good practices would you highlight for other countries and for WFP internally in terms of the role of capacity strengthening when channelling support through national/local systems? 	*	*		*		
<p>6. To what extent has WFP contributed to strengthening national social protection systems in view of responding to shocks through technical advice, capacity strengthening, advocacy and public policy/legislative support (upstream work)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could you comment on the extent to which social protection systems have been strengthened since 2015? From your perspective and in your context, which changes have been the most significant? <i>[the below list is a list of possible changes drawn from the ToC, only to be used as reference for interviewers to help jog memory and organize notes]:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved capacity of national stakeholders and institutions to conduct monitoring, evaluation, research and development in SRSP and generate and share information / lessons ▪ Expanded or improved mechanisms for delivering cash or in-kind assistance to recipients of social protection and/or people affected by shocks ▪ Improved gender-sensitive and inclusive targeting mechanisms, including protocols, processes and criteria for identifying people and families most in need of social protection or emergency support, including persons with disabilities ▪ New or improved financing strategies and mechanisms for disaster risk management, including budgetary instruments, contingent financing and/or insurance ▪ Improved coordination mechanisms between social protection and DRM actors at the country and regional levels before and after shocks, including key players supporting gender empowerment and social inclusion ▪ Improved quality and utility of data and information management systems, including availability and access to sex, age and disability- 	*	*	*	*	*	

<p>disaggregated data and related information for mapping vulnerability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved legal, policy and normative frameworks of social protection and disaster risk management institutions ○ What has contributed to these changes or improvements? [Consider country roadmaps, SSTC] ○ Do you consider that the type of capacity strengthening has been more useful for any type of shock, or that these strengthening capacities are transversal for any type of shock? 						
<p>7. To what extent has WFP's engagement in SRSP contributed to improved response to different types of shocks and across diverse country contexts in LAC between 2015 and 2022?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you have seen improvements, what changes have there been in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ coverage ▪ coordination ▪ Adequacy of assistance provided ▪ Speed of response ▪ Other ○ What has facilitated / hindered these changes? [consider type of interventions and tools such as CBT, SBCC, digitalization (internal) and types of shocks (climate-related disaster, political or migration crisis)] 	*	*	*	*	*	*
<p>8. To what extent and how has WFP's support to preparedness and capacity strengthening contributed to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through social protection?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can you provide specific examples for how the SP systems strengthened through WFP support have helped improve the lives of beneficiaries (e.g. in terms of livelihoods, food security, etc. 	*	*	*	*	*	*
<p>9. Have you noted any unintended negative or positive effects from WFP's engagement in SRSP LAC on SP systems? Please describe what these have been</p> <p>10. Are you aware of any additional benefits for beneficiaries that were not originally anticipated? Likewise, are you aware of any difficulties that the support might have generated? If so, please explain?</p> <p>11. Did the support that you received lead to any additional benefits that you were not originally expecting? Similarly, did this support generate any difficulties that you were not expecting?</p>		*	*	*		
<p>12. To what extent has the SRSP engagement's design, implementation and monitoring promoted gender equality, equity, inclusion of indigenous populations, people living with disabilities and social inclusion in general?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How have protection risks associated with SRSP responses been identified and analyzed? ○ To what extent has a needs-based approach been taken in SRSP work, including the conduct of any needs assessments or vulnerability, gender and social inclusion analyses and diagnostic processes for understanding the needs, rights, and capacities of intended users/beneficiaries? 	*	*	*	*		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent has WFP's SRSP work managed to create and disseminate evidence on gender-sensitive and inclusive social protection, including sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data? What have been the benefits/challenges of this? ○ To what extent has WFP prioritized gender-sensitive and inclusive Shock-Responsive Social Protection in planning and partnership decisions (e.g., sufficient time, people, financial resources, and dedicated capacity strengthening of staff and partners)? ○ Is there sufficient internal and external awareness, capacity and buy-in to implement gender-sensitive and inclusive social protection systems? ○ Could you provide any examples of good practices and lessons in how WFP's system preparedness and response work has reduced inequalities in access and optimized distribution/reach of national SRSP systems to those most in need, including women and girls, indigenous populations, migrants, people living with disabilities and other most left behind groups, depending on context/crisis? ○ To what extent have social, cultural and other barriers/exclusionary norms been transformed or reinforced through SRSP targeting and delivery mechanisms? 	*			*		
	*	*	*	*		
	*	*	*	*		
	*		*			
	*					

III. Effectiveness and Sustainability	W	G	C	U	D
EQ 2: What are the key factors that have influenced WFP's engagement in SRSP in the region in general and with regards to the sustainability of achievements?					
13. What are the key enablers, barriers and trade-offs in WFP's engagement in SRSP in LAC? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the main enablers or barriers of progress on SRSP in the region/country? ○ Will funding for SRSP activities be sustainable? What are the key internal and external factors influencing/impacting sustainability of funding? ○ What institutional trade-offs have occurred, or are expected/desired, to support SRSP in LAC? (<i>trade-off could be in terms of speed, coverage, sustainability, and other</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. What criteria have been or could be followed to make decisions when choosing between rapid/direct deliveries and capacity strengthening with a longer term perspective? ○ In [country], what trade-offs exist between overall government investments in social protection and SRSP? 	*	*	*	*	
14. To what extent can the achievements propelled by WFP be sustained in time and which factors influence this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent are the results generated through the activities likely to be sustained in the long term? What do you consider to be major challenges or risks in sustaining results? 	*	*	*	*	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent has WFP's work supported the Government's capacity to sustain activities and results related to SRSP? What evidence do you have to support this? 					
15. Could you please identify key lessons and good practices related to WFP's SRSP engagement in LAC/in your country?	*	*	*	*	*

IV.Efficiency & Effectiveness	W	G	C	U	D
EQ 3: Which modalities of engagement deployed by WFP were the most effective and efficient in support of positive outcomes in SRSP in view of different contexts?					
<p>16. What kind of modalities of engagement did WFP use to support SRSP engagement in your countries?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Were these modalities the most appropriate to the type of shock(s)? Why, why not? ○ Where these modalities the most appropriate to the country context? (e.g. income level, level of existing capacities, institutional set up, country size, etc.) <p>Note to interviewer: Modalities of engagement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence generation ● High-level advocacy ● Seminar ● Roadmap development ● SSTC ● Tech solution, digitalization, platforms and expertise ● Training ● Multistakeholder coordination ● Development of financing mechanisms 	*	*	*	*	
17. What mechanisms are used to monitor changes in the country situation and ensure that WFP's approach to SRSP remains relevant in evolving contexts?	*				
18. To what extent does the level of decentralization for decision-making and organizational processes enable WFP country offices to respond within their local contexts?	*				
<p>19. To what extent were the deployed resources adequate to reach the intended results (including to strengthen internal capacities of WFP)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How many staff positions (FTE) currently support SRSP? How about part-time, consultant or temporary duty positions? How has this changed since 2015? What are their various roles in relation to SRSP? ○ In relation to funding can you share with us the track record of how resources have been mobilized to meet ambitions and goals of the regional work on SRSP? *(only ask to finance staff) ○ Is internal capacity at WFP adequate to meet objectives in the Regional Strategy, especially in terms of number of staff and technical expertise? Are there any gaps in resources (financial and human)? ○ Has WFP been able to mobilize the right technical expertise to respond to the diversity of contexts and shocks? 	*				

