



WFP EVALUATION



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP's Strategic Plan 2022–2025

Centralized evaluation report
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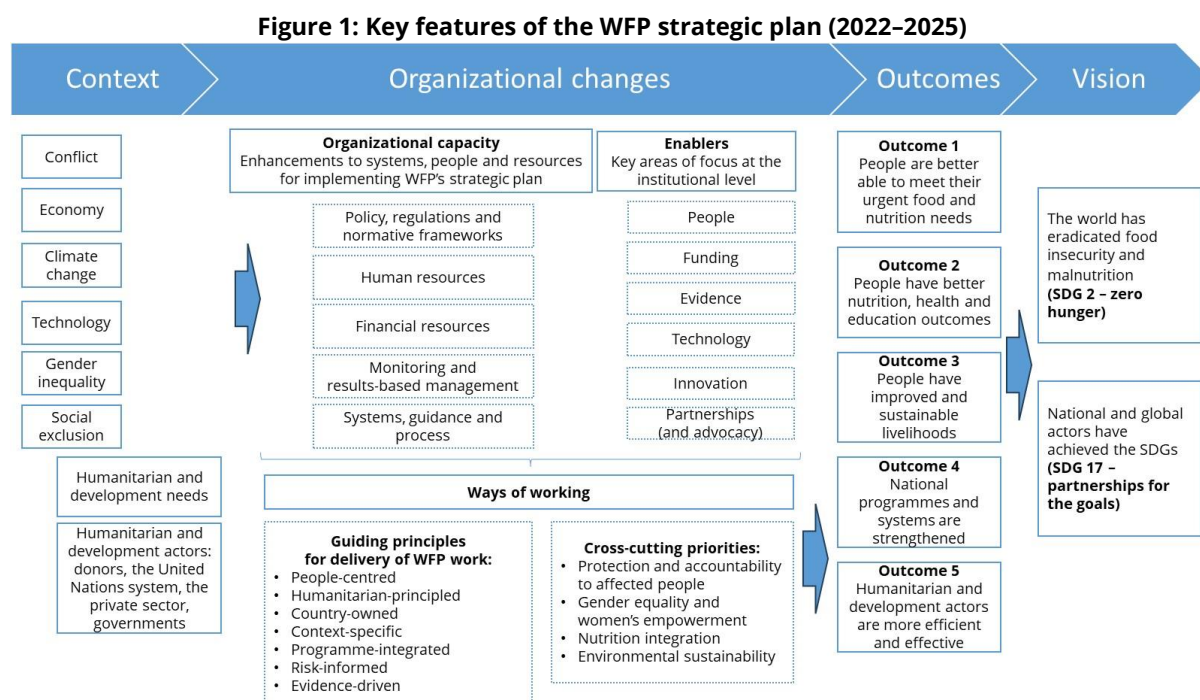
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Executive summary

INTRODUCTION

What was evaluated?

1. The strategic plan for 2022–2025 was developed in 2021. Figure 1 captures the key features of the plan, including the organizational capacities and enablers to be deployed in its implementation, and the planned ways of working.



2. The main vehicle for implementation of the strategic plan is the country strategic plan (CSP) through which the strategic plan's priorities are translated into country-specific plans that are informed by national priorities and developed in consultation with governments and in line with United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. At the time of this evaluation, all the countries where WFP operates had a CSP or an interim CSP, with 46 country offices having moved to second-generation CSPs. A total of 36 CSPs have been designed after the strategic plan was approved.

Why was the evaluation conducted and in which context?

3. The mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan for 2022–2025 was conducted between September 2023 and August 2024 and covered the period from January 2022 to the end of 2023. The evaluation provided an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the strategic plan so far, and to identify key issues to be addressed during the remaining period of the plan's cycle and in the design of the next strategic plan, which will be presented to the Executive Board for approval in November 2025.
4. Over the strategic plan implementation period, WFP's corporate structure has undergone significant changes. In 2023, WFP welcomed a new Executive Director, prompting a shift in senior leadership. Also in 2023, WFP launched the business operation and organization strategic transformation project, which aims to review WFP's organizational structure with a view to enhancing institutional efficiency and effectiveness.
5. The global context has also evolved considerably over the strategic plan period. Economic pressures arising from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic have adversely affected food

production and food security, and continue to disproportionately affect certain regions, notably sub-Saharan Africa. Prolonged conflicts such as those in the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and Ethiopia, the war in Ukraine, the conflict in Gaza and extreme weather events continue to create significant humanitarian needs. In 2024, nearly 300 million people require humanitarian assistance and protection.¹

Figure 2: Humanitarian needs by region, 2021 and 2024



Sources: Humanitarian Action. 2024. [Global Humanitarian Overview 2024](#); Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2021. [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).

6. The ongoing reform of the United Nations development system has seen WFP expand its services in order to function as a “partner of choice” in support of other humanitarian and development actors. Within the United Nations development system, WFP has also committed to strengthening its role as a system-wide service provider beyond its cluster responsibilities.
7. In 2023, WFP launched the global assurance project aimed at strengthening specific areas of the organization’s assurance systems. While still ongoing, the project has identified key areas requiring improvement, including monitoring, identity management and supply chains in high-risk WFP operations, and has incorporated assurance initiatives into WFP’s 2024 implementation plans.

How was the evaluation conducted?

8. The mid-term evaluation adopted a mixed-methods, participatory approach, analysing quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources. These included data on WFP’s performance and financing, previous evaluations, audits and other internal documents, a survey of country office staff, round table discussions on specific themes involving the six regional bureaux and country offices, focus group discussions with Board representatives (one for each list) and semi-structured interviews with key informants. Overall, 384 informants were consulted, 46 percent of whom were women and 54 percent men.
9. In recognition of the limitations associated with assessing progress towards the strategic outcomes after only two years of implementation, and with performance data available for only one year

¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2024. [Global Humanitarian Overview 2024](#).

(2023), the mid-term evaluation focused mainly on understanding how WFP has equipped itself to deliver on the strategic plan, explicitly considering the implications for the remaining implementation period and for the design of next strategic plan. Shifts in the external environment and internal organizational changes provide the backdrop for the findings and guide consideration of the priorities to be brought forward.

FINDINGS

Relevance and strategic focus of the design of the strategic plan

The strategic plan for 2022–2025 is well aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other relevant normative frameworks, including those related to the strengthening of the United Nations development system. Building on its predecessor, which covered the period from 2017 to 2021, the strategic plan for 2022–2025 has introduced some important shifts, such as greater integration of the changing lives and saving lives agendas through the adoption of an incremental approach that allows for the continuity and consolidation of ongoing initiatives, rather than the sudden introduction of significant change.

10. Adopting an incremental model of change, the strategic plan for 2022–2025 introduced the following key shifts:
 - the reframing and streamlining of the strategic outcomes and strategic results of the previous strategic plan into five strategic outcomes that are mapped on to and aligned with the SDGs and related targets;
 - the introduction of seven guiding principles for the design and implementation of WFP's work;²
 - the recognition of six essential enablers³ of the strategic plan's results and ambitions;
 - the inclusion, for the first time, of nutrition integration as a cross-cutting priority, as reflected in the corporate results framework (CRF) for 2022–2025, joining the cross-cutting issues that were included in the previous strategic plan; and
 - an ambitious shift in positioning, with a focus on partnerships that advance WFP's work and provide funding for activities that address the root causes of food insecurity and build resilience.
11. Alignment with the new results architecture and revised indicators for the strategic plan implied transaction costs for WFP's country offices, diverting resources from the implementation of the plan. These alignment efforts were sometimes in tension with approaches and priorities already agreed with national governments prior to the submission of CSPs for quality assurance and clearance from central headquarters.

² The seven guiding principles are people-centred, humanitarian-principled, country-owned, context-specific, programme-integrated, risk-informed and evidence-driven.

³ The six strategic plan enablers are people, partnerships, funding, evidence, technology and innovation.

The strategic plan helped to clarify WFP's ambitions in the saving lives and changing lives agendas but was less helpful in prioritizing interventions at the country level, inadvertently encouraging the proliferation of activities with limited internal coherence. There was a missed opportunity to link WFP's receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize to a better articulation of the organization's role in addressing the challenges in peacebuilding.

12. The design of the strategic plan is evidence-based and relevant to the global challenges related to food security and nutrition. The plan gives greater legitimacy to WFP's engagement in development programming, but it does not sufficiently clarify the organization's roles in the changing lives agenda. Among internal and external stakeholders there are concerns about WFP's capacity to deliver across a wide range of activities without clear prioritization, and the evaluation observed an inclination in some country offices to include as many ambitions as possible in their CSPs, so as to avoid limiting potential funding opportunities. In particular, for country offices focused on changing lives, the context-specific features of WFP's comparative advantages are insufficiently clear.
13. The strengthening of national capacities⁴ and the provision of administrative and logistics services for national governments are emphasized in the strategic plan as important dimensions of WFP's enabling role. However, the plan's results architecture presents these services as stand-alone strategic outcomes 4 and 5 rather than intervention modalities for delivering strategic outcomes 1, 2 and 3. This results architecture has not helped the linking of service provision and capacity strengthening to food security and nutrition outcomes in programme planning and management at the country level and in reporting to external stakeholders, with implications for the coherence, contribution to lesson learning and funding of WFP's capacity strengthening work.

Policy architecture and guidance

WFP's policy framework and related guidance are aligned with the strategic plan and largely provide the tools to implement the plan through CSPs, but they have not helped to clarify organizational priorities. The volume and complexity of current policies, strategies and guidance make them difficult for users, especially country offices, to absorb. There is a demand for simplified, consolidated and practical guidance and there are signs that this need is being recognized in recent policy formulation.

14. Policies help to align the design of WFP's programmes with global developments and best practices, and increasingly articulate the theories of change that explain how WFP's activities are intended to contribute to outcomes. While WFP's policy architecture is seen as enabling the implementation of the strategic plan, it has become increasingly elaborate and difficult to absorb, particularly for country offices, and conveys the message that everything is a priority. In addition, the process for commenting and providing feedback on CSPs has resulted in each unit at central headquarters emphasizing the policies and the elements of the strategic plan that are related to its function and requesting the inclusion of additional elements in the plan, with detrimental effects on the strategic focus and prioritization of CSPs.
15. The newly reconfigured Programme Policy and Guidance Division has started to consolidate and streamline the technical comments on programmes provided by its services, and the Staffing Coordination and Capacity Service is drafting streamlined processes for CSP development and approval. In addition, policies being developed or updated in 2024 are placing more emphasis on

⁴ Country capacity strengthening in WFP refers to three domains: an enabling environment, which involves advocacy for conducive policy and regulatory frameworks; the organizational domain, which includes initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of state institutions and civil society organizations; and the individual domain, which is related to people's skills and behaviours.

specifically where WFP should and should not engage in different programme areas and circumstances, based on its comparative advantages relevant to the policy area and its mandate.

Evidence-based programming in the strategic plan period

There has been progress in the design of more integrated programming but there has been insufficient organizational support for the operationalization of that integration. There is tension between integration efforts and WFP's budget structure, requirements related to the line of sight, and the corresponding management structure.

16. Integrated programme design has been supported by the progressive “bundling” of activities.⁵ However, structural limitations remain, linked mainly to the requirement that resources be linked to results through a budget structured around activities and outcomes – rather than outputs and outcomes – which is conducive to increased donor earmarking at the activity level, challenging integration.
17. Other challenges for the design and implementation of integrated programmes derive from the internal fragmentation of country offices’ work streams and teams, and gaps in overarching programme management. Notably, programme management in country offices is structured around the budget architecture, with outcome and activity managers but no overarching operational programme coordination function.
18. Lessons on the implementation of layered, sequenced and integrated programmes exist but are not yet being systematically captured and synthesized across WFP. These lessons could be very valuable to programming and should be informing WFP's ongoing organizational changes.

Over the strategic plan period there has been a growing emphasis on the use of evidence for accountability and learning purposes. Resources for evidence gathering have been directed mainly to monitoring activities aimed at informing aggregated reporting based on CRF requirements, which have become increasingly cumbersome. However, knowledge management remains weak, with evidence insufficiently linked to decision-making, including on the scale-up of innovations.

19. The strategic plan emphasizes the use of evidence in decision-making and in demonstrating effectiveness. In this, the plan is supported by the 2022 evaluation policy which prioritizes the production of demand-driven, accessible summaries of evaluation evidence to support decision-making. In 2023, WFP met or exceeded CRF targets related to the use of evidence in CSPs and policies, and the numbers of joint and system-wide evaluations conducted. However, targets for the number of audit recommendations outstanding and the percentage of evaluation recommendations implemented were not met.
20. The recent assessment of WFP carried out by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network concluded that “WFP is a strong generator of knowledge but does not have effective knowledge management systems to share learning across countries or to present knowledge in a form useful for decision makers at country level”.⁶ The mid-term evaluation endorses this finding,

⁵ WFP. 2023. Strategic Plan (2022–2025) Line of Sight Guidance (Version 1.4) (internal document). According to WFP's guidance on the line of sight, “activity bundling” is the combination of several activities into a single “broad” activity and is usually intended to facilitate programme integration, reduce transaction costs and retain flexibility in the allocation of resources.

⁶ Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network. 2024. [MOPAN Assessment Report, World Food Programme](#).

observing that much of WFP's monitoring work is focused on generating data that can be aggregated for reporting to the Board, and that current CRF and corresponding monitoring and reporting requirements are not conducive to the generation of analytical information and its use in management's decision-making. In addition, important areas of WFP's work are not being captured.

21. An important aspect of knowledge management involves distilling and leveraging lessons from innovations to inform decisions on the scale-up of operations. In this connection, WFP has enhanced its strategic prioritization of innovation, and systems for promoting innovation have evolved positively. However, the coverage of such systems is limited and there is a continuing tension between innovation and risk aversion. The criteria, methods and procedures for scaling up innovations remain insufficiently systematic or clear.

