

Evaluation of China

WFP Country Strategic Plan

2022-2025

Summary Terms of Reference



Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs) encompass the entirety of WFP activities during a specific period. Their purpose is twofold: 1) to provide evaluation evidence and learning on WFP's performance for country-level strategic decisions, specifically for developing the next Country Strategic Plan and 2) to provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders.

Subject and Focus of the Evaluation

The evaluation will cover all WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) since the cut-off date of the data collection of the previous CSPE, October-2020: while the evaluation will focus primarily on the current CSP 2022-2025 in order to better assess the extent to which changes have taken place with the introduction of the CSP.

The evaluation will assess WFP contributions to CSP strategic outcomes, establishing plausible causal relations between the outputs of WFP activities, the implementation process, the operational environment and changes observed at the outcome level, including any unintended consequences.

The evaluation will also focus on adherence to humanitarian principles, protection and gender issues and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC), namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and coherence.

Objectives and Users of the Evaluation

WFP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a broad range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and presents an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Country Office and its stakeholders. It presents an opportunity for the Country Office to benefit from an independent assessment of its

operations and to use the evaluation evidence to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan. The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in November 2025.

Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

Question 1: To what extent is the CSP evidence-based and strategically focused to address the root causes of food and nutrition insecurity of the most vulnerable people in rural and underdeveloped areas (central and western areas) in China? The evaluation team will reflect on the extent to which: the design of the CSP was informed by evidence (including from the evaluation of the previous CSP) ; the CSP is relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals and is internally coherent and based on a theory of change, including achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals; the CSP addresses the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind; WFP's strategic positioning has remained relevant throughout the implementation of the CSP in light of changing context, national capacities and needs; and the CSP is coherent and aligned with the wider UN and includes appropriate strategic partnerships based on the comparative advantage of WFP in the country.

Question 2: What difference did WFP's CSP make to food security and nutrition in rural and underdeveloped areas (central and western areas) in China? The evaluation team will reflect on the extent to which: WFP used its comparative advantage to achieve CSP coverage and outcome targets, WFP contributes to achievement of cross-cutting aims (gender, integration, equity and inclusion, environment, and climate change); the achievements of the CSP are likely to be sustainable; the extent to

which WFP's concept-testing model enhance markets and sustainability to smallholder farming, did WFP's assistance to the Chinese government inform better targeting practices; and the extent to which WFP's rural resilience approaches supported the government to strengthen the link between rural revitalization and poverty alleviation.

Question 3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to CSP outputs and strategic outcomes? The evaluation team will reflect on: whether outputs were delivered within the intended timeframe; the appropriateness of coverage and targeting of interventions; cost-efficient delivery of assistance; and whether alternative, more cost-effective measures were considered.

Question 4: What are the critical factors, internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results? The evaluation team will reflect on the extent to which: WFP has sustained and enhanced its partnership with the Government of China and other entities at the centralized and decentralized levels; WFP established an leveraged strategic and operational partnerships (Government, private sector, non-governmental, UN agencies) to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of interventions to address root causes of nutritionally vulnerable people in China; and other factors (technical cooperation model, resourcing outlook and strategy, transition/handover strategy, WFP technical expertise and capacity, other internal or external factors) the played a role in the implementation of the CSP

Scope and Methodology

The unit of analysis is the Country Strategic Plan understood as the set of strategic outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs that were included in the CSP document approved by the WFP Executive Board, as well as any subsequent approved budget revisions.

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach; this implies a methodological design in which data collection and analysis is informed by a feedback loop combining a deductive approach, which starts from predefined analytical categories, with an inductive approach that leaves space for unforeseen issues or lines of inquiry that had not been identified at the inception stage.

In line with this approach, data will be collected through a mix of primary and secondary sources with different techniques including desk review, semi-structured or open-ended interviews, closed answer questionnaires, focus groups and direct observation.

Systematic data triangulation across different sources and methods should be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluation Team: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent evaluators and thematic experts with relevant expertise for the China CSP.

Evaluation Manager: The evaluation will be managed by Ms. Philippa Morgan, Evaluation Officer in the WFP Office of Evaluation. She will be the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process. The second level of quality assurance will be provided by Ms. Alexandra Chambel, Senior Evaluation Officer.

Stakeholders: WFP stakeholders at country, regional and HQ level are expected to engage throughout the evaluation process to ensure a high degree of utility and transparency. External stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, government, donors, implementing partners and other UN agencies will be consulted during the evaluation process.

Communications

An internal reference group composed of key WFP staff from the China Country Office and Headquarters, plays an advisory role, and will review and provide feedback on evaluation products.

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office and Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the fieldwork. A country learning workshop will be held to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

While all evaluation products will be produced in English, arrangements for local translators during fieldwork may be required.

Timing and Key Milestones

Inception Phase: May– June 2024

Fieldwork Dates: July - August 2024

Fieldwork Debrief: late August 2024

Reports: Draft Report November 2024, Final Report February 2025

Learning Workshop: January 2025

Executive Board: November 2025