V.Coherence	W	G	C	U	D
EQ4 Coherence: To what extent did WFP’s role in advancing SRSP programming in the Latin American and Caribbean region contribute to WFP’s corporate vision and approach to social protection and wider discussion on the subject?					
<p>20. To what extent has WFP’s Regional Social Protection Strategy and work in LAC aligned with the Global Social Protection Strategy and contributed to internal strategies, initiatives and tools at different levels across the organization [internal coherence]?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In what ways does the regional social protection strategy align with the global social protection strategy (in terms of approaches, frameworks, terminology and concepts, expected outcomes and outputs, etc)? ○ In which ways do these frameworks differ? How have these differences and similarities influenced the regional strategy’s implementation? ○ In which ways has LAC worked with and engaged WFP HQ on SRSP? How about with other WFP regional bureaus? With country offices? ○ What is your perspective on the status of implementation and outcomes of SRSP in the LAC region versus in other regions and countries? ○ Has there been any knowledge sharing amongst regions on SRSP? If yes, what have been expected/unexpected outcomes of this exchange? 	*				
<p>21. What has been WFP’s value added vis-à-vis other SRSP actors in LAC in supporting better preparedness, response and resilience to shocks through national systems [external coherence]?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which other partners/stakeholders are collaborating on SRSP in the region/country? ○ What is the nature of collaboration amongst stakeholders / partners working on SRSP in the region/country? ○ Is there clear communication and coordination amongst partners in order to ensure coherence in preparedness and response work (i.e. no duplication of effort/work)? Are there things you would like to see changed? ○ Do you see the work of WFP in SRSP as consistent with current social protection policies and strategies in the country? What value does WFP bring to supporting governments’ improved preparedness and response to shocks through national systems? 	*	*	*	*	*

WFP Evaluation Shock-Responsive Social Protection

REGIONAL EVALUATION OF WFP'S CONTRIBUTION TO SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION (SRSP) IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN [2015-2022]

The regional evaluation of WFP's contribution to shock-responsive social protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) from 2015 to 2022 and seeks to:

- Mapping and understanding the results on implementing WFP's shock-responsive social protection framework.
- Assessing the results of direct implementation of WFP shock-responsive interventions in social protection programmes.
- Identifying the enablers and barriers, both internal and external to WFP, that might have accelerated or hindered further progress.

The survey should take **no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete**. Responses will be handled directly by the external evaluation team who will keep the identity of respondents confidential.

Thank you for participating in the e-survey.

The DeftEdge Team

Section 1. General questions on respondent profile

*Please select the type of organization you are affiliated with

- Government World Food Programme United Nations agency
- International Financial Institution Civil Society Organization Donor
- Other (Please specify)

***Please select the country where you are based**

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Anguilla | <input type="radio"/> Antigua and Barbuda | <input type="radio"/> Argentina |
| <input type="radio"/> Aruba | <input type="radio"/> Bahamas | <input type="radio"/> Barbados |
| <input type="radio"/> Belize | <input type="radio"/> Bermuda | <input type="radio"/> Bolivia |
| <input type="radio"/> British Virgin Islands | <input type="radio"/> Brazil | <input type="radio"/> Cayman Islands |
| <input type="radio"/> Chile | <input type="radio"/> Colombia | <input type="radio"/> Costa Rica |
| <input type="radio"/> Cuba | <input type="radio"/> Curaçao | <input type="radio"/> Dominica |
| <input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic | <input type="radio"/> Ecuador | <input type="radio"/> El Salvador |
| <input type="radio"/> Grenada | <input type="radio"/> Guadalupe | <input type="radio"/> Guatemala |
| <input type="radio"/> Guyana | <input type="radio"/> Haiti | <input type="radio"/> Honduras |
| <input type="radio"/> Jamaica | <input type="radio"/> Martinique | <input type="radio"/> Mexico |
| <input type="radio"/> Montserrat | <input type="radio"/> Nicaragua | <input type="radio"/> Panama |
| <input type="radio"/> Paraguay | <input type="radio"/> Peru | <input type="radio"/> Puerto Rico |
| <input type="radio"/> Saint Kitts and Nevis | <input type="radio"/> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | <input type="radio"/> Saint Lucia |
| <input type="radio"/> Saint Maarten | <input type="radio"/> Suriname | <input type="radio"/> Trinidad and Tobago |
| <input type="radio"/> United States Virgin Islands | <input type="radio"/> Turks and Caicos Islands | <input type="radio"/> Uruguay |
| <input type="radio"/> Venezuela | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify) | | |

***When did you start working in the shock-responsive social protection field?**

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Before 2015 | <input type="radio"/> 2015-2016 | <input type="radio"/> 2017-2018 |
| <input type="radio"/> 2019-2020 | <input type="radio"/> 2021-2022 | <input type="radio"/> 2023 |
| <input type="radio"/> I do not work in this area | | |

* Has the percentage of your time dedicated to shock-responsive social protection increased in the past 5 years or since you first started working on the area with WFP?

- Yes No Don't Know
-

* What percentage of your time do you currently spend working on shock-responsive social protection?

Enter a value between 0 and 100

* Please select the type Ministry you work for:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Social Protection/Development | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Civil Defense/Protection | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Environment |
| <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Health | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Housing and Urban Development |
| <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Education | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Economy/Finance | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Women and Gender Equality |
| <input type="radio"/> Ministry for Children/Youth/Family | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Foreign Affairs | <input type="radio"/> Ministry of Labour |
| <input type="radio"/> Disaster Management/Response | <input type="radio"/> Statistics or Research Office/Agency/Institute | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify) | | |

* Please indicate your gender

- Female Male Non-binary
 Prefer not to answer

Section 2. Mapping and evidence generation

WFP contribution to shock-responsive social protection through mapping and evidence generation

*Are you aware of publications, case studies or other evidence generated by WFP on shock-responsive social protection?