Institutional mechanisms and organizational structures that support implementation

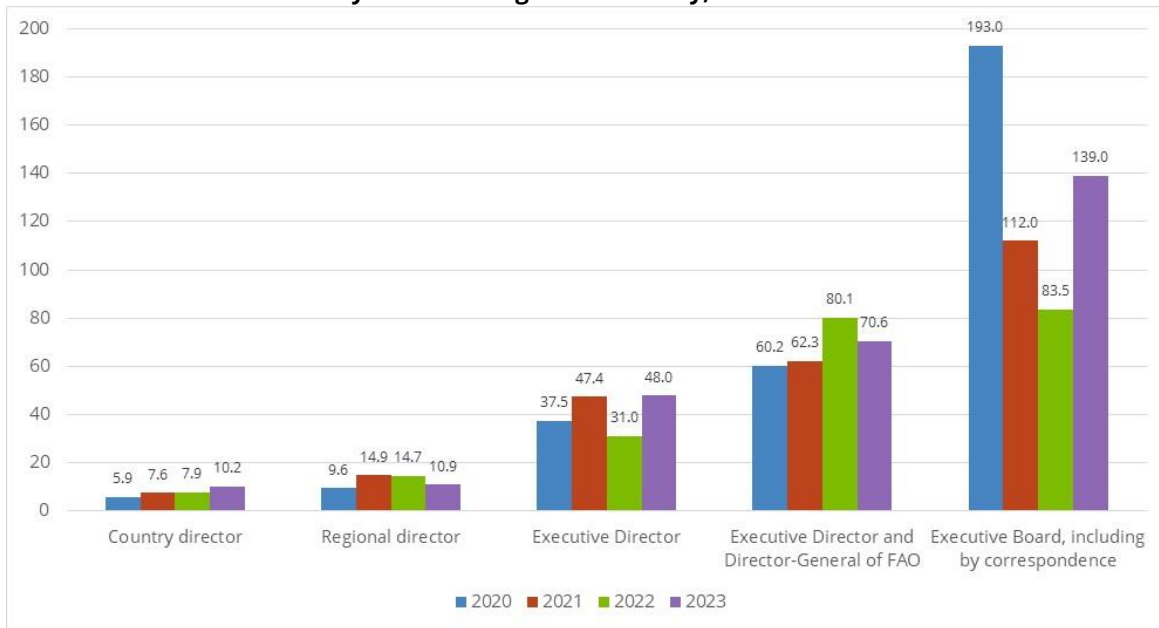
The implementation of the strategic plan has been supported by several mechanisms and processes aimed at improving WFP's ability to "do the right thing at the right time", but the limited agility of the CSP budget revision process remains a challenge.

22. WFP's advance financing mechanisms remain a key strength in enabling the organization's operational responsiveness. Notably, the Immediate Response Account provided USD 385 million in advances to 36 country offices in 2022, and USD 433.5 million to 31 country offices in 2023, although 72 percent of the funds advanced in 2023 were concentrated in five country offices.⁷ The Global Commodity Management Facility has also expanded, facilitating shortened procurement lead times, which are three months shorter than under conventional procurement processes, helping to ensure consistent supplies of food to country offices, and accounting for 57 percent of the food purchased for country offices in 2023.
23. Another mechanism for advance financing is internal project lending, which enables country offices to incur commitments and spend money before contributions for their CSP activities are confirmed. In 2023, 64 percent of the amount advanced through internal project lending was concentrated in seven operations.⁸
24. The Changing Lives Transformation Fund provides an important vehicle for investing in key ambitions of the strategic plan, but the implementation of the projects it has funded started only in 2024, making it too soon to assess their success.
25. Budget revisions continue to serve as a key mechanism for country offices adapting to volatile situations, although the overall time required for the approval of budget revisions has not declined, with some categories of delegated authority granting approvals slightly more quickly in 2023 than in 2020, and others more slowly, as shown in figure 3.

⁷ Democratic Republic of the Congo, State of Palestine, the Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye. "[Report on the utilization of WFP's strategic financing mechanisms \(1 January–31 December 2023\)](#)" (WFP/EB.A/2024/6-F/1).

⁸ Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, State of Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen. "[Report on the utilization of WFP's strategic financing mechanisms \(1 January–31 December 2023\)](#)" (WFP/EB.A/2024/6-F/1).

Figure 3: Average number of days required for a budget revision by level of delegated authority, 2020–2023



Source: Mid-term evaluation analysis of data from WFP's System for Project Approval tracking file (internal report).
 Abbreviation: FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Complementarity in the division of labour between central headquarters and regional bureaux in supporting country offices in implementing the strategic plan has been less than optimal.

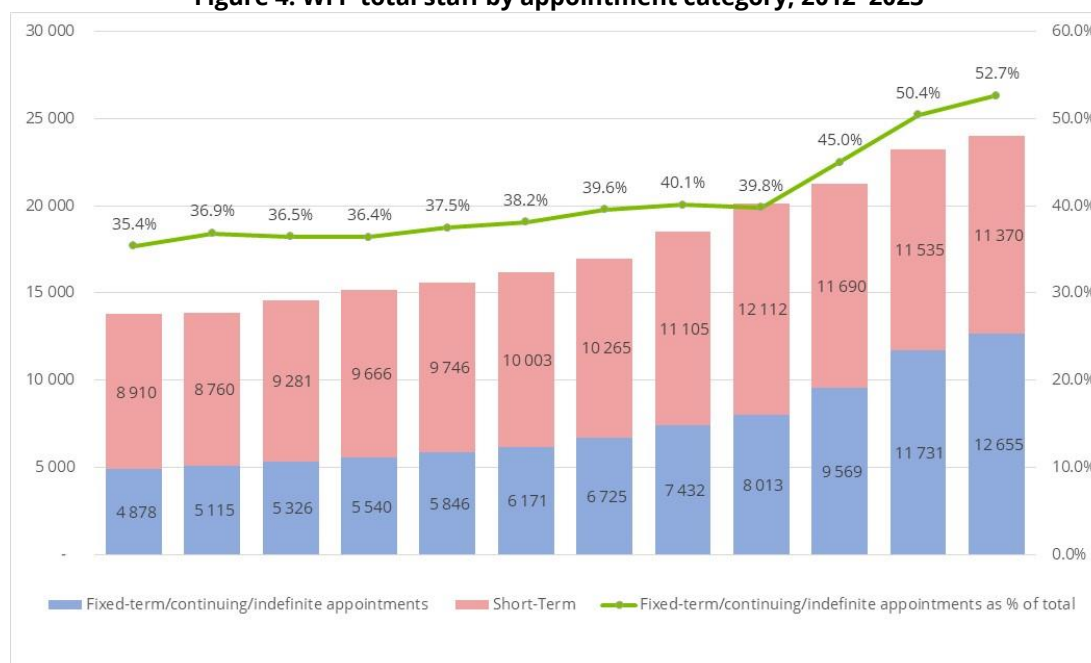
26. In WFP's regions of operation, regional bureaux play a very important role in supporting the implementation of global normative, compliance and reporting requirements by country offices. The mid-term evaluation found that country offices broadly view regional bureau support as useful and conducive to strategic plan implementation. Key areas of support include programme design, strategic partnerships for development financing, donor relations, and thematic expertise. However, the provision of technical expertise and guidance on the ambitious range of topics covered in the strategic plan has been challenging for regional bureaux in a context of reduced resources and insufficient clarity on the division of labour with central headquarters.
27. A review of WFP's organizational structure, commissioned by the Executive Director in August 2023, concluded that there were problems related to fragmentation, unclear roles and responsibilities, increased bureaucracy and a lack of agility, suboptimal allocation of resources, and unclear vision and prioritization of activities. The outcome of the first phase of the organizational review is a reconfigured organizational structure for central headquarters aimed at achieving greater integration of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Service into the Programme Policy and Guidance Division, more coherent grouping of technical programme areas under the Programme Policy and Guidance Division, and full integration of the former country capacity strengthening unit into these new technical programme services. The next phase of the review is looking at the configuration of regional bureaux and the relative roles and responsibilities of central headquarters and regional bureaux, with a view to improving the support and oversight of field operations.
28. While the necessity of this exercise is not questioned, its effectiveness cannot be assessed at this stage as the process is still ongoing. Some of the immediately visible consequences and risks of the review in relation to human resources are discussed in the following section.

Human resources

WFP has made progress towards the strategic plan’s ambitions regarding the “People” enabler, although financial sustainability is challenging and, in some areas, gaps in staffing or mismatches between staff profiles and the ambitions of the strategic plan remain. To address the funding shortage, significant cuts in staffing are being made, but with insufficient strategic guidance and inadequate internal communication, creating the risk of losing important technical skills and having negative effects on staff morale and motivation.

29. WFP has made significant investments in enhancing its human resources systems, wellness policies and workplace culture under the strategic plan. These investments have included the development of a new leadership framework, an induction programme for field leaders, global mentoring, and career development programmes for international and national staff, which are highly appreciated by the stakeholders consulted.
30. WFP has also made steady progress in decreasing the percentage of staff on short-term contracts, which should increase the likelihood of attracting and retaining talent. Since the adoption of the strategic plan, WFP’s workforce has increased by 13 percent, growing from 21,259 people in 2021 to 24,025 in 2023. Over the same period, the overall percentage of staff with fixed-term, continuing or indefinite appointments has grown from 45 to 52 percent, continuing a long-term trend as shown in figure 4.⁹ The shift to longer-term contracts is an important strategic priority but reduces flexibility and has generated additional fixed costs that in a voluntary funded organization may be difficult to sustain.
31. In terms of staff profiles, qualitative evidence suggests that there has been progress in the recruitment and development of specialized skills in key areas such as gender issues and country capacity strengthening, but gaps remain, particularly in relation to the changing lives agenda.

Figure 4: WFP total staff by appointment category, 2012-2023



Source: Mid-term evaluation analysis based on data from WFP’s human resources management information system.

⁹ The steady growth in overall numbers of WFP employees through 2023 shown in figure 4 does not reflect the effects of the hiring freeze and reduction in positions funded from the programme support and administrative budget that began in late 2023.

32. During the period evaluated, a surge in funding followed by significant shortfalls prompted efforts to bring costs rapidly into line with funding levels, but this initiative was not guided by an overarching strategic direction. This has resulted in a disconnect between the budget and workforce cuts made in regional bureaux and the changes made at central headquarters, reducing organizational readiness. At the time of the evaluation, budget cuts were having negative effects on the implementation of the strategic plan, with the elimination of strategically important technical capacities at various levels, and weak communications fuelling uncertainty among employees and having detrimental effects on their morale.

Financial resources

The ambitions of the strategic plan were realistic in relation to the funding landscape at the time of the plan's adoption. However, the funding landscape has evolved during the strategic plan period, with a dramatic surge in funding followed by a decline leaving the organization with an unsustainable level of core operating costs.

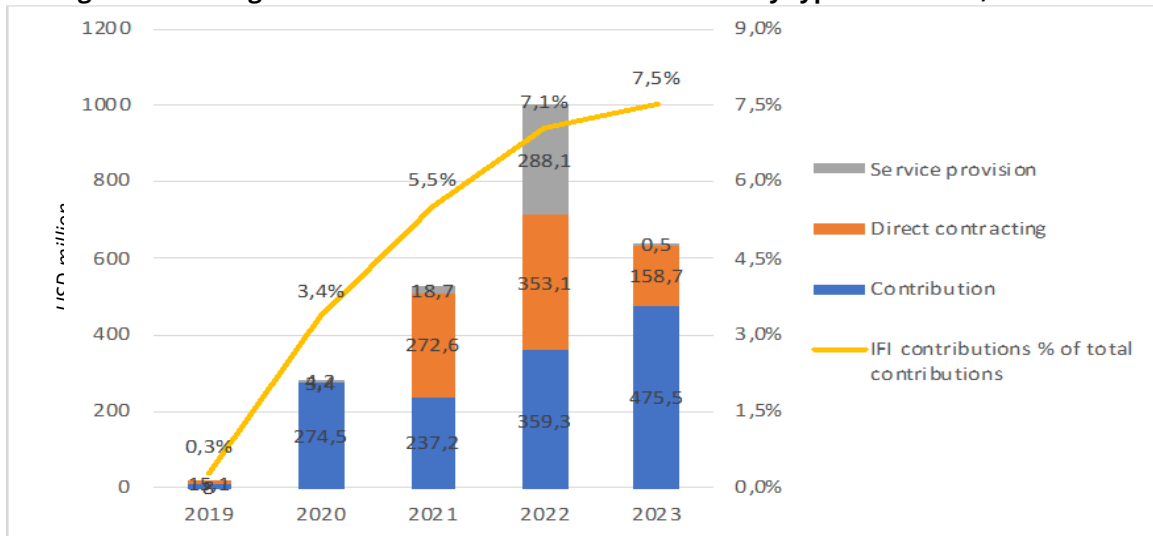
33. Evidence gathered for the mid-term evaluation contradicts a narrative that is emerging at all levels of WFP suggesting that the strategic plan was overly ambitious because WFP's funding levels had become so high. However, while contribution levels rose far above WFP's expectations following the plan's formulation, reaching USD 9.6 billion in 2021 and USD 14.2 billion in 2022, they dropped back to USD 8.3 billion in 2023,¹⁰ which is in line with the projections at the time the strategic plan was designed. The primary challenge arising from the fluctuation in funding is the result of the substantial increases in its core operating costs that WFP made during the period of funding growth, which have proved difficult to sustain.

WFP has made progress in diversifying its funding sources, notably with international financial institutions (IFIs), but remains heavily dependent on earmarked, short-term funding from bilateral donors, hampering its medium-term integrated programming and its flexibility and responsiveness in programme implementation.

34. Funding from IFIs grew from USD 23 million in 2019 to USD 1 billion in 2022 before settling back to USD 600 million in 2023 (figure 5). While efforts to engage with IFIs predate the period evaluated, the current strategic plan is credited with raising the profile and importance of those relationships.

¹⁰ ["Annual performance report for 2023"](#) (WFP/EB.A/2024/4-A/Rev.1).