- Yes No

*Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

WFP has contributed to system strengthening by mapping existing disaster risk management and social protection systems and identifying gaps, weaknesses and redundancies

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Agree
 4 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

WFP has effectively used the evidence generated to position shock-responsive social protection on the national agenda

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Agree
 4 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

Evidence generated by WFP has contributed to a shared shock-responsive social protection strategy between national government and other key actors

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Agree
 4 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

WFP has effectively used the evidence generated to engage with other partners along the triple nexus (e.g., United Nations, International Financial Institutions, Civil Society) on shock-responsive social protection

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

Section 3. Contribution of seminars, webinars and broader learning events

*Have you participated in any online or in person seminars, webinars, or exchanges with other countries on shock-responsive social protection organised or co-organised by WFP?

- Yes No

*Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

The knowledge gained from the event on shock-responsive social protection allowed me to integrate elements of shock-responsive social protection in my work

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Agree
 4 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

Relationships developed during the event allowed my institution to work more effectively with other institutions in my country/region on shock-responsive social protection

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Agree
 4 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

My country applied lessons from exchanges with other countries to make our social protection system more shock-responsive

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Agree
 4 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

Section 4. WFP contribution to strengthening national social protection systems to respond to shock

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

*WFP contributed to strengthening National Social Protection systems in the following areas

a. By strengthening government capacity to better target beneficiaries in the event of a shock

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

b. By strengthening delivery mechanisms to enable a more rapid/efficient response in the event of emergencies

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

c. By strengthening multistakeholder coordination mechanisms to ensure an integrated response to emergencies

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

d. By strengthening linkages between the social protection and civil protection sectors

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

e. By supporting the establishment of financing and insurance mechanisms to better manage disaster risks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

f. By strengthening national information systems to support decision-making when responding to shocks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

g. By strengthening awareness on the gender equality dimensions of different types of shocks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

h. By strengthening awareness on the inclusion dimensions of different types of shocks

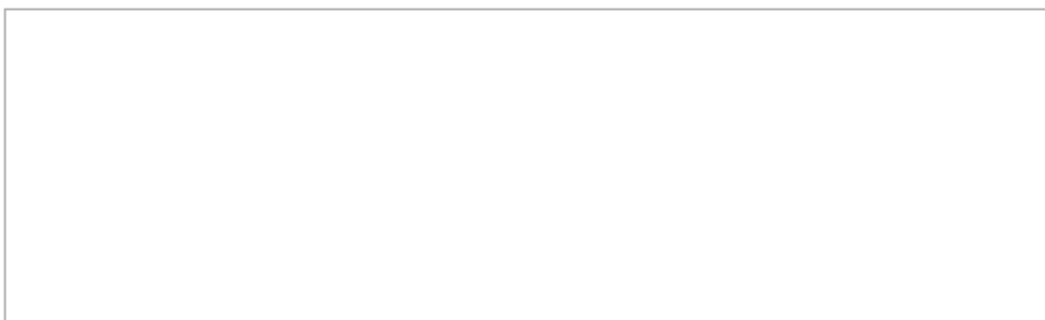
- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

i. By strengthening the normative framework to enable the social protection system to respond to shocks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

Please use this space to explain any of your responses and to provide specific examples to the above

Please use this space to provide examples of areas where WFP did not provide sufficient support



Section 5. Outcomes of strengthened national social protection systems

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

*WFP's engagement in my country has contributed to:

a. Social protection systems that are able to respond more rapidly to affected households in need in the aftermath of a shock

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

b. Social protection systems that are able to expand coverage to newly affected households in the aftermath of a shock

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

c. Social protection systems that are able to mobilise adequate assistance to cover basic needs of affected households in the aftermath of a shock

- 1 Strongly Disagree
 - 2 Disagree
 - 3 Agree
 - 4 Strongly Agree
 - Don't Know
-

Please use this space to explain any of your responses and to provide specific examples to the above

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide detailed explanations and specific examples related to their responses.

Section 6. Enabling/hinder factors

* In your operational context, please identify up to three key enabling factors that have facilitated the strengthening of national social protection systems to respond to shocks

Factor #1:

Factor #2:

Factor #3:

* Please identify up to three key factors that have hindered the strengthening of national social protection systems to respond to shocks

Factor #1:

Factor #2:

Factor #3:

Section 7. WFP's Value Added

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

*In relation to other partners promoting adaptive and/or shock-responsive social protection systems within the region, to what extent do you agree that WFP brings a clear value-added in the following working areas

a. Value added in supporting the use of digitalization (e.g. data collection on vulnerable households impacted by shocks, development of social registries, design and implementation of Management Information Systems, etc.)

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

b. Value added in supporting national social protection systems to effectively target the most vulnerable through needs/vulnerability assessments

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

c. Value added in supporting the strengthening of national systems to efficiently distribute cash and in-kind assistance in the event of a shock

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

d. Value added in supporting linkages between different types of social protection programmes (including among others, employment programmes, housing, food security, school feeding programmes) and response to shocks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

e. Value added in providing technical assistance and/or financial inputs to support the disaster risk/climate financing schemes that will respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in the event of natural disasters

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

f. Value added in coordination and information sharing among government ministries and departments with roles in delivering in shock-responsive social protection

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

g. Value added in convening and information sharing between United Nations partners, government, donor and other actors with complimentary roles in delivering in shock responsive social protection

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

h. Value added in advocating for the development of gender-sensitive social protection responses in the event of shocks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

i. Value added in advocating for the development of inclusive social protection responses in the event of shocks

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

Other value added not mentioned above, please describe

Please use this space to explain any of your responses to the above

Section 8. WFP's resourcing and investment in shock-responsive social protection

To what extent have resources (human and financial) deployed by WFP been adequate to operationalize its work in shock-responsive social protection in the following areas

* Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

WFP has recruited staff with the expertise to contribute effectively to national systems strengthening

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

WFP has provided staff and consultants with needed training and orientation with respect to their roles in shock responsive social protection

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

WFP has a clear strategy with respect to strengthening policies and processes of key national institutions with respect to shock-responsive social protection

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

WFP has put in place or leveraged adequate funding to support the institutionalisation (uptake) of system strengthening measures

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

Overall, WFP's investments in shock-responsive social protection at the national level can be sustained by national institutions

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

Section 9: WFP’s resourcing and investment in shock-responsive social protection

To what extent has WFP mobilized resources to operationalize its work in shock-responsive social protection

*WFP has built an investment case convincing donors to support its work on shock-responsive social protection

- Strongly disagree Disagree Agree
 Strongly agree Don't Know

Section 10. Recommendations

Please provide up to three recommendations for how WFP could improve its support to strengthening national systems to respond to shocks

Recommendation #1:

Recommendation #2:

Recommendation #3:

ANNEX 7. FIELDWORK AGENDA

Ecuador

Date	Organization	Female	Male
April 17, 2023	WFP Country Office Ecuador	2	4
	HIAS	1	0
	ADRA	2	0
	Plan Internacional	2	2
April 19, 2023	World Vision	0	1
	WFP Country Office Ecuador	1	0
	Registro Social	1	1
	OCHA	0	1
	MIES	1	1
April 21st, 2023	MIES	0	1
	Independent	1	0
May 3rd, 2023	ECHO	1	0
May 4th, 2023	SNGRE	1	1
	Esmeraldas Governorate	0	1
May 8, 2023	La Favorita Corporation	1	0
May 16, 2023	USAID-BHA	0	1

Dominican Republic

Date	Position	Female	Male
April 13, 2023	WFP Country Office DR	1	0
April 14, 2023	WFP Country Office Venezuela	1	0
April 17, 2023	WFP Country Office DR	5	0
April 18, 2023	WFP HQ	0	1
	WFP Country Office DR	2	1
	SIUBEN	1	0
April 19, 2023	MEPYD	0	1
	ACNUR	1	0
	PNUD	0	1
	ADESS	1	1
	CEED	0	1
	Superate	0	1
	Expertise France	1	0
April 20th, 2023	Beneficiaries	15	3
April 21st, 2023	WFP Country Office DR	2	0
April 25th, 2023	WFP Country Office DR	1	1

Barbados

Date	Position	Female	Male
April 19, 2023	MCO Caribbean	0	1
	RBP Barbados	2	0
	RBP Barbados, Bridgetown, Programming	1	1
April 20th, 2023	UN Women	0	1
	RBP Barbados	1	0
	UNICEF, Trinidad and Tobago	1	0
	RBP RB Latin America and the Caribbean	1	0
	Food and Agriculture Organization	1	1
	Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs	1	0
April 21st, 2023	Global Affairs Canada	2	0

Dominica

Date	Organization	Female	Male
April 24th, 2023	RBP Dominica	3	0
	Government of Dominica	1	0
April 26th, 2023	RBP Dominica	2	0

ANNEX 8. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS MAPPING

Recommendation [in numerical order]	Conclusions [by number(s) of conclusion]	Findings [by number of finding]
Recommendation 1. WFP should establish more structured platforms for knowledge sharing and exchange both internally among WFP country offices and regional bureaus as well as externally among partners, while also providing support to strengthen capacities in less-advanced regions with a view to promote their uptake of lessons.	Conclusion 2	Finding 12
Recommendation 2. WFP should continue positioning itself as a key partner to national governments within the realm of SRSP, as part of its broader contribution to SP system strengthening, for better food security and nutrition outcomes. Building upon the existing SRSP roadmaps and CSPs, WFP COs, working closely with governments, should persist in revising well-defined strategies with measurable objectives in SRSP based on lessons learned to date, while maintaining flexibility to address emerging needs.	Conclusion 2 & 3	Findings 1, 5, 10 & 12
Recommendation 3. WFP should continue generating robust evidence on its engagement in strengthening SP systems and contribute to enhancing the monitoring and evaluation capacities of these systems. It shall further develop its ToC and performance measurement framework (PMF) for SP, describing the key milestones and how WFP will know when these are met.	Conclusion 3	Finding 1, 5, & 10
Recommendation 4. Recognising the significant investment to date in internal and external capacity strengthening in SRSP as part of the broader capacity strengthening efforts on SP in LAC (Caribbean SRSP e-learning, EPRI training among others) and to ensure sustainability of investments in SP systems, WFP should continue these efforts internally and externally.	Conclusion 3 & 4	Finding 1, 5, 10, 13 & 16
Recommendation 5. The evaluation recognizes the innovative and pioneering nature of WFP's investments to date on disaster risk financing (DRF). WFP should continue to expand its evidence generation and investments in disaster risk financing where it is relevant, to contribute to sustainable financing models of response to shocks through strengthened SP.	Conclusion 1	Findings 3,4,5,8,9, 10 & 11
Recommendation 6. Recognizing its innovative contribution in digitalization processes, WFP should continue exploring opportunities in supporting governments of the region in to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of SP delivery. Particular emphasis should be placed on registries, monitoring, payment and delivery systems.	Conclusion 1	Findings 3,4,5,8,9, 10 & 11
Recommendation 7. WFP should seize the opportunity when assisting governments in strengthening SP systems and emergency preparedness and ensure that it also contributes to enhancing inclusion, gender-sensitivity and potentially their transformative attributes. This will allow to continue building on its strategic thinking on gender sensitive SP from an intersectional perspective, ensuring the needs of the most vulnerable populations are systematically considered.	Conclusion 5	Findings 3, 5 & 6

ANNEX 9. LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

At the inception phase, the team interviewed relevant stakeholders remotely. Remote inception briefing meetings and interviews took place from in the last two weeks of January 2023. At data collection, the team members travelled to Barbados, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador for fieldwork in April. Online interviews were also conducted in the data collection phase in March, April, and May. Beneficiaries have been listened through field interviews and focus group discussions.

Inception phase - overview key informant interviews

Organization	F	M
WFP-CO	3	1
WFP-HQ	1	
WFP-RBP	4	4
Grand Total	8	5

Data collection phase - overview key informant interviews

Institution	F	M
ACNUR	1	
ADESS		1
ADRA	2	
Beneficiaries	46	12
Canadian High Commission (Barbados)	1	
CashCap	1	
Colombia-DNP (Departamento Nacional de Planeación)		1
Colombia-SISBEN Medellín, Antioquia	1	
Corporación La Favorita	1	
ECHO	2	2
ECLAC		1
Expertise France	1	
FCDO	1	
Food and Agriculture Organisation, Barbados	1	
France/BVI	1	
Global Affairs Canada	1	
Gobernación de Esmeraldas		1
Government of Dominica	1	
HIAS	1	
IDB		1
INABIE	1	
IOM		1
MIES-Ecuador	1	1
Ministerio de Economía-Dominican Republic		1
Ministry of Finance and Planning, Dominica	1	
Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs, Barbados	1	
Ministry of the Environment and Kalinago upliftment	1	
OCHA		2
Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States	1	
Peru - Instituto de Defensa Civil (INDECI)	1	1
Peru - Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusion Social (MIDIS)		1
Plan Internacional	2	2
Registro Social-Ecuador	1	1
SIUBEN	1	
Secretaria de Gestion de Riesgos (SNGRE)-Ecuador	1	1
Subsecretaría de Desarrollo Infantil-Ecuador		1
Superate	4	1
UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	1	
UN Women	1	
UNDRR		1
UNDP		1
UNHCR	1	1
UNICEF	3	1
USAID-BHA		3
WFP-CO	35	20
WFP-HQ	10	3
WFP-Other Bureaus	2	4
WFP-Other COs		2
WFP-RBP	15	9
World Bank	2	1
World Vision	3	3
Grand Total	151	81