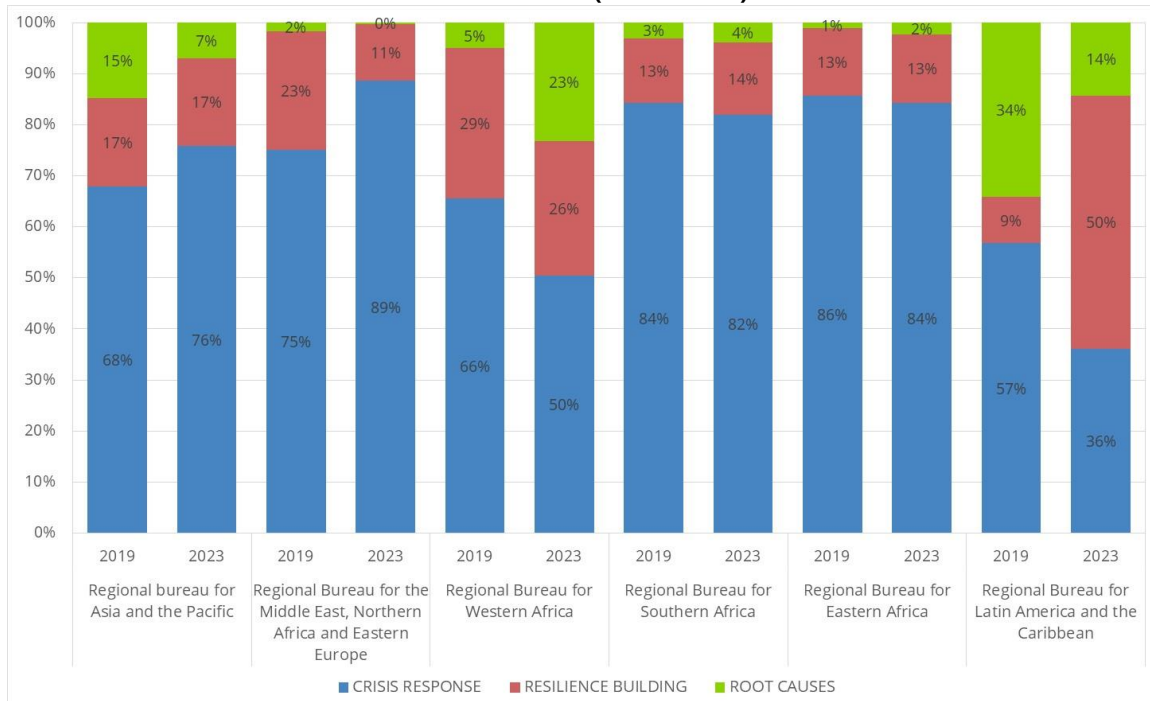
Figure 5: Funding from international financial institutions by type of contract, 2019–2023



Source: WFP's Multilateral and Programme Country Partnerships Division.

35. The predictability and flexibility of funding from bilateral donors have not improved during the strategic plan period. Multi-year and flexible funding remain the exception, and this continues to limit WFP's ability to plan and programme work at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
36. The regional bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean has seen significant growth in funding for resilience building over the strategic plan period, followed by the regional bureaux for Asia and the Pacific, for Western Africa and for Southern Africa. However, the regional bureaux for the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe and for Eastern Africa, where most of the large emergencies have occurred, have seen declines in contributions earmarked for resilience building.

Figure 6: Percentages of total earmarked contributions by focus area and region, 2019 and 2023 (USD million)



Source: Mid-term evaluation analysis of WFP's distribution, contribution and forecast statistics, 29 May 2024.

37. Overall, significant gaps between operational requirements and available funding remain. Part of the challenge stems from an aspirational needs-based planning system that sometimes results in overambitious targets that would be beyond WFP's capacity to achieve even if the necessary funding were available. To address this challenge, WFP is introducing measures for calibrating its ambitions regarding the strategic plan and increasing its focus on CSPs and country office budgets. Such efforts include plans to replace the needs-based planning mechanism with a new approach that aims to shift the focus from the quantity to the quality of assistance by making more realistic requests to donors, enhancing confidence in WFP's planning and delivery capacity, and promoting the design of programmes that are more closely aligned with WFP's capacities and strengths, while taking into account the roles, capacities and plans of partners. The feasibility of this approach will depend on country offices' capability to accurately analyse the funding landscape during CSP development, which could include challenges arising from the competition to secure funding in the international aid environment.

Strategic positioning and external coherence

Partnerships with governments, the private sector and IFIs have been strengthened during the strategic plan period, and WFP's global comparative advantages in emergency response are widely acknowledged. However, the organization's comparative advantages in specific thematic areas and environments are less clear, and this has negative effects on its strategic positioning in the changing lives agenda.

38. WFP is positioned as a trusted partner of governments, and the strategic plan has enhanced the organization's engagement with governments through the recognition of the importance of such relationships and the focus on country capacity strengthening.
39. South-South and triangular cooperation has expanded during the strategic plan period as a key part of WFP's engagement with governments, including through the centres of excellence in Brazil, China and Côte d'Ivoire and the regional bureaux, all of which play an important role in building relationships at the regional level and positioning WFP as a knowledge broker.
40. While WFP has recognized comparative advantages in emergency response – including in telecommunications and analytics, food delivery and supply chains, field presence, cash-based transfers, and school meal programmes – and has been proactive in expanding its range of partners, it has been insufficiently clear in defining how, and in which thematic and geographic areas and contexts, it is best placed to intervene and, eventually, play a leading role, taking into account the fact that WFP may lack the expertise to respond to some requests for support in the strengthening of policy and systems and the building of technical capacity.
41. In addition, WFP's delivery of services for governments risks substituting rather than strengthening national capacities, and creating tensions in relation to the humanitarian principles, particularly perceptions of neutrality. These risks should be carefully assessed and managed when engaging in service provision.

Operational coordination with other United Nations entities remains challenging, and relations with civil society and cooperating partners are mainly transactional. Overall, WFP's partnering approach is focused largely on mobilizing resources for the organization, with relatively limited emphasis on developing strategic partnerships that could enhance the complementarity and effectiveness of interventions.

42. WFP has made a genuine effort to align with United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks and has brought valuable perspectives to joint planning and programming. Nonetheless, there are gaps in WFP's global coordination with key United Nations partners, and competition continues to be strong, including among the Rome-based agencies, challenging operational coordination. There have also been missed opportunities to develop stronger partnerships to complement WFP's expertise in gender issues with that of other United Nations entities such as the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
43. No shift has been observed in WFP's partnerships with civil society organizations, which have continued to show strong transactional features over the strategic plan period. Although the response to the COVID-19 pandemic brought positive examples of partnerships with civil society, consultation with non-governmental organizations remains uneven and relationships based on joint programming and the leveraging of local knowledge and expertise remain the exception rather than the rule. WFP's annual partnership consultation in 2023 continued to emphasize a critical need for more transparency regarding funding, together with the breaking down of the "silos" between sectors and greater engagement in joint advocacy in an increasingly challenging global environment.¹¹
44. WFP's relationships with cooperating partners, and its efforts in localization, have seen the least progress of any area of WFP's partnership-related work and the strategic plan has not specifically advanced WFP's relationships with this important group of actors.
45. At the corporate level, the prime driver for WFP's external engagement continues to be the need to mobilize resources, and this is reflected in the organization's management plan and internal incentives structure, in which successful partnership building is rewarded according to the monetary values accrued to the organization.

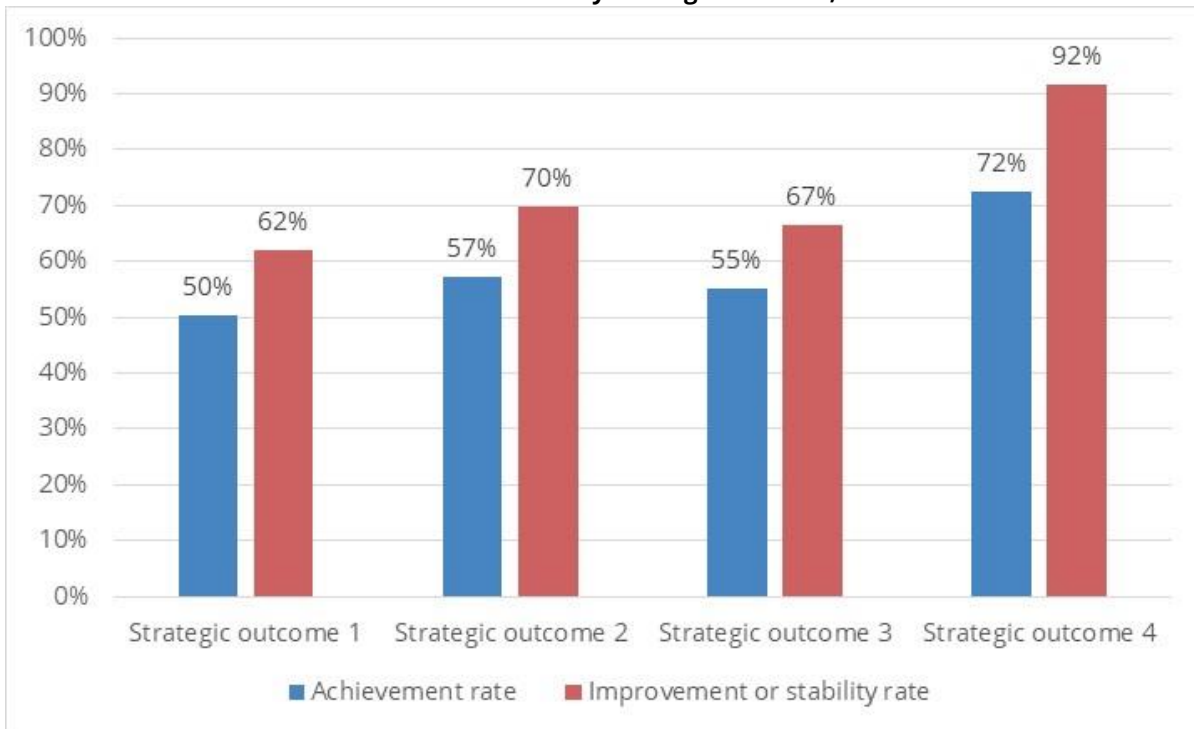
Progress towards the strategic plan's targets

Based on available performance data, WFP largely reached or exceeded the targets of the strategic plan, but the actual effects of doing so have not met expectations. However, with only one year of performance data available, it is not yet possible to make a conclusive judgement.

46. Under strategic outcome 1 on urgent food and nutrition needs, WFP reached more beneficiaries than planned, but with inadequate rations because the funding available did not match the expanding needs. Overall, corporate data show good performance in WFP's efforts to provide access to better nutrition, health and education under strategic outcome 2, but the effects of this success have been less than expected. WFP managed to reach a significant number of people under strategic outcome 3 on strengthening food systems and resilience, but outcome data suggest that the actual effects have been moderate. While targets under strategic outcome 4 have been met or exceeded, evidence collected by the evaluation team suggests that the indicators used for this strategic outcome do not accurately measure the expected changes in national capacities, calling into question the reported achievements (figure 7).

¹¹ As discussed at WFP's 2023 annual partnership consultation with the membership on "the power of partnership in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse".

Figure 7: Achievement rates and improvement or stability rates for outcome indicators by strategic outcome, 2023*



* No outcome indicators reported for strategic outcome 5.

Notes: Improvement or stability rate = the percentage of measurements that improved or remained stable compared with the baseline. Achievement rate = the percentage of measurements that met or exceeded the target.

Source: “Annual performance report for 2023” (WFP/EB.A/2024/4-A/Rev.1), annex III-C.

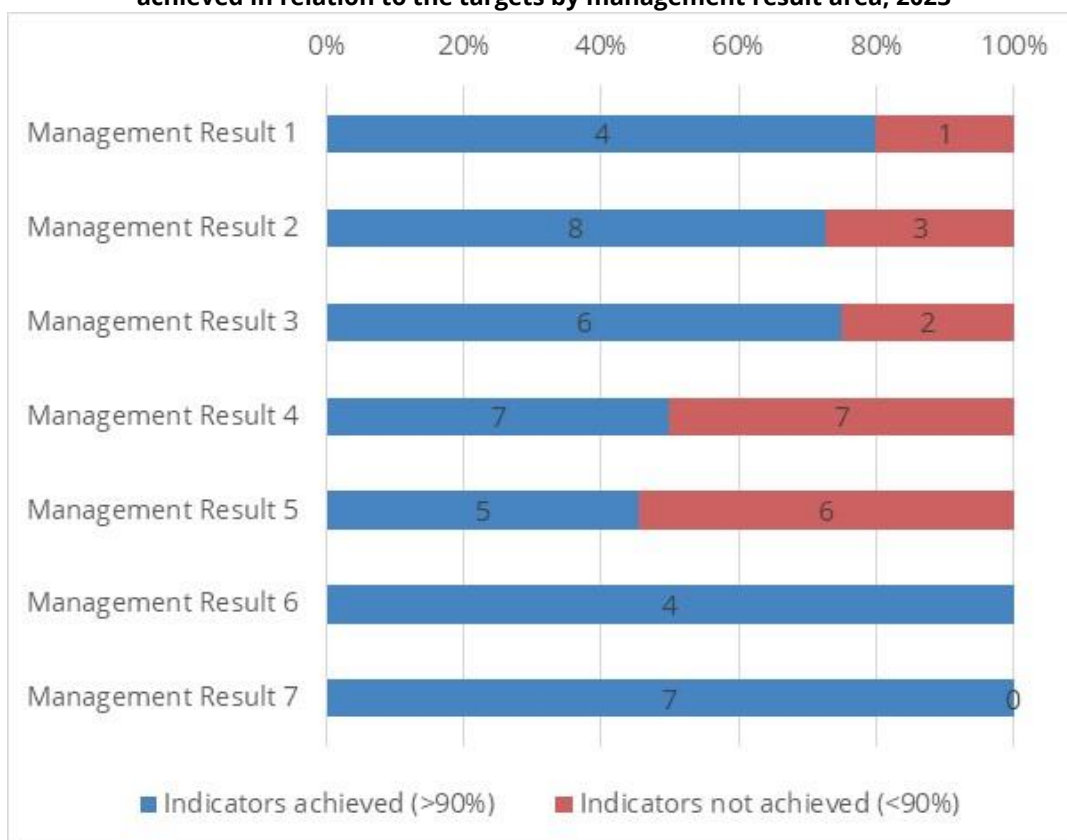
The achievement of key performance indicator (KPI) targets has shown good progress under all management results except for funding and evidence and learning, for which only half or fewer of the targets were met. On the other hand, expenditure targets were almost met, met or exceeded under all management results, reflecting little correlation between expenditure and performance as measured by KPIs.

47. Under management result 4 on effective funding for zero hunger, WFP has met only half of its KPI targets, with likely explanations of the weak performance being funding constraints, insufficient diversification of funding sources, and inadequate growth in flexible and multi-year funding. Performance has also been low under management result 5 on evidence and learning, with only 5 of the 11 KPIs being met or nearly met in 2023. Regarding the KPI that measures the percentage of audit and evaluation recommendations implemented, while the implementation of evaluation recommendations has remained strong,¹² outstanding audit recommendations increased in 2023, in part because more audit reports were issued in 2023 than in 2022.¹³

¹² “Implementation status of evaluation recommendations” (WFP/EB.A/2024/7-D). Despite a 51 percent increase in the number of evaluation recommendations issued in 2023, WFP implemented a similar percentage of recommendations (65 percent) as in 2022 (66 percent).

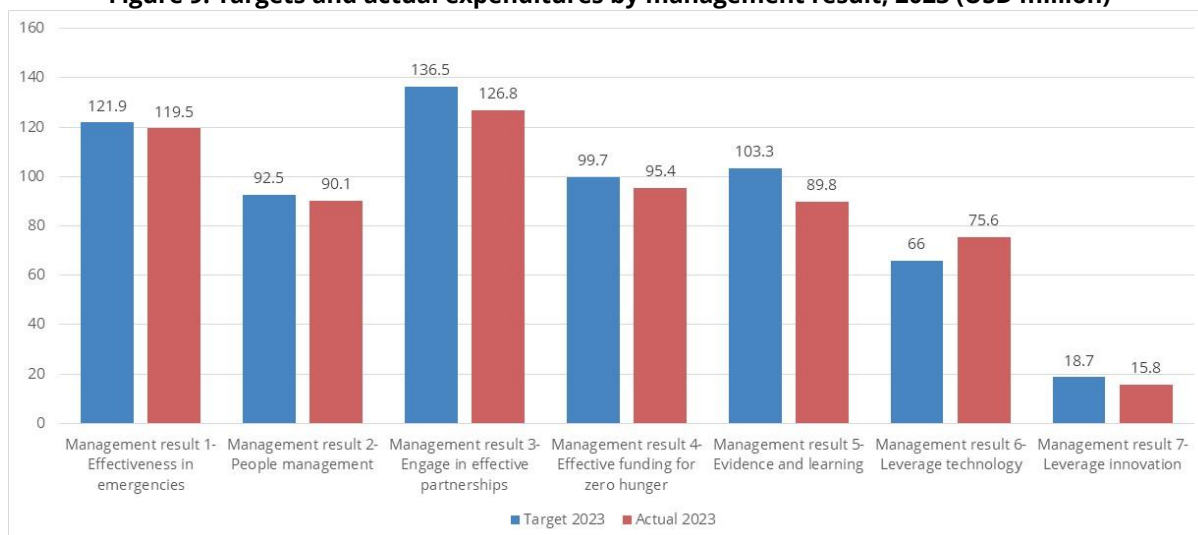
¹³ “Annual report of the Inspector General” (WFP/EB.A/2024/6-D/1), table 1, p. 4.

Figure 8: Numbers and shares of management result indicators achieved, nearly achieved and not achieved in relation to the targets by management result area, 2023



Source: "Annual performance report for 2023" (WFP/EB.A/2024/4-A/Rev.1), annex IV-A.

Figure 9: Targets and actual expenditures by management result, 2023 (USD million)



Source: "Annual performance report for 2023" (WFP/EB.A/2024/4-A/Rev.1), annex IV-A.

48. According to CRF indicators, the implementation of cross-cutting priorities has progressed well in general, but with less progress under the indicators for access for persons with disabilities, and community engagement. However, performance data on cross-cutting issues do not always capture the full scale of the processes involved in bringing change to these issues.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

49. Overall, the mid-term evaluation found that the strategic plan for 2022–2025 was highly relevant to the global environment at the time of its design and remains so today. Its greatest strength as a global strategic framework has been in clarifying and giving legitimacy to WFP’s ambitions as a humanitarian agency that is committed to building resilience and addressing the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition. An incremental approach to change has allowed for continuity with the previous strategic plan.
50. While the flexibility of the strategic plan enabled WFP to adapt to changing circumstances, the plan’s lack of a clear articulation of WFP’s comparative advantages led to a lack of strategic direction to guide prioritization at the country level, support negotiation with external partners, and better position WFP at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. This gap in strategic direction enhanced the risk of stretching WFP too thinly and rendering the organization more reactive to funding opportunities than strategically driven. While considerable progress has been made in diversifying funding sources during the strategic plan period, WFP remains heavily dependent on short-term funding earmarked according to donors’ priorities, which constitutes a key hindering factor for greater effectiveness in the changing lives agenda.
51. The CRF was another critical factor influencing strategic direction in programme design and implementation: making country capacity strengthening and service provision standalone strategic outcomes did not help country offices to clearly link activities under those outcomes to WFP’s mandate and contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and has hindered the organization’s ability to mobilize resources for country capacity strengthening.
52. The implementation of the strategic plan has been supported by institutional mechanisms and structures aimed at improving WFP’s ability to act rapidly and effectively. However, the complementarity between central headquarters and regional bureaux in supporting country offices has been suboptimal, and some systems and processes still require adaptation and simplification to make WFP’s internal institutional environment optimal for ensuring the flexibility and responsiveness necessary to “do the right thing at the right time” in highly dynamic environments. Among the systems and processes requiring improvement are those for the design of CSPs and related budgets, approval and revision processes, and approaches and systems for generating evidence and managing knowledge to inform strategic decision-making, external communications and the scale-up of interventions and initiatives. There are good examples of innovative approaches, but the incentives for innovation are not systematically embedded throughout the organization. The skill sets of WFP’s staff also remain insufficiently aligned with the organization’s ambitions for effective policy engagement and systems strengthening.
53. While it is still too soon to provide a definitive judgement on progress towards the strategic outcome and management targets of the strategic plan, there is clear evidence that efforts to meet beneficiary coverage targets have too often come at the cost of reduced food assistance rations. This has impeded effectiveness, and calls for a better balance between the breadth and the depth of programme coverage to ensure that food security and nutrition goals are met.

What did the evaluation recommend?

#	Recommendation	Rationale	Responsibility	Deadline
1	The next strategic plan should clearly set out WFP's strategic vision for the future. It should reaffirm the centrality of humanitarian assistance, building resilience and addressing the root causes of food insecurity as the heart of WFP's mission and mandate, and clearly define the organization's comparative advantages.	One of the strengths of the current plan is that it is sufficiently flexible to allow response to unforeseen events and to legitimize a wide range of interventions; this flexibility should be retained. At the same time, continued diffusion of focus puts WFP's reputation at risk and undermines confidence in the organization's ability to achieve meaningful results at scale. In being forced to "do better with less", WFP should concentrate resources on high-quality programmes, where they have the greatest likelihood of having an impact. The focus on cross-cutting priorities and a people-centred approach is fundamental to WFP's commitments to first supporting the people left furthest behind.	Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	
1.1	The next strategic plan should be framed with a long-term horizon and provide a clear statement of WFP's intended contributions to global goals for food security and nutrition within a five-year period, in line with the completion of the 2030 Agenda cycle.			November 2025
1.2	Ensure that the next strategic plan includes a clear definition of WFP's core and context-specific comparative advantages in different operating environments and under different modalities of engagement.			November 2025
1.3	To strengthen strategic direction during the remainder of the current strategic plan period, urgently develop a concept paper and related guidance on WFP's comparative advantages that supports the design and implementation of CSPs.			June 2025
2	To operationalize the strategic vision, provide a more sharply defined programme framework, leaving flexibility for adaptation to changing circumstances on the ground.	While maintaining a wide overarching strategic framework that allows the flexibility to navigate	Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	

#	Recommendation	Rationale	Responsibility	Deadline	
2.1	In the results architecture of the next strategic plan maintain strategic outcomes 1, 2 and 3 while framing capacity strengthening and service provision for governments as modalities of intervention in support of these three strategic outcomes. Services provided under the current strategic outcome 5 could be retained as a separate strategic outcome.	across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, the strategic plan should provide more elements to guide country-level prioritization and ability to better link different intervention modalities to WFP’s ultimate goals through consistent country and corporate results frameworks. This will entail actions in relation to the strategic plan results architecture, alignment requirements and minimum standards for programme quality.		November 2025	
2.2	Relax requirements for the alignment of CSPs with the CRF, focusing on the aggregation of basic food and nutrition outcome indicators at the global level, while leaving country offices full discretion regarding the use of additional context-specific outcome, output and process indicators.			June 2026	
2.3	State clearly in the strategic plan document that cross-cutting priorities are minimum standards for programme quality, and ensure they are appropriately invested in and budgeted for.			November 2025	
3	Ensure that WFP’s processes, systems and incentives for management and staff provide the agility and responsiveness required to make the organization an effective player in increasingly complex and dynamic settings.	While assurance mechanisms are essential for transparent management and accountability, many of WFP’s processes are overly complex, time-consuming and inefficient. There is need for systems, management approaches and skill sets that enable the organization to “do the right thing at the right time”. The skills needed include soft skills in negotiation and policy engagement, and the ability to find innovative and effective solutions to complex problems,			
3.1	Resolve the current ambiguity between the roles and responsibilities of central headquarters and regional bureaux in supporting country offices.			Assistant Executive Director Work Place Management	November 2025
3.2	Ensure that the systems and processes for the design, approval and revision of CSPs are strategic rather than process-driven, and appropriately streamlined to avoid unnecessary duplications of efforts and reduce transaction costs. This may also entail expanding the delegation of authority, and corresponding accountability, for granting approval at the regional level.			Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	November 2025

#	Recommendation	Rationale	Responsibility	Deadline
3.3	Provide incentives for managers and staff to stimulate innovation, including innovative approaches to partnerships, in an environment that is risk-tolerant and willing to learn from mistakes as well as good practices.	beyond the diligent management of standardized processes.	Assistant Executive Director, Partnerships & Innovation	November 2025
3.4	Strengthen evidence generation and knowledge management systems to support decision-making, enhance internal cross-fertilization, inform the scale-up of interventions, and feed into national policy debates.		Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	November 2025
3.5	Continue efforts to attract and retain staff with relevant skills and experience in establishing and nurturing effective partnerships for policy engagement and systems strengthening in fragile and relatively stable institutional settings.		Assistant Executive Director, Workplace and Management Department	November 2025
4	WFP should strengthen its efforts to secure predictable and flexible funding.	Funding gaps and a lack of flexible and predictable funding are key factors hindering strategically focused, effective and sustainable interventions at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. These factors are not under WFP's direct control and depend largely on the choices of Member States and other financial contributors, but there are actions that the organization could take to enhance awareness of the issue.	Assistant Executive Director, Partnerships & Innovation	November 2025
4.1	Formally engage in a structured dialogue with relevant Member States to discuss ways of ensuring more predictable and flexible funding.			
4.2	To support efforts in advocating funding, enhance WFP's capacity to document and report good practices and challenges in multi-year programming.			

1. Introduction

1.1 EVALUATION FEATURES

1. This report reflects the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the World Food Programme (WFP) Strategic Plan (SP) 2022–2025. The evaluation covers the period January 2022 to the end of 2023. Findings will be presented to the November 2024 Executive Board (EB) session.
2. The conduct of this MTE is a corporate requirement, and it constitutes an opportunity for reflection and identification of areas that require strengthening. The MTE lines of inquiry involve five evaluation questions (EQs) which cover: SP design and continued relevance (EQ1); organizational readiness for delivery (EQ2); external coherence and complementarity (EQ3); country implementation and delivery (EQ4); and progress against high-level targets (HLTs) (EQ5). For coherent presentation in this report, dimensions related to country implementation and delivery (EQ4) have been mainstreamed across the other four evaluation questions.
3. The MTE's key features are:
 - **Independence** – The MTE was commissioned to an external team by the WFP Office of Evaluation to enable an independent assessment.
 - **Consultative and learning focused** – In recognition of the challenges associated with assessing progress over the relatively short two-year period of this evaluation, and to enhance utility of this exercise, the MTE was designed and implemented to prioritize internal consultation and reflection at country, regional and headquarters levels.
 - **Evidence-driven** – The evaluation draws from and builds on accumulated evaluative evidence, including through updating (where feasible) findings of the *Evaluation of WFP's Policy on Country Strategic Plans (CSPs)*.¹⁴ Views of stakeholders consulted were carefully analysed and are a key evidence base for this evaluation.
 - **Context-driven and forward-looking** – The MTE explicitly considers implications for the remaining implementation period and for the next SP. Shifts in the external context and internal organizational changes provide the backdrop for the findings and frame and inform considerations on priorities moving forward.
 - **An emphasis on organizational readiness** – Understanding how the organization equipped itself to deliver on the SP ambitions was identified as a priority area for inquiry at inception. MTE data collection and reporting put this issue at the centre of the evaluation.
4. Internal stakeholders for this evaluation include staff at all levels of the organization. In addition, views of Member States, humanitarian and development actors, international financial institutions (IFIs), private sector partners, resident coordinators, and United Nations agencies were selectively sought, based on close collaboration and knowledge of WFP's strategic work.

¹⁴ WFP, 2023k

1.2 CONTEXT

Global economic, climate, conflict and inequality trends

5. Over the SP implementation period, the global context evolved considerably, particularly as the world moved beyond the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic introduced unforeseen socioeconomic pressures, which have adversely affected food production and food security, and continue to disproportionately impact certain regions, notably Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁵

6. Inequalities were growing and changing in nature at the time of SP design (2020–2021), with climate change, gender inequality and violent conflict driving and entrenching basic and new inequalities alike.¹⁶ The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these issues and catalyzed a severe global economic recession. As a result, global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted by more than 3 percent in 2020,¹⁷ and global inflation rates increased, compounding the economic difficulties faced by individuals and communities.¹⁸

7. Since the SP design period, successful COVID-19 vaccination efforts in many regions have reduced infection rates and led to the easing of public health restrictions, which helped GDP growth rebound. However, inflation rates remain high or increasing in many areas.¹⁹ The pandemic response strained public spending, increasing the debt burden of low-income countries.²⁰ Global and regional economies were also affected by the conflict in Ukraine since its onset in 2022. This is reflected in volatile and elevated commodity prices, exacerbating food shortages and contributing to inflation in many regions.^{21,22,23} The pandemic response and global food crisis created a growing demand from national governments to respond to and anticipate responses to crises through government systems, such as national social protection systems.