ANNEX 10. DETAILED STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholders	Interest in the Evaluation	Participation in the Evaluation (<i>including stage and level of importance</i>)	Key Stakeholders (<i>including role in relation to SRSP</i>)
Internal (WFP)			
Regional bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean	<p>RBP Management: RBP management has an interest in an independent/ impartial account of performance at different levels as well as in learning from the evaluation findings. RBP propelled the work in the field SRSP through the implementation of the Regional Social Protection Strategy and associated SRSP framework, and thus have specific interests in demonstrating with evidence what has gone well, where there is a growing demand for their services, and how internal and external collaborations can be improved.</p>	<p>RBP Management will be involved in using evaluation findings from this thematic evaluation in several phases: (1) to approve the final inception report as members of the EC; (2) in reviewing the findings from the field visits and regionally through one regional workshops; (3) finally, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the report will provide support to strengthening and expanding work in Shock-Responsive social protection in alignment with diverse country contexts and needs to prepare for and respond to external shocks.</p> <p>In addition, they will be engaged as key informant interview respondents during the data collection phase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Director – Evaluation Committee Chair Regional Head of Programme, RBP
	<p>RBP Technical Advisors: They will continue providing technical support and oversight to country offices in LAC and are expected to use the evaluation findings and recommendations to this purpose, as well as to identify future areas of focus for SRSP work.</p>	<p>RBP will be involved in using evaluation findings from this thematic evaluation in several phases: (1) First, in iterating on the findings of the inception interviews, and specifically the evaluability assessment, in order to learn from and improve on sampling and data collection processes, plans and tools as members of the EC/ERG; (2) in reviewing, analyzing and validating the findings from the quantitative data collection (online survey) in order to develop detailed lines of inquiry for the qualitative data collection (desk review, desk review + and field visits); (3) in individually validating the findings from the field visits and regionally through four remote workshops; (4) finally, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the report will provide support to strengthening and expanding work in Shock-Responsive Social Protection in alignment with diverse country contexts and needs to prepare for and respond to external shocks.</p> <p>In addition to being members of the EC/ERG and being engaged in various approval or validation phases throughout, according to availability and as noted above, they will also be engaged through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inception Phase Interviews Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Social Protection Advisor Social Protection Expert Programme and Policy Officers, RBP Regional CBT Officer Regional School Feeding Officer Regional Social Behavior Change and Communications Officer Regional EPR Officer Regional Country Capacity Strengthening Adviser

	<p>RBP: Gender and Inter-sectoral specialists: Interested in findings and recommendations related to their areas of work, and are thus interested in filling data gaps and connecting the team to data, including policies, data sources, other thematic focal points in the region, sharing challenges and good practices that require attention during the evaluation.</p>	<p>In addition to being members of the EC/ERG and being engaged in various validation phases throughout, according to availability and as noted above, they will also be engaged through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception Phase Interviews • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Gender Adviser • Regional Protection Advisor • Regional Nutrition Advisor
	<p>RBP: Evaluation officers: The regional evaluation officers support regional bureau management to ensure quality, credible and useful decentralized evaluation.</p>	<p>The evaluation manager (with support from the regional evaluation officer) will be the main interlocutor between the team, represented by the team leader, the firm's focal point, and WFP counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Officer – Evaluation manager • Regional Evaluation Officer
<p>WFP HQ divisions (Social Protection)</p>	<p>WFP headquarters divisions are responsible for issuing and overseeing the rollout of normative guidance on corporate programme themes, activities and modalities, as well as of overarching corporate policies and strategies. They also have an interest in the lessons that emerge from evaluations, as many may have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus. The social protection unit has been consulted during planning and preparation phases of this evaluation to ensure that key policy, strategic and programmatic considerations are understood from the onset. LAC is one of the regions where WFP pioneered the work in the field of SRSP, and the evaluation is expected to provide valuable evidence and lessons learnt for WFP's work globally.</p>	<p>In addition to some being members of the ERG and being engaged in various validation phases throughout, according to availability and as noted under RBP Technical Advisors, they will also be engaged through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception Phase Interviews • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Adviser, Social Protection • Programme and Policy Officers • Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction, Global Cash-Based Transfers Division, Gender-responsive Social Protection, Emergency Support and Response Unit, Gender and Disability Inclusion Advisors
<p>WFP Regional and Country Offices (Social Protection) – Outside LAC</p>	<p>LAC is one of the regions where WFP pioneered the work in the field of SRSP, and the evaluation is expected to provide valuable evidence and lessons learnt for WFP's work globally. They have an interest in the lessons that emerge from this evaluation, as it is expected to have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus, and LAC's influence on other WFP SRSP work is the focus of one evaluation question.</p>	<p>Social protection officials from a sample of other WFP Regional Bureaus and country offices outside of LAC will be engaged through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews during the data collection phase • Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Programme and Policy Officers and Advisors in SRSP activity areas

WFP country offices in LAC	Responsible for the planning and implementation of WFP interventions at country level. The country offices have an interest in learning from the experience to inform decision-making and future strategies. They are also called upon to account internally as well as to its beneficiaries and partners for performance and results of its work in SRSP. The country office will be involved in using evaluation findings for its future programme and policy work and partnerships strategies.	In addition to some being members of the ERG and being engaged in various validation phases throughout, according to availability and as noted under RBP Technical Advisors, they will also be engaged through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception Phase Interviews • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase • Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative and Director, Caribbean MCO • Representative and Director, Dominican Republic CO • Representative and Director, Ecuador CO • Programme and Policy Officers, including gender and protection officers, at the CO level: Barbados MCO, Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala, Colombia • M&E, Gender and Protection Officers at CO level
WFP field offices in LAC	Responsible for day-to-day programme implementation. The field offices liaise with stakeholders at decentralized levels and has direct beneficiary contact. It will be affected by the outcome of the evaluation.	Field offices may be engaged through the survey. This will be determined with the EM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV)	Primary stakeholder and 2 nd level quality assurance – The Office of Evaluation has a stake in ensuring that decentralized evaluations deliver quality, credible and useful evidence respecting provisions for impartiality as well as roles and accountabilities of various decentralized evaluation stakeholders as identified in the evaluation policy. It may use the evaluation findings, as appropriate, to feed into centralized evaluations, evaluation syntheses or other learning products.	OEV are not expected to be engaged through data collection, though provide some oversight through the Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
External			
National Governments and Regional Bodies	Key informants and primary stakeholder – WFP has worked closely with national Governments and regional bodies, such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), to implement the Regional Social Protection Strategy. Therefore, these Governments have a direct interest in knowing whether WFP activities in the country are aligned with its priorities, harmonized with the action of other partners and meet the expected results.	Governments will be engaged through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase • Surveys (as participants of trainings / workshops related to social protection) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministries of Social Protection • Ministries of Finance • Disaster management Agencies • Ministries of Education (School Feeding) • Disaster preparedness/ Ministries of the Environment (Climate Change) • Statistical Units/Population Statistics • Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) • Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) • Inter-American Development Bank • R4V on Migration and Social Protection • Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)