8. At the time of the SP design, global poverty rates were rising for the first time in decades. In 2020, an estimated 9.7 percent of the global population was living below the extreme poverty line.²⁴ Since then, the percentage decreased to 8.9 percent – 689 million people.²⁵ However, poverty rates have not decreased uniformly in all regions.²⁶ In 2024, the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, conflict and the economic downturn continue to cement and exacerbate existing inequalities.²⁷

¹⁵ World Bank, 2024b

¹⁶ UNDP, 2020

¹⁷ World Bank, n.d.

¹⁸ IMF, n.d.

¹⁹ IMF, 2024; IMF, n.d.

²⁰ World Bank, 2023

²¹ UN, 2023.

²² WFP, 2024a

²³ Food Security Portal, n.d.

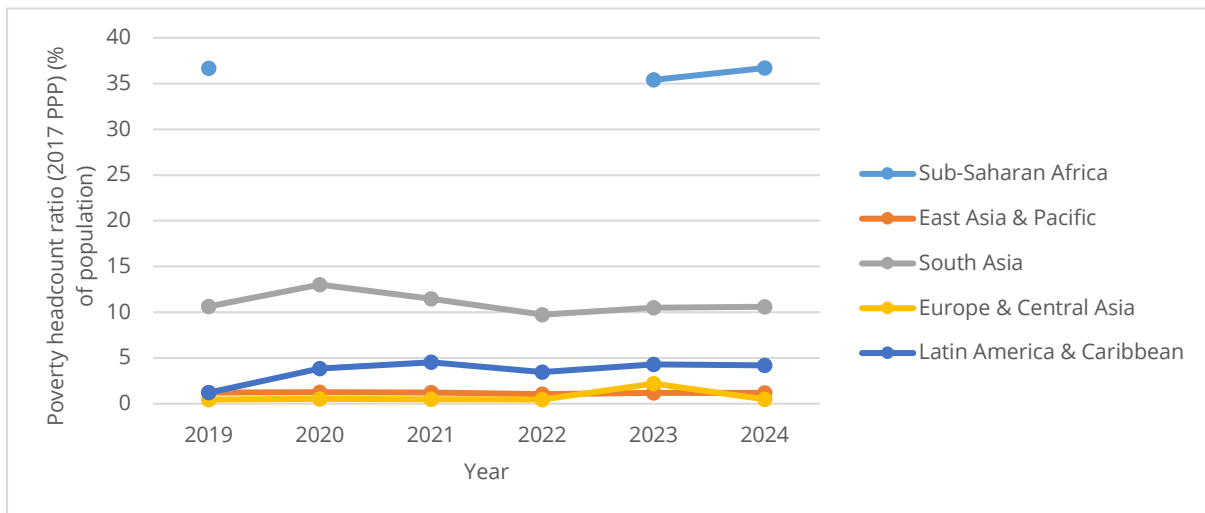
²⁴ World Bank, n.d.

²⁵ World Bank, 2024a

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ OCHA, 2024

Figure 1: Regional extreme poverty rates, 2019–2024



Data unavailable for Middle East and North Africa during the time period, and for Sub-Saharan Africa during 2020–2022, due to limited survey coverage. Data for 2023 and 2024 are estimates from the World Bank.

Source: World Bank Poverty and Inequality Platform; World Bank March 2024 Global Poverty Update

Humanitarian needs

9. Prolonged conflicts such as in Syria, Yemen, and Ethiopia, continued to create significant humanitarian needs during the SP design period. Extreme weather events posed critical challenges, with 240 climate-related disasters recorded in 2023.²⁸ These disasters resulted in 12,000 deaths, over half in 2023 from low-income or lower-middle income countries, and the remainder in countries responsible for less than 0.1 percent of the world's emissions.²⁹ In 2022, 274 million people required humanitarian assistance and protection,³⁰ with almost 100 million people located in just four countries: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Yemen.³¹ In the three years since the SP design, humanitarian needs have continued to grow. Consequently, nearly 300 million people require humanitarian assistance and protection in 2024, with the number of people in need increasing in all the regions WFP operates in compared to 2021.³² The countries with the highest number of people in need have shifted slightly with the onset of conflicts in Sudan and Ukraine, while the DRC, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia are the countries experiencing the highest number of people in need.³³

10. Despite the rise in humanitarian needs across the SP period, the nature of the humanitarian issues remains consistent with those mentioned in the SP as driving the world away from zero hunger, including new wars and unresolved conflicts, the global climate crisis, and recurrent economic shocks, all of which continue to necessitate WFP intervention.

²⁸ Save the Children, 2023

²⁹ Save the Children, 2023

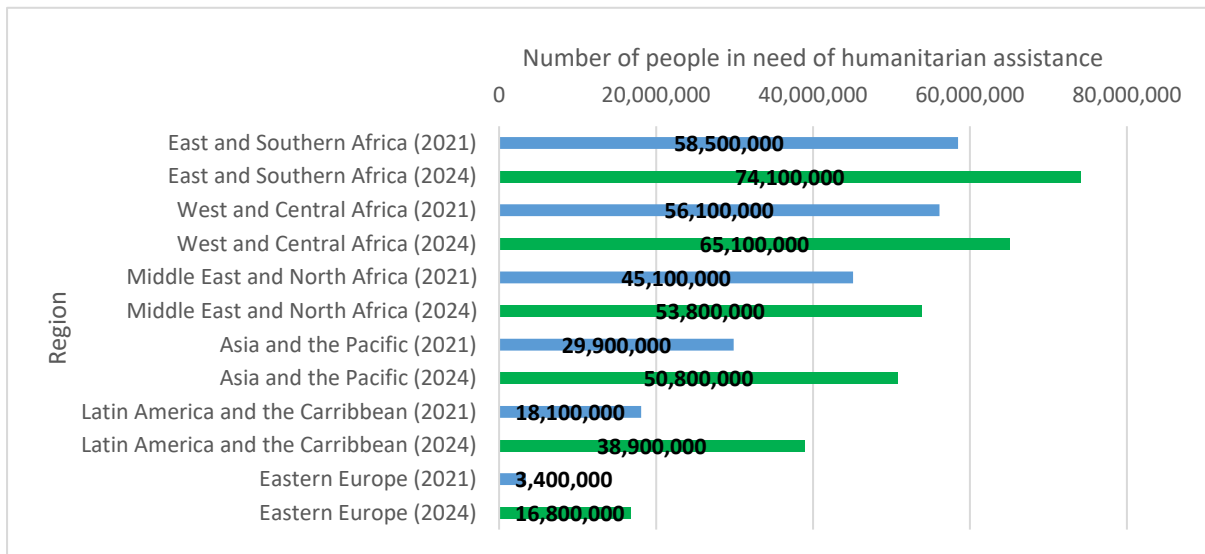
³⁰ OCHA, 2022

³¹ OCHA, 2022

³² OCHA, 2024

³³ Humanitarian Action, n.d.

Figure 2: Humanitarian needs, by region



Source: Humanitarian Action, 2024; Humanitarian Action, 2021

Food insecurity and malnutrition

11. Progress in reducing food insecurity and improving nutrition faced significant setbacks during the period of SP design (2020–2021). In 2021, up to 283 million people were acutely food insecure across 80 countries.³⁴ This period also saw a growing number of countries with populations in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 5 (Catastrophe) (South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Madagascar).³⁵ Acute food insecurity remains a critical challenge in 2024, with 309 million people affected³⁶ (an increase of 26 million since 2021 and 160 million compared to pre-pandemic levels).³⁷ Furthermore, 37.2 million people are estimated to face emergency levels of acute food insecurity in 2024, and more than one million people are estimated to face catastrophic conditions (IPC Phase 5).³⁸ In Sudan, famine is ongoing in the Zamzam camp in North Darfur.³⁹

12. Progress towards global nutrition targets is mixed. While there were advances in reducing stunting, childhood overweight rates worsened.⁴⁰ In 2020, among children under five, an estimated 149 million (22 percent) were stunted, and 45 million (6.7 percent) were wasted.⁴¹ In 2022, rates remained similar or better compared to 2020, with 148.1 million children under 5 years of age stunted, and 45 million wasted. However, at the regional level, the percentage of stunted children under 5 years of age in Sub-Saharan Africa improved between 2020 and 2022, whereas, in Asia, North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, stunting rates worsened.⁴²

Features of internal context at WFP

13. **Funding.** At the time of the SP design, WFP funding was on an upward trajectory – continuing a steady trend from previous years – with contribution revenue growing by 60 percent between 2017 and

³⁴ WFP, 2021a

³⁵ Global Report for Food Crises, 2022

³⁶ WFP, 2024a

³⁷ WFP, 2024a

³⁸ WFP, 2024u

³⁹ IPC, 2024

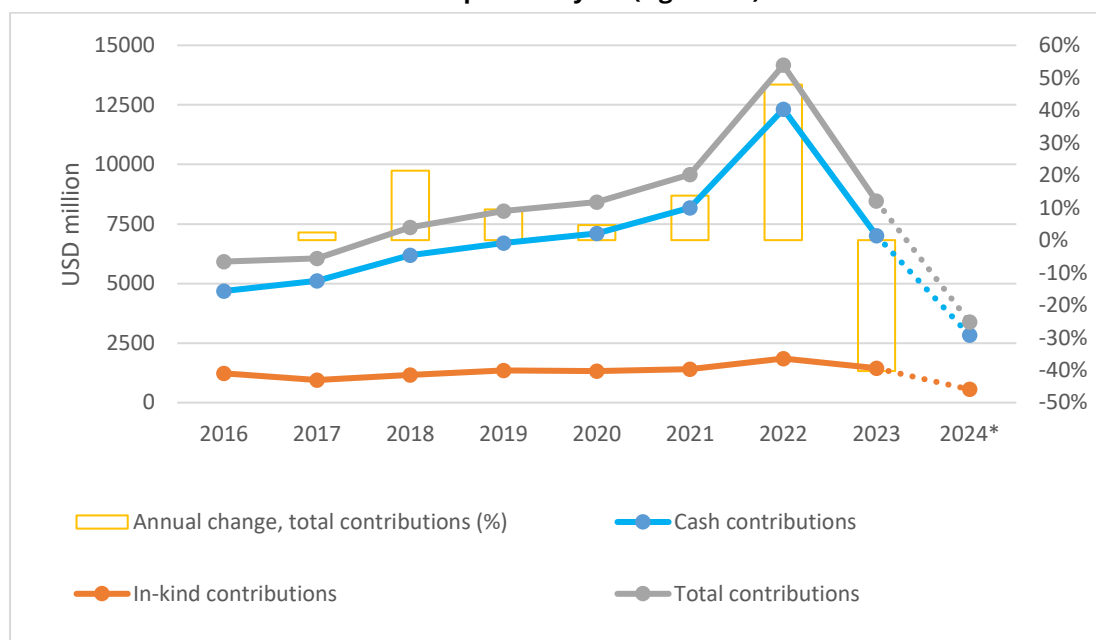
⁴⁰ SOFI, 2021

⁴¹ SOFI, 2023

⁴² SOFI, 2021; SOFI, 2023

2021.⁴³ Since 2023, funding dropped significantly. After receiving a record USD 14.1 billion in contributions in 2022, the organization experienced a significant reduction in 2023, receiving USD 8.3 billion in contributions,⁴⁴ and the forecast contributions for 2024 indicate a continued reduction (Figure 3). Additionally, at the time of the SP design, earmarking was a critical issue, with only 5.9 percent of contributions “flexible” in 2021.⁴⁵ In 2023, earmarking remained a key challenge, though the amount of flexible funds received improved, accounting for 14 percent of total contributions.⁴⁶

Figure 3: WFP contributions by type, USD million (left axis) and change compared to previous year (right axis)



Note: As of June 2024, an additional USD 5.55 billion is forecast for 2024.

Source: Distribution and contribution forecast, FACTORY (Accessed: 29 May 2024)

14. **Programming.** At the time of the SP design, WFP operations reached 128 million people, while in 2023 the organization directly reached 152 million people. There is an increasing trend towards the use of cash-based transfers (CBTs) as the modality of choice; the value of CBTs grew from USD 2.3 billion in 2021 to USD 2.8 billion in 2023, while the volume of food transfers fell from 4.4 million metric tons (mt) to 3.7 million mt during the same period.⁴⁷ The current funding reduction significantly affected WFP programming; the organization was forced to make three main choices: “to reduce transfer values to beneficiaries while maintaining the number of beneficiaries as far as feasible; to reduce the breadth of coverage where necessary; and to shift from status-based to vulnerability-based targeting, applying criteria relevant to each operating environment.”⁴⁸ The aforementioned funding gap affected WFP’s ability to achieve its targets for CBT and food transfers in 2023 (see Figure 4).

⁴³ WFP, n.d.c; WFP, 2021b. The substantial increase in 2021 came in late with the WFP Management Plan for 2022, which was sent to the November 2021 Executive Board, still projecting only USD 8.6 billion in contributions for 2022 and USD 8.4 billion for 2023.

⁴⁴ WFP, n.d.c

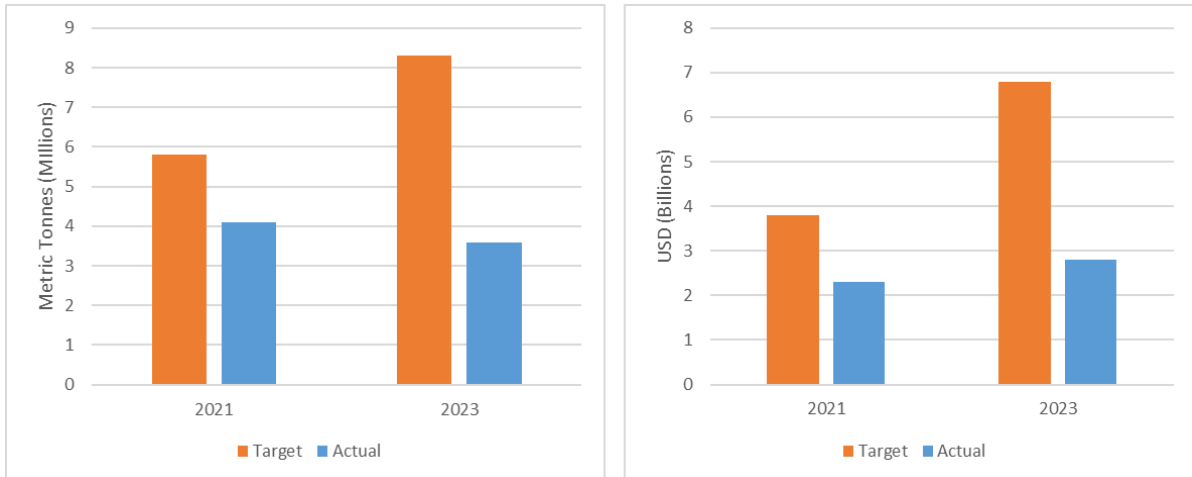
⁴⁵ WFP, n.d.c

⁴⁶ WFP, n.d.c. WFP expanded its definition of flexible funds in 2022 to include “softly earmarked” funds (e.g. regional or thematic earmarking) which contributed to the increase.