United Nations partners	<p>Secondary stakeholder - The harmonized action of the UNCT should contribute to the realization of the government developmental objectives. It has therefore an interest in ensuring that WFP programmes are effective in contributing to the United Nations concerted efforts. Various agencies are also direct partners of WFP at policy and programme levels. Collaboration in the field of SRSP at regional level and in some countries has been particularly close with UNICEF and this evaluation is expected to be relevant for informing future partnerships and collaboration efforts.</p>	<p>In addition to some being members of the ERG (UNICEF) and engaged in various validation phases throughout, according to availability and as noted under RBP Technical Advisors, they will also be engaged through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase • Surveys (as participants of trainings / workshops related to social protection) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCT Members / country-level specialists and advisors in Dominican Republic, Dominica, Colombia, Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador • UNICEF LACRO, Regional Social Policy Adviser – • Regional UNHCR/IOM on migration and UNICEF on COVID-19 response • UN Women • Pan-American Health Organization • Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) • IOM • UNICEF • UNDP • Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (ILO) • ECLAC • OCHA
Multilateral, bilateral, area specialists, and donor agencies	<p>Primary stakeholder - In many countries WFP has been closely collaborating on the field of SRSP with the World Bank. ECHO has funded some of WFP's work in SRPS in the region and showed continued interest into the topic. The results of the evaluation may affect future implementation modalities, strategic orientations and partnerships. These stakeholders will be involved in informing the evaluation and using its findings and recommendations. They also have an interest in knowing whether their funds have been spent efficiently and if WFP work has been effective and contributed to their own strategies and programmes.</p>	<p>In addition to some being members of the ERG and being engaged in various validation phases throughout, according to availability and as noted under RBP Technical Advisors, they will also be engaged through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Bank, Sr Social Protection Specialists • Department for International Development (UK Government) (DFID) • Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (US) • USAID • Government of Canada • ECHO
Non-governmental organizations, academia and private sector	<p>Secondary stakeholder –WFP and governments sometimes work through non-governmental organizations, academia, and the private sector on communication, targeting and research activities. The results of the evaluation may affect future delivery modalities, communication and targeting strategies. In addition, they may provide feedback on the needs and situation of hard-to-reach beneficiaries.</p>	<p>NGO, academia and private sector partners will primarily be engaged through in-country fieldwork in sampled countries through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Informant interviews during the data collection phase • Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxford Policy Management • International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) <p>International non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations representing beneficiary groups, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbados: TBD • Colombia: Western Union, Asociación de Sobrevivientes de Minas, Asociación de Capacidad Sin Límites Caritas, Juntas de Acción Comunal • Dominica: Dominica Red Cross, Save the Children, Oxfam • DR: World Vision, Asociación Dominicana de Planificación Familiar (PROFAMILIA), Acción Comunitaria para el Progreso, Círculo de Mujeres con Discapacidad, Mujeres en Desarrollo Dominicana

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecuador: Plan International, Red Cross Guatemala: Oxfam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peru: TBD
Beneficiaries	<p>Key informants and secondary stakeholders -As the ultimate recipients the assistance through Shock-Responsive Social Protection, beneficiaries have a stake in WFP determining whether its work is appropriate and effective. While taking into account that an important portion of WFP work in SRSP was supporting national governments in strengthening their social protection systems, the evaluation team will also seek views of the direct and indirect beneficiaries to ensure their opinions and experience are accounted for. Under SRSP activities, particular attention is paid to the needs of women, children, and older persons directly, as well as youth, persons with disabilities and migrants indirectly where their needs are specific and -in the event of shocks-they are at risk of being further left behind.</p>	<p>The evaluation team will primarily seek the perspective of beneficiaries through interviews with their representative organizations, such as those working with persons with disabilities in Colombia and Dominican Republic or with women and children in Ecuador, as well as through extensive document review of Gender and Age Marker reports at the country-level. The inception phase interviews revealed that it may be difficult to access beneficiaries during the time available for this evaluation, and therefore discussions are continuing about some interviews in Ecuador as well as the Dominican Republic (given the small size of the country and accessibility of primary beneficiaries). In addition, there is a possibility in the Dominica to consult with village councils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities, women and indigenous communities and their representative organizations (above)

ANNEX 11. QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

This annex describes how validity, utility, credibility, and independence were addressed as part of the quality assurance process throughout the evaluation.

Validity: Evaluation team members all took responsibility for the quality assurance process, ensuring rigorous data collection, analysis, and synthesis, supported by triangulation and verification to minimize potential errors. In addition to the standard report review process, the Evaluation Committee and Evaluation Reference Group were engaged in inception interviews as well as the mid-point validation workshop to monitor quality and validate results at multiple stages.

Following the development of the data collection instruments, there was a pre-test phase to confirm the validity and reliability of the collection and analysis processes. The DE team pre-tested the interview and discussion guides, as well as the survey(s) to determine which items needed to be revised for clarity and accuracy. DE team members tasked with conducting interviews held a practice session to ensure a common understanding of the main questions and follow-up/branching questions in all languages (Spanish, English, and French), and the note-taking requirements for each stakeholder group, including coding and analysis purposes. The online surveys were pre-tested internally to ensure they were fully functional, and then sent to a small group selected by the Evaluation Office (likely made up of EC and ERG members) to ensure the questions were clear in all language versions, that the flow was logical, and necessary information was being captured (including for the case studies), and to confirm the time required to complete the questionnaire. The tools were revised as needed and tested again, if necessary, prior to being finalized. This phase also allowed for the initial testing of the codes assigned for the qualitative data analysis.

Quality assurance mechanisms also extended to our data management systems. DE had set up a secure hub with a common file structure for document management in MS Teams' SharePoint. A range of other data management software was used by DeftEdge for processing and analyzing sensitive information collected through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. The primary software used for this assignment included Zoho, MS Excel and RStudio for surveys and quantitative data, and Dedoose and NVivo for qualitative data.