⁴⁷ WFP, 2021b; WFP, 2024e

⁴⁸ WFP, 2024d

Figure 4: WFP food transfers and cash-based transfers, 2020 and 2023



Source: WFP, 2021b; WFP, 2024e

15. **Aspects of institutional context.** Over the SP implementation period, WFP corporate structure experienced significant changes. In 2023, WFP welcomed a new Executive Director, prompting a shift in senior leadership. In 2023, WFP also launched the Business Operation and Organization Strategic Transformation (BOOST) Project, which is ongoing and aims to review WFP's organizational structure to reduce fragmentation, address duplication and incentivize collaboration. The BOOST exercise identified five main challenges for WFP, as follows: a) fragmentation and duplication, lack of coordination and ineffective governance; b) lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities; c) increased bureaucracy and lack of agility; d) suboptimal allocation of resources across the organization; and e) unclear vision and prioritization of activities. BOOST helped inform a new organizational structure at headquarters, with further changes being implemented across regional bureaux and country offices at the time of drafting of this report.

16. In 2023, WFP launched the Global Assurance Project Reassurance Action Plan, aimed at strengthening specific areas of WFP assurance systems. The project is ongoing, but identified key areas requiring improvement – including monitoring, identity management, cooperating partner management, and the supply chain within WFP high-risk operations – and incorporated assurance initiatives into WFP's 2024 implementation plans.

17. **United Nations Reform.** The ongoing United Nations Development System (UNDS) reform, which began in 2017, repositions the United Nations system to be “more strategic, accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient, effective and results-oriented” in responding to national development needs and priorities in light of the 2030 Agenda.⁴⁹ This reform process led WFP to expand its services to function as a “partner of choice” in support of other humanitarian and development actors. With UNDS reform, WFP also committed to strengthening its role as a system-wide service provider outside its cluster responsibilities.⁵⁰

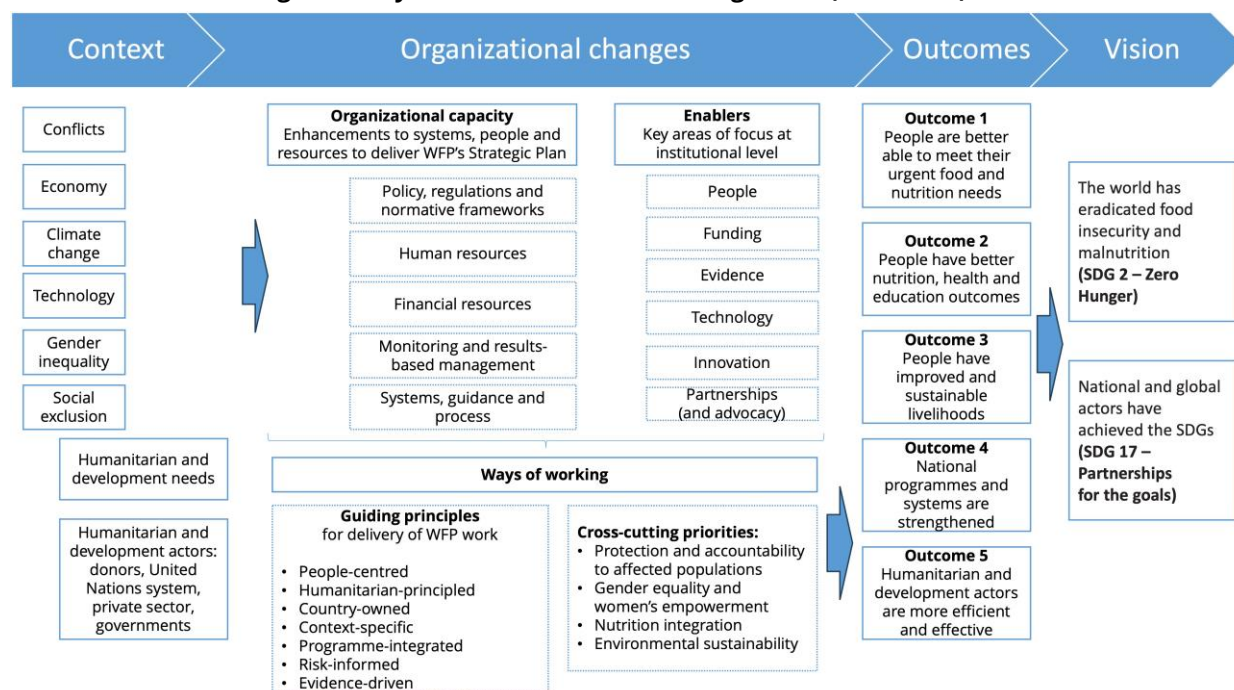
⁴⁹ WFP, 2022a

⁵⁰ WFP, 2022a

1.3 SUBJECTS EVALUATED

18. Figure 5 is an overview of its main features. The diagram illustrates the place and importance of organizational dimensions that are an important feature of this evaluation.

Figure 5: Key features of the WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2025)



Source: Evaluation Team

19. The main vehicle for SP implementation is the CSP process. SP priorities are translated into contextually specific plans through country planning exercises which are informed by national priorities and developed in consultation with governments, as well as by priorities agreed under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). At the time of this evaluation, all countries where WFP operates have a CSP or interim CSP, with 46 country offices having graduated to second-generation CSPs. A total of 36 CSPs were designed after the SP was approved.⁵¹

20. HLTs with lead and supporting indicators for each strategic outcome (SO) were formulated for the first time as part of this SP. The Corporate Results Framework (CRF) includes a simpler results framework:⁵² it reflects realignment of the former categories of management results indicators to the six SP enablers; and it expands the number of management key performance indicators (KPIs). The CRF also includes the HLT as well as 12 corporate outputs distributed underneath the SP's SOs. This marks a shift from activity-based reporting to output-based planning and reporting.

21. The Programme Operations Department was tasked with facilitating SP implementation. It rolled out five workstreams: Activities architecture (line of sight (LoS)) and guidance; Reporting and system alignment; Policy and normative alignment; Funding the Strategic Plan; and Support to regional bureaux and country offices transitioning. A multi-year Critical Corporate Initiative (CCI) was introduced to support the implementation of the SP by aligning systems and processes and providing enhanced programme support to country offices. The CCI deliverables focus on systems and platform realignment, which includes:

⁵¹ Decisions and recommendations of the Executive Board in November 2022, February 2023, and June 2023: WFP, 2022b, WFP, 2023b, WFP, 2023c.

⁵² Replacement of the 19 former outcome categories with the five strategic outcomes.

financial and donor reporting and beneficiary counting; change management processes; making cross-cutting priorities part of mainstream work; and strengthening of evidence generation and field monitoring. The implementation of the SP is also supported by the Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee, which was assembled to represent the perspectives of WFP from headquarters, regions, and country offices.⁵³

1.4 METHODOLOGY, LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

22. The evaluation was conducted between July 2023 and November 2024. Data collection took place between November 2023 and May 2024. A full timeline can be found in 0. The evaluation methodology combined a **theory-based approach** with elements of developmental evaluation approaches. The full evaluation methodology is described in 0.

23. Evaluation design was supported by a review of the **SP Theory of Change** (ToC) (see 0). ToC underlying assumptions were made explicit at inception and were included in the evaluation lines of inquiry and in the evaluation matrix (0) which reflected the five evaluation questions. The ToC review informed agreed changes to the evaluation sub-questions, with modifications approved at inception. The evaluation matrix provides an overview of the evaluation criteria, sub-questions, lines of inquiry/indicators, data sources, and means of triangulation.

24. The evaluation inquiry around EQ2 was guided by the **model of Organizational Readiness** developed and used by Mokoro for the Strategic School Feeding evaluation⁵⁴ (see 0) and used again in the Country Strategic Plan Policy Evaluation (CSP PE). This theoretical model aligns with the inquiry into the strength of the SP enablers. It guided the evaluation in reflecting on the overall organizational capability and coherence of WFP (a central feature of the model) rather than considering the enablers in isolation.

25. Elements of **developmental evaluation approaches**⁵⁵ ensured a **focus on learning and inclusion of stakeholder perspectives**. Key stakeholders and leaders responsible for the strategic planning process were engaged as thought partners throughout the evaluation and had input into the findings, conclusions and recommendations. Consultation with stakeholders was supported by the evaluation's Internal Reference Group (IRG). Engagement with regional bureaux and country offices included facilitated reflection opportunities and was included in the evaluation's three internal Analytical Papers (APs) on Programme Integration, Strategic Positioning, and Innovation. The APs were short stocktaking papers that drew on available evidence and formulated critical questions for reflection around opportunities and areas of weaknesses. Dedicated advisory groups assisted in scoping for the APs and provided feedback on the draft papers. High-level findings, conclusions and recommendations will be presented and discussed at a global workshop in Rome in early September 2024. Fifty-four percent of stakeholders (209 persons in total) consulted were male, and 46 percent (175 persons) were female.

26. The MTE data collection took place through a **mixed-methods approach** and combined qualitative and quantitative methods. This ensured that findings were drawn from a triangulated evidence base, with bias minimized.

⁵³ The Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee is an advisory group that makes directional decisions

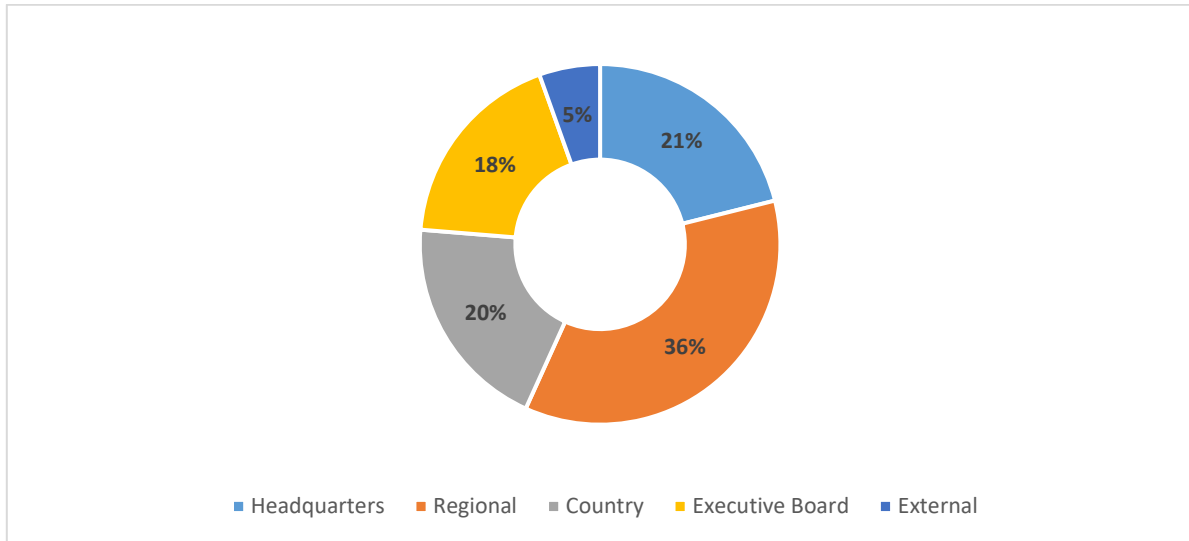
⁵⁴ WFP, 2021c

⁵⁵ See Patton, 2010; Patton, 2015; and Patton, 2021

Table 1: Overview of evaluation methods, focus and coverage

Method	Focus	Coverage
Desk review	Documentation analysis. Analysis of existing WFP datasets to update findings from the Country Strategic Plan Policy Evaluation (CSP PE).	Analysis of 21 recently completed CSP Evaluations (CSPEs), audit reports, decentralized evaluations, global strategic and policy evaluations, and other internal documentation. WFP datasets on needs-based plans, expenditure, funding sources, levels, and changes over time; staff records; and performance indicators.
Survey	Collect views of purposely sampled WFP country office staff on the Strategic Plan (SP) design and implementation.	443 respondents targeted, 123 staff members (67 female, 63 male, and one other) responded (29 percent response rate).
Focus group discussions	Executive Board consultations to gather perspectives on SP design, relevance, and WFP's organizational readiness to achieve the results of the SP.	Five focus groups of two hours held with informants who agreed to participate: a total of 70 participants.
	Regional bureaux consultations: Five round tables with each regional bureau (covering the Analytical Paper (AP) topics, and sessions on organizational readiness and results) and selected interviews with regional bureau informants.	All six regional bureaux covered. Regional Bureaux Panama, Nairobi and Bangkok with one-week in-person visits by the Evaluation Team, and other consultations held remotely over a period of two-to-three weeks. A total of 145 (77 female and 68 male) people were consulted at regional bureau level.
Semi-structured key informant interviews	Country office perspectives on SP continued relevance, organizational readiness and progress towards results through key informant interviews and/or focus group discussions.	Interviews with 40 countries, including 75 informants from Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iraq, Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pacific Multi-Country, Peru, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
	Headquarters and external informant interviews to support the design phase of the evaluation and collect primary data against evaluation questions.	56 informants (21 male, 35 female) from WFP, and 13 external informants (five male, and eight female)

Figure 6: Evaluation participants, by type



Source: Evaluation Team

27. **Synthesis of data, compilation, and triangulation.** Data collected was organized, classified, and analysed based on key word searches to reflect the main themes of the evaluation. Evidence from all sources was collated into findings matrices against evaluation questions and sub-questions to bring together the evidence and perspectives. A three-day team workshop at the end of the data collection phase (April 2024) consolidated analysis and findings. Information collected was triangulated by cross-confirming findings and conclusions. Main findings were cross-checked through at least two different methods. WFP Evaluation Quality Assurance System (EQAS) quality criteria, templates and checklists were consistently applied. A Mokoro quality assurance reviewer provided independent advance quality assurance of all deliverables. All deliverables were reviewed and commented on by the Office of Evaluation. The SP principles and enablers were mapped against the EQs at the inception stage (Annex IV), and therefore were not analysed individually.