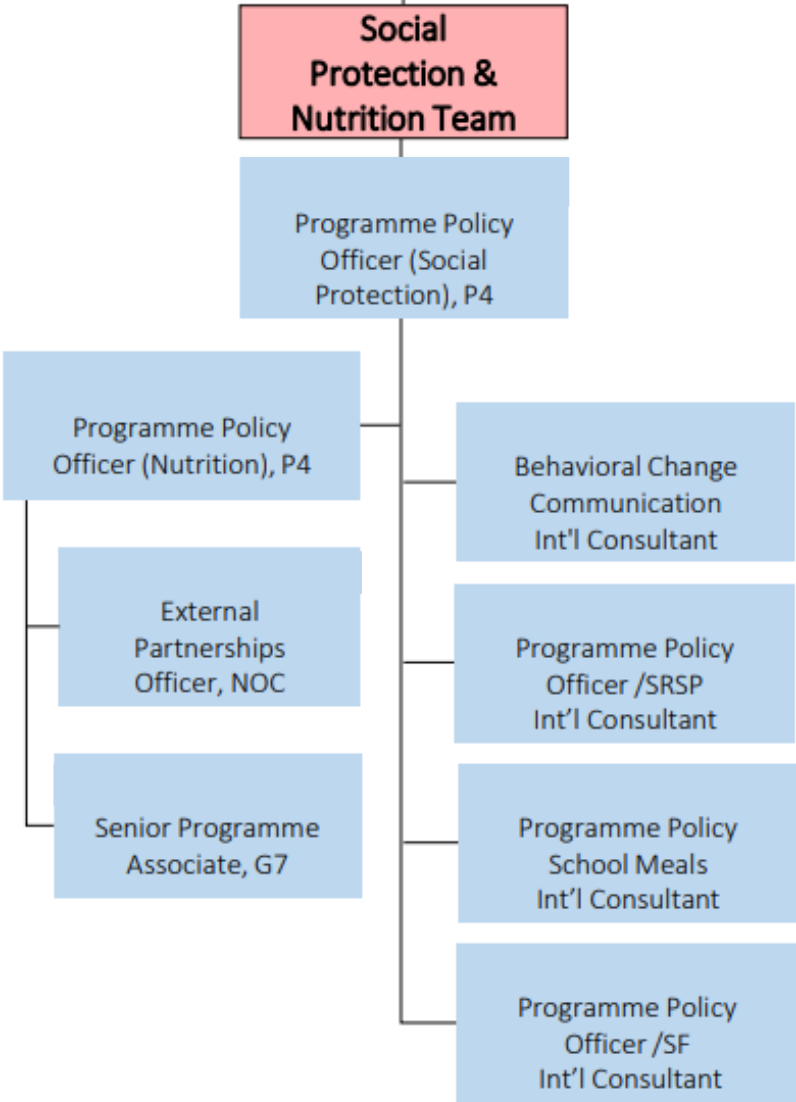
Finally, the evaluation used DE's integrated Quality Support (QS) system. For this assignment, the designated internal quality assurance specialist was Ms. Ann Sutherland, who had extensive experience in evaluation and evaluation quality assessment processes. The evaluation team had also identified two additional members of the team, including the Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader, who supported this role. Together, they provided evaluation quality assurance through review and feedback on major assignment deliverables prior to submission, at the design, data collection and analysis, and reporting phases.

Utility – To support utility, the QA process ensured that the evaluation, and in particular the recommendations, aligned with the evaluation purpose and objectives. The deliverables were clearly and concisely presented with frequent use of carefully chosen visual aids to convey key information. Furthermore, a participatory approach was followed that included frequent communication with the Evaluation Manager, validation of findings with the EC and ERG, and a consultative process for the development of recommendations.

Credibility – This was attained by ensuring that the robust methodological approach was carefully followed. Important steps included the testing of data collection tools for validity and reliability, gathering data from a representative sample of the range of stakeholder groups (drawn from the stakeholder mapping) and conducting extensive document review. Findings were based on multiple methods and sources of data, and this triangulation was clearly evident in the report. Different stakeholder views were adequately reflected in the evaluation analysis and reporting, and the evaluation report provided a balanced and comprehensive presentation of the findings, including identification of successes and failures, in support of the primary learning objective.

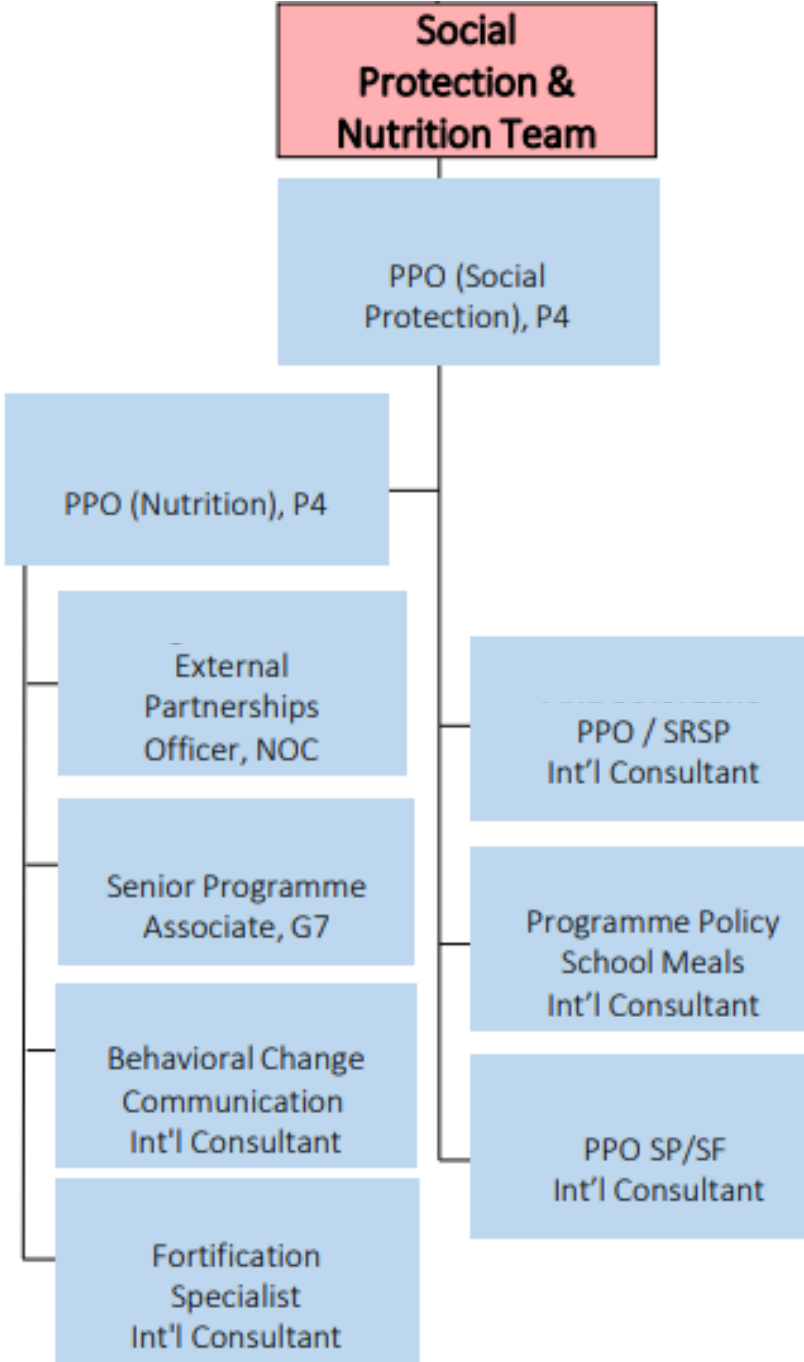
Independence: DeftEdge confirmed that all members of the evaluation team were independent, and that no member had any conflict of interest with the subject of the evaluation. Each member had signed the UNEG Pledge of Ethical Conduct in this regard.