28. **Limitations.** The Evaluation Team identified challenges to evaluability at inception and put mitigating factors in place. Details can be found in Annex III, Table 7.

29. **Ethical considerations and safeguards.** The evaluation was designed to ensure informed consent, protect the privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, ensure cultural sensitivity, respect the autonomy of participants,⁵⁶ ensure fair representation (including women, and a balance between headquarters, regional bureaux, country offices, Executive Board, and external stakeholders) and ensure that the evaluation resulted in no harm to participants. All interview notes were stored in secure files and were not accessible to any other party.

30. **Consideration of gender and diversity.** The evaluation incorporated gender and diversity and other cross-cutting issues (protection and accountability to affected populations, nutrition integration, and environmental sustainability) in design and implementation through the coding framework, guides for interviews, and in the approach to different consultative events.

31. Chapter 2 reviews the main evaluation findings against four main areas, which cover the five evaluation questions and discuss: the strength and relevance of SP design (Section 2.1); organizational readiness for SP implementation (Section 2.2); progress on external coherence and complementarity (section 2.3); and progress towards SP results (Section 2.4).

⁵⁶ References to interview sources are via randomized meeting note (MN) numbers in the footnotes.

2. Evaluation findings

32. This section of the report reviews the Strategic Plan's (SP's) intended changes, aims and alignment with the broader normative environment.

2.1 STRENGTH AND RELEVANCE OF STRATEGIC PLAN DESIGN

2.1.1 Did the SP in its design clearly articulate its intended changes?

Finding 1. The SP reflected several important shifts, the most prominent being the greater integration of the Saving Lives and Changing Lives agendas. However, this reflected incremental change rather than major shifts; this continuity in design was broadly welcomed.

Finding 2. The SP set out a high-level vision that gave legitimacy to a wide range of activities. However, the breadth of potential activities does not assist prioritization at the country level, and may have encouraged a proliferation of activities within Country Strategic Plans (CSPs).

33. The SP was developed in 2021 in a complex environment overshadowed by the continuing effects of COVID-19. There was also the context of diminishing time to reach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a widening gap to the ambition of zero hunger.

34. **The SP design was informed by an extensive context analysis which remains broadly relevant today.** The SP context analysis⁵⁷ highlighted conflict, climate crisis and economic slowdowns as the key drivers of hunger. It acknowledged that international actors, including WFP, were falling behind in their efforts. While the context analysis remains largely relevant,⁵⁸ it could not have foreshadowed two issues at the time of the SP's approval in November 2021: the imminent boost in available resources (related to the COVID-19 pandemic); and the potential risk of volatile resource levels. Other main trends were anticipated, and the context analysis remains globally relevant today.

35. **An organization-wide Theory of Change (ToC)⁵⁹ was developed, though not fully capitalized on.** An organizational ToC was prepared to support SP development.⁶⁰ This was seen as a positive move, but the ToC had no official standing and did not play an active role in country programming.⁶¹ Its structure – five strategic outcomes (SOs), (including two modalities for implementation – SO 4 on country capacity strengthening and SO 5 on service provision) – had reduced focus and clarity in practice. ToC design had included a sixth outcome area, related to global advocacy and partnerships – critical to WFP's role in the global sphere. Its exclusion in the final version constituted a lost opportunity to position WFP more strongly in global advocacy on food security. This also missed a chance to support more focused and strategic CSP development where WFP's engagements would be more strongly linked to advocacy efforts (where relevant, with other partners). Internal interviewees who recalled the design process confirmed this view.

36. **Executive Board members, external stakeholders, and staff were extensively consulted.⁶²** The Executive Board consultations, conducted over several online workshops, allowed Member States to contribute extensively to the evolving SP drafts. This included acknowledgement that the SP was largely

⁵⁷ WFP, 2020b

⁵⁸ Based on the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) review of the context analysis that contributed to the SP and comparison to current trends and forecast developments.

⁵⁹ WFP, 2021e

⁶⁰ Key informant interview (KII), Headquarters

⁶¹ KII, MTE country consultations

⁶² This included engagement with staff through interviews, brainstorming and reviews at different levels, a working session with regional and country leadership, workshops, and digital consultations.

built on the previous strategic plan and represented a continuation of the same vision. Overall, there was endorsement of the SP and appreciation for the consultative process. However, there was concern that the “other side of the picture”, namely the Corporate Results Framework (CRF), was absent at the time of consideration of the SP. For the first time, the SP design process also included a wide raft of external consultations, including with sister agencies (some of which were drafting their own SPs), Rome-based agencies (RBA), national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and beneficiaries in three countries. The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) learned that, for many staff, the eventual outcome was seen as primarily driven by headquarters, with inputs from countries and regional bureaux not well reflected in emerging drafts.⁶³ This perception reportedly discouraged participation in the process.⁶⁴

37. **The SP design built on its predecessor SP (2017–2021)**, and embodied conceptual, strategic, and organizational shifts, comprising:

- a reinforced focus on the links between the Saving Lives and Changing Lives agendas, and WFP's role in working across these interrelated dimensions;
- reframing and streamlining the SP SOs and results into five SOs that are mapped and aligned with SDGs and related targets;
- introducing seven guiding principles in the design and implementation of WFP's work;⁶⁵
- recognizing six essential enablers⁶⁶ of SP results and ambitions;
- including nutrition integration in existing cross-cutting priorities – also in the CRF (reflecting a significant shift from social protection to protection and accountability to affected populations, to a clearer focus on gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW) and disability inclusion);
- an ambitious shift in positioning, with a focus on partnerships that would advance WFP's work and funding for root causes and resilience activities;
- four main modes of engagement which go beyond simple terminology of delivering/enabling to include delivering, capacitating, servicing, and advocacy;
- introduction of on-demand service provision as a standalone SO for the first time; and
- explicit inclusion of a risk-based approach to decision making and programming.⁶⁷

38. **The SP design reflected several important shifts.** The most notable was a move to greater integration of the Saving Lives and Changing Lives agendas. The SP clarified WFP's envisioned role and ambition for these agendas, including engagement with national governments, and work across the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus. The SP reaffirmed WFP's role as a lead emergency organization, but also emphasized its part in enabling others through country capacity strengthening (CCS), technical assistance, and service provision.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, consultation respondents from regional bureaux involved in Changing Lives thought that the SP insufficiently reflected WFP's offering in their contexts.⁶⁹

39. The SP's change was expressed in incremental terms, rather than as a step change, and this continuity was welcomed internally and externally.⁷⁰ The previous SP and the shift to the Integrated Road Map (IRM) structure is widely acknowledged as a major change for the organization. This SP's changes were

⁶³ KIIs, Headquarters and external

⁶⁴ KIIs, Headquarters

⁶⁵ The seven guiding principles are: i) people-centred; ii) humanitarian principled; iii) country-owned; iv) context-specific; v) programme-integrated; vi) risk-informed; and vii) evidence-driven.

⁶⁶ The six SP enablers are: i) people; ii) partnerships; iii) funding; iv) evidence; v) technology; and vi) innovation.

⁶⁷ The SP includes an emphasis on risk-based decision making and programming. It states that “WFP will systematically assess complex threats, risks and opportunities and embed risk management in the planning and delivery of its strategies and programmes to reduce risks and mitigate their consequences.” (p. 19)

⁶⁸ KIIs, Headquarters, regional bureaux

⁶⁹ KII, MTE regional bureaux and country office consultations

⁷⁰ KIIs, regional bureaux, and external

more nuanced and represented continuity with incremental advances in WFP areas of work,⁷¹ rather than frequent changes that can be distracting, detract from implementation, and increase transaction costs. Recommendations from the mid-term review of the SP 2017–2021⁷² were also adopted in the SP design, including: a simplification of the strategic outcome/strategic results configuration; strengthening learning from existing CSPs; and retention of focus on SDGs 2 and 17.

40. **The SP strengthened the emphasis on WFP’s engagement in the Changing Lives sphere.** It also elevated CCS and service provision to SOs. Compared to SP 2017–2021, the current SP puts a greater emphasis on aims related to livelihoods, human capital development, strengthening of national government capacities and systems, and service provision. The new SP introduces SO 4 on capacity strengthening and SO 5 on service delivery. These new SOs broaden WFP’s fundraising areas, and elevate two modalities for delivering SO1, 2 and 3 to dedicated objectives. Challenges arising from this – and in particular for SO 4 – are discussed in paragraph 120. A detailed analysis, mapping changes from the preceding SP to the current one, can be found in Annex XII.

41. The SP clarified WFP’s ambitions in the Changing Lives space, and facilitated external communication around WFP’s enabling and development role. SP 2022–2025 is perceived by internal stakeholders as a useful support to WFP’s positioning.⁷³ It provides clarity about WFP’s role and ambition in the Changing Lives sphere, including its engagement with national governments, and WFP’s work across the HDP nexus: *“The SP recognizes WFP’s possible role in Changing Lives... Now it is much easier to articulate with government and other partners, United Nations system, WFP’s aspirations towards Changing Lives. In addition, the new SP states clearly WFP’s positioning with cross-cutting priorities.... This helps significantly everyday communication with externals (funding proposals, donor briefs, strategic discussions with government etc.)”*.⁷⁴

42. **The SP framed WFP’s comparative advantage as guiding its choice on engagement.** The SP states that “WFP will only undertake activities for which it has a comparative advantage and will use evidence to inform decisions to scale up” (paragraph 48). The SP acknowledges that those potential comparative advantages include: humanitarian response; supply chain services; and WFP’s “deep” field presence. Others mentioned in the document relate to provision of “valuable services” (p.2) for partners in the areas of transport and logistics, procurement, cash-based transfers (CBTs), administration, infrastructure, digital solutions and data analytics.” (Executive Summary, p.3). The ToC explanatory note has only two brief references to comparative advantage, both relating to operational field presence and supply chain capacity (pp.17 and 18).⁷⁵ Indirectly, the SP proposes a range of technical areas for WFP engagement in nutrition, health, livelihoods, food systems, school feeding, programme and systems strengthening for national governments, and humanitarian support. It does not, however, make specific statements as to what WFP’s comparative advantage in these technical areas might be.⁷⁶

43. **The SP provides a menu of options for many contexts but does not provide focus.** With its wide menu of options, the SP is a useful framework for organizational direction, and facilitates high-level planning. It provides the broad umbrella under which country programmes are designed,⁷⁷ and it is appreciated for maintaining flexibility and avoiding being overly prescriptive. However, as a high-level document that lacks hierarchy across pillars, it is not seen as particularly helpful for guiding programming choices across the range of contexts and countries that WFP operates in.⁷⁸ In particular, the SP does not guide prioritization.⁷⁹

⁷¹ KII, Headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices

⁷² WFP, 2020f

⁷³ MTE Survey responses

⁷⁴ MTE Survey, Country Director (survey response)

⁷⁵ WFP, 2021e

⁷⁶ WFP, 2022a WFP, 2022a

⁷⁷ KII, MTE regional bureaux consultations

⁷⁸ KII, MTE regional bureaux consultations

⁷⁹ Absence of prioritization emerged as one of the five key challenges for WFP from the BOOST exercise

44. At the country level, the intended aims of WFP are defined and contextualized in CSPs. CSPs provide the framework for defining “WFP’s position, role and specific contribution based on country needs and WFP’s strengths”.⁸⁰ CSPs draw on “country analyses, but also monitoring, evaluation and audit findings and lessons learned regarding WFP’s past contributions and comparative advantage moving forward.”⁸¹ Priority setting, other than project support and administrative (PSA) budget allocations, is established at the regional bureaux and country office level through CSPs and budget revisions and not by the SP. This distinction of roles is seen as appropriate for such decision making.⁸²

45. **WFP continued to diversify its programmatic offer during the SP period.** Across the organization, there are concerns about the wide range of activities that WFP is pursuing and its capacity to deliver. Recent analysis of CSPs by the MTE team confirms the perception of excessive programmatic diffusion. In the absence of a clear and defined scope in the SP, WFP is seen by some as wanting “to do it all”. In the words of a high-level field manager: “WFP is doing too much. It should better define what it does and what it will not do.” This mirrors a view that some country offices are “trying to replicate as much as possible from [the SP’s] menu into their CSP”. This is at least partly due to an inclination for some country offices to include as many ambitions as possible so as not to limit potential funding opportunities. This is happening without proper consideration of country office capacity, and reflects a tension between the CSP’s roles in planning/prioritizing, but also in fundraising.⁸³ Another contributing factor to the proliferation of services is that the SP is seen more as architecture for operationalizing the organization’s mandate, rather than a way to focus its ambition.

2.1.2 How well is the SP design aligned to the wider normative environment?

Finding 3. The SP was well aligned with the SDGs, and other relevant normative frameworks, including those related to strengthening the United Nations system, humanitarian principles, gender equality and empowerment of women, food security and food systems, and environmental sustainability. There was a missed opportunity to link WFP’s Nobel Peace Prize to better articulation of the role of WFP in addressing the challenges in peacebuilding.

46. **The SP commits to the role of WFP within the wider normative environment.** WFP has obligations and commitments under the broader humanitarian–development normative environment. This includes alignment with Agenda 2030, the SDGs, United Nations Reform, Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), the Agenda for Humanity, and the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit, the Grand Bargain, the Committee on World Food Security, the Food Systems Summit, the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Nutrition Targets 2025, the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting, and other normative frameworks.

47. **The vision for this SP recommits to SDGs 2 and 17,** with eight SDG targets⁸⁴ reflected in the corporate results framework (CRF). This focus was also recommended by the SP 2017–2021 mid-term review. The connection to other SDGs⁸⁵ is highlighted in the SP, including: how work done by WFP towards SDG 2 and SDG 17 benefits other goals, including health (SDG 3); education (SDG 4); and poverty reduction (SDG 1).

48. WFP was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its work in fighting hunger, improving conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas, and preventing the use of hunger as a weapon of war. This recognition provided WFP with the opportunity to solidify its role in promoting peace by enhancing food

⁸⁰ WFP, 2023k, p.8

⁸¹ WFP, 2023k

⁸² KII, MTE regional bureaux consultations

⁸³ WFP, 2023r

⁸⁴ WFP, 2022a, cl.31

⁸⁵ WFP, 2022a, cl.35

security in conflict-affected regions. However, this opportunity was not fully realized, as the SP did not clearly define the organization's role in peacebuilding, and did not recognize ambitions around SDG 16 alongside the commitment to SDGs 2 and 17.⁸⁶

49. Through the SOs and its guiding principles⁸⁷ the SP commits to work within the normative environment and to strengthen national systems. This includes putting people, including those most at risk of being left behind, at the centre of programme design. This is consistent with the central pledge of the 2030 Agenda. Through four explicit cross-cutting priorities designed to maximize programme effectiveness, the SP commits to protection and accountability towards affected populations, gender equality and women's empowerment, nutrition integration and environmental sustainability. The SP also acts in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, respecting country ownership as part of the United Nations development system, and being guided by the principles of the HDP nexus of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

50. **WFP is committed to the 2030 Agenda vision of environmentally responsible sustainable development.** Environmental sustainability is recognized as a cross-cutting priority in the SP.⁸⁸ Safeguards are embedded in mainstream work as part of CSP development and through programme cycle screening. The Annual Performance Report (APR) 2023⁸⁹ tracks progress and reports any extensions to WFP's environmental management system.

51. Consistent with the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit, the SP recognizes its role in promoting localization working to "reinforce rather than replace local and national capacity".⁹⁰ Within SO1 – People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs – there is also recognition of localization of emergency responses, with WFP taking on a more enabling role. Referencing the Grand Bargain's localization workstream, WFP also commits to investing in building the long-term institutional capacity of local actors.⁹¹

52. **The SP reflects QCPR recommendations on operational activities for the development of the United Nations system.** WFP reports⁹² its progress on QCPR implementation in 2023, including alignment of CSPs, by revising guidance to country offices, with national priorities, UNSDCF and humanitarian response plans. Also, Country Directors are active in United Nations country teams and participate in common country analyses. WFP supports the resident coordinator system, and derives all its second-generation CSPs directly from UNSDCF – 90 percent of these are aligned with the UNSDCF cycles. The CRF reflects the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0).⁹³ United Nations entities report annually on their progress in mainstreaming gender equality. The CRF also reflects the QCPR commitments to the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (three CRF indicators are QCPR-aligned).

53. **SP 2022–2025 refers to integrating Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) into programming for the first time,** and an increasing number of CSPs and policies refer to PSEA. WFP's strategic direction for PSEA is derived from successive Executive Director circulars and is outlined in SP 2022–2025.⁹⁴ The United Nations system and Inter-Agency Standing Committee have strengthened awareness of risks and responsibilities related to PSEA. A 2023 Executive Director circular significantly updated WFP's normative framework on PSEA. An evaluation found that WFP is making important efforts to

⁸⁶ Commitment to SDG 16 is recognized in UNICEF's Strategic Plan under its Goal Area 3. It is not specifically referenced in UNHCR's Strategic Plan.

⁸⁷ WFP, 2022a, Guiding principles Section 4

⁸⁸ WFP, 2022a, Section 6.4

⁸⁹ WFP, 2024e

⁹⁰ WFP, 2022a, cl. 19

⁹¹ WFP, 2022a, cl. 116

⁹² WFP, 2024e, Annex IX

⁹³ WFP, 2024e, Annex VII

⁹⁴ WFP, 2022a and WFP, 2024f

develop effective indicators and a wider monitoring system, but this is not yet resulting in consolidated reporting.⁹⁵ The SP CRF introduced indicators related to PSEA, but performance data is not yet available.

Summary of findings on strength and relevance of SP design

Despite several important shifts, including the greater integration of the Saving Lives and Changing Lives agendas, the SP reflected incremental rather than sudden step change. This continuity was welcomed internally and externally. The SP was broadly aligned to the SDG and normative framework, giving legitimacy to a wide range of activities. However, the SP's lack of guidance on country-level prioritization may have inadvertently encouraged proliferation across a highly diversified programme offering. There was a missed opportunity to link WFP's Nobel Peace Prize to a better articulation of WFP's role in addressing the challenges of peacebuilding.

2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS FOR SP IMPLEMENTATION

54. This section of the report discusses evidence about the rollout of SP priorities. It reflects on how the organization equipped itself to deliver against SP objectives.

2.2.1 How well did WFP manage the transition to SP 2022–2025 and strengthen programmatic support?

Finding 4. WFP moved rapidly to adapt existing CSPs to the new framework, then shifted to focus SP implementation efforts on strengthening certain programme design and monitoring tools. However, many of the initiatives supported were to follow up ongoing activities, rather than representing new, SP-inspired shifts.

55. **WFP moved rapidly to adapt corporate systems and existing CSPs to align with the new SP framework.** In January 2022, WFP set up a governance structure and five workstreams to carry out the actions required to achieve a swift transition to implement SP 2022–2025. In an intensive exercise, all CSPs and lines of sight were aligned or retrofitted to the new strategic framework by January 2023. Headquarters “did a lot of the heavy lifting”⁹⁶ in an attempt to minimize country office workload. Country offices and regional bureaux consistently noted that the retrofitting process required extraordinary effort on their part, so the effects of the transition are still unfolding.⁹⁷ As noted by one informant (and commented on by others): “Even a small change in the Corporate Results Framework has an incredible impact on the amount of work needed to realign.”⁹⁸

56. A steering committee with representatives from headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices provided oversight and guidance for SP implementation work. Coordination was supported by a dedicated project management organization team. The SP implementation effort is illustrated in Figure 7.

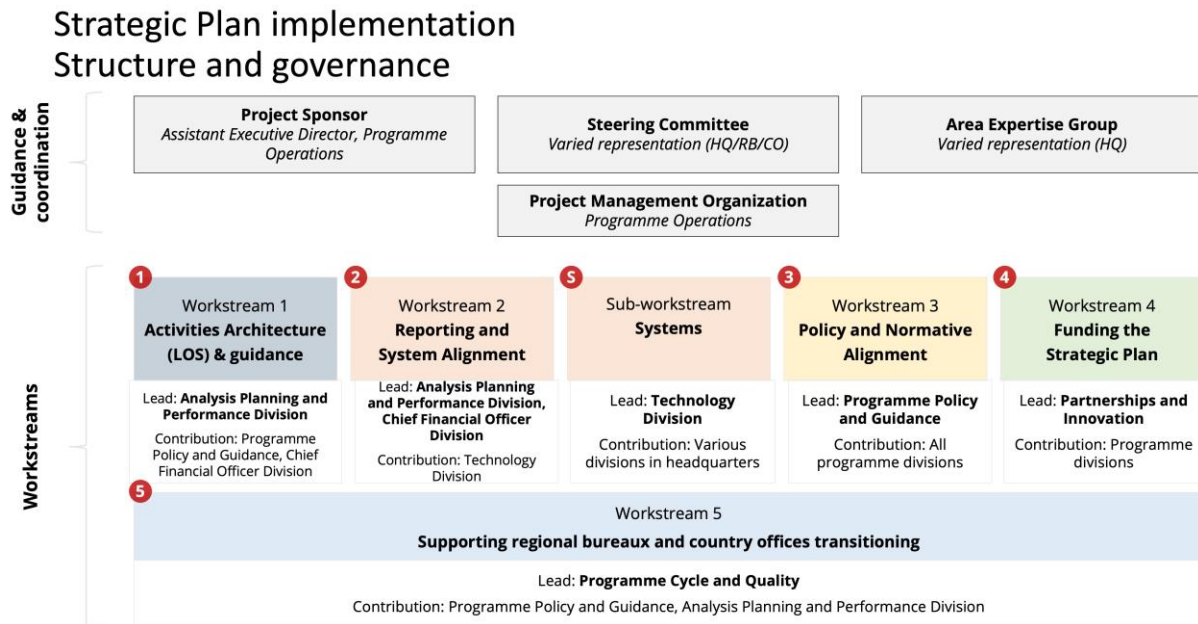
⁹⁵ WFP, 2024r

⁹⁶ MTE KII Headquarters

⁹⁷ MTE KIIs at Headquarters, regional bureaux and country office

⁹⁸ MTE KII Headquarters

Figure 7: Strategic Plan implementation 2022 workstreams and governance structure



Source: WFP, 2023aj

57. A Critical Corporate Initiative (CCI) was established to support SP implementation. This began in June 2022, and was initially focused on financing the systems needed to realign the SP implementation workstreams. In 2022, the CCI included three key deliverables: i) realignment of financial, donor and corporate reporting, beneficiary counting systems and platforms; ii) full alignment of planning, budgeting and reporting of all country offices with the new SP and CRF; and iii) optimization of field budget processes to strengthen the linkages between resources and results. WFP allocated substantial resources to support the implementation of the SP and CRF through the CCI, totalling USD 29 million to date.⁹⁹

58. In year two of implementation, WFP shifted attention from CSP retrofitting to enhancing support for country offices on key SP programmatic ambitions. However, allocated resource spending shows that progress was slower than intended. The rollout of the Business Operation and Organization Strategic Transformation (BOOST) exercise in Q4 of 2023, and the organization-wide freeze on recruitment in 2024 contributed to the slower than intended progress. In 2023, the CCI expanded to support three new deliverables: a) project support and change management (including overall SP implementation coordination, development of third-generation CSP architecture and processes, and enhanced support for CCS integration in CSPs); b) mainstreaming of cross-cutting priorities¹⁰⁰ into WFP operations and developing a thematic roadmap for funding; and c) strengthening of evidence generation, field monitoring and cooperating partner management. With the addition of these three new deliverables, key shifts in the SP received more attention related to enhanced focus on CCS, integration of Nutrition, evidence generation (the latter as both a guiding principle and enabler in the SP), and funding.

59. **Headquarters supported selected country offices to strengthen their value proposition.** WFP Headquarters provided support to 12 country offices to help them sharpen their value proposition to engage in the Changing Lives agenda. This entailed identifying key priorities based on specific comparative advantages in the country context, while mapping partners and opportunities for strategic engagement to

⁹⁹ WFP, 2022j and WFP, 2022c

¹⁰⁰ Including initiatives on environmental and social safeguards, gender equality and empowerment of women, community feedback mechanisms for emergency preparedness and response, and strengthening integration of nutrition in WFP systems.

unlock catalytic funding. A stocktaking exercise indicated that the development of value propositions helped to fill a gap between the broad CSPs and funding proposals.¹⁰¹

60. By the end of 2023, the SP implementation workplan was deemed completed and its few unfinished tasks were folded into the ongoing work funded by the CCI.¹⁰² During 2023, the CCI funding enabled implementation of a wide array of initiatives related to the SP including:

- a draft approach for the next (third) generation of CSPs;
- efforts to enhance support for country CCS and monitoring;
- a headquarters support structure for environmental and social safeguards;
- new gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW) indicators and regional bureaux initiatives to build evidence on gender aspects of various programmes;
- strengthened tools and staffing for community feedback mechanisms for emergency preparedness and response;
- adapted systems and tools to strengthen nutrition integration;
- initial work on thematic and joint partnerships/programme collaborative fundraising models;
- artificial intelligence (AI) pilot initiatives and initial work on a WFP Knowledge Management Strategy;
- development of 44 new indicators related to WFP's Changing Lives and enabling work;
- rollout of a corporate process monitoring solution; and
- update of resources for cooperating partner management.¹⁰³

61. While the results stemming from the CCI show progress that complements elements of the SP, the MTE found that shifts promoted in the SP did not influence these initiatives. Most programme-oriented CCI results represent ongoing work and priorities, based on long-standing aims¹⁰⁴ to improve programme design and organizational systems. It is plausible that the same aims would have been achieved regardless of the SP.

2.2.2 Have the shifts in the SP been met with adequate investments in policy and guidance, evidence, human resources, innovation, and key systems?

62. Beyond the official SP implementation workplan and CCI, many other efforts during 2022–2024 supported the SP's changed ambitions. This section covers the organizational readiness related to policy and programme guidance, programme integration, the SP enablers of evidence, people, innovation, and key systems and structures.

63. Overall, many substantive initiatives to strengthen WFP's capacity and structures are underway but have not yet reached country level to adequately support SP implementation.¹⁰⁵ The following sections provide evidence of progress on organizational readiness, and the degree to which this was influenced by the SP.

¹⁰¹ Site stocktaking exercise

¹⁰² WFP, 2023x

¹⁰³ Ibid

¹⁰⁴ As identified over time through various WFP evaluations, audits, reviews, and performance management efforts.

¹⁰⁵ MTE KI interviews regional bureaux and country offices, and MTE survey of country offices

Policy architecture and guidance

Finding 5. The WFP policy framework and related guidance largely provide the tools to implement the programme concepts in the SP through CSPs. However, policy gaps remain, related to the HDP nexus, localization, food systems, knowledge management and innovation. Policies and guidance have not helped to clarify organizational priorities. The volume and complexity of current policies, strategies and guidance are difficult for users (especially country offices) to absorb, and there is demand for more simplified, consolidated, and practical guidelines. There are signs that this is being recognized in more recent policy formulation. A revision of the CSP design and approval process is underway, and has scope to promote greater SP focus in CSPs.

64. **The complex and fragmented policy ecosystem at WFP works against clarifying the organization's strategic priorities.** While the WFP policy ecosystem is seen as enabling SP implementation,¹⁰⁶ it has become more elaborate,¹⁰⁷ and many WFP stakeholders see the proliferation of policies (some with programmatic and thematic overlap) as reinforcing a message that everything is a priority.¹⁰⁸ Potential policy gaps were also identified, related to localization, the HDP nexus, food systems, inclusion, knowledge management, and innovation.¹⁰⁹ Some WFP staff suggested that policies should be consolidated and encapsulate strategic direction and approaches for main WFP priorities.¹¹⁰ WFP management intended to suggest a new “policy on policies” as part of implementing the current SP.¹¹¹ It was hoped that this would establish a more coherent framework for policy coverage and approval by the Executive Board, versus management-approved normative tools (strategies, programme guidance). However, this was placed on hold pending Executive Board consideration of recommendations from the Governance Review, which was also delayed.

65. **The CSP design and approval process diluted the CSPs' SP focus, but this is under revision.** CSPs are designed in consultation with national partners. However, under the current and previous SPs, each unit at headquarters used the CSP commenting and feedback process to request additional elements, leveraging policies and SP content related to their unit's function.¹¹² And so the combined influence of the SP, CRF