ANNEX 12.A. ORGANIGRAMME OF RBP STAFF IN SP IN 2020



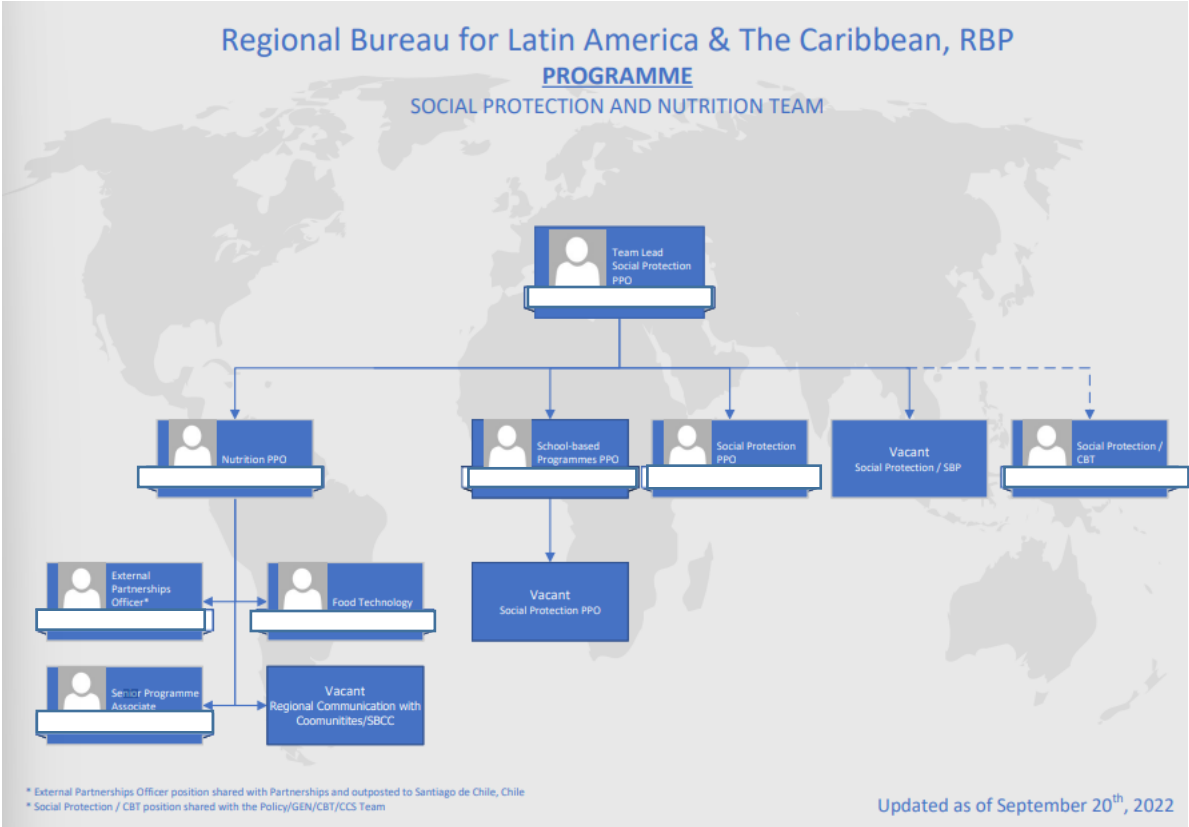
Source: RBP Programme Organigramme 2020.

ANNEX 12.B. ORGANIGRAMME OF RBP STAFF IN SP IN 2021



Source: RBP Programme Organigramme 2021.

ANNEX 12.C. ORGANIGRAMME OF RBP STAFF IN SP IN 2022



Source: RBP Programme Organigramme 2022.

ANNEX 13. SURVEY RESPONSES

See survey responses in link: [Zoho analysis - All responses \(104\).pdf](#)

ANNEX 14. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ANNEX 15. ACRONYMS

ACR	Annual Country Report
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
ASP	Adaptative Social Protection
BHA	Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance
BVI	British Virgin Islands
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBT	Cash-Based Transfer
CCRIF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CCS	Country Capacity Strengthening
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CEPAL/ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
CO	Country Office
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CRIFF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
DAC	Development Assistance Commission
DE	Deft Edge
DEQAS	Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System of WFP
DEWAS	Decentralized Evaluation Work Area System
DFID	Department for International Development (UK Government)
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EC	Evaluation Committee
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EM	Evaluation Manager
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
EQ	Evaluation Question
ER	Evaluation Report
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ERM	Emergency and Response Management
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
ET	Evaluation Team
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
G2P	Government-to-people
GAM	Gender and Age Marker

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICSP	Interim Country Strategic Plan
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IOM	The International Organization for Migration
IPC-IG	International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth
IR	Inception Report
JP	Joint Programme
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
KIs	Key Informants
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean region
MCO	Multi-country Office
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Microsoft
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NEP	National Employment Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NVivo	Qualitative Analysis Software
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
P2/P3/P4/P5	Staff grades in the UN classification system
PAP	Public Assistance Programme
PP	Percentage Points
PROSOLI	Programa Progresando con Solidaridad (Solidarity Progressing Program, a social welfare programme in the Dominican Republic)
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QS	Quality Support
R4V	The Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants
RB	Regional Bureau
RBB	Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific
RBC	Regional Bureau for Africa
RBP	Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean
REO	Regional Evaluation Officer

SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SF	School Feeding
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SIUBEN	Sistema Único de Beneficiarios
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SP	Social Protection
SPIF	Social Protection Innovation Facility
SPN	Social Protection and Nutrition
SPR	Standard Project Report
SRSP	Shock-Responsive Social Protection
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCTs	United Nations Country Teams
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VfM	Value for Money
WFP	World Food Programme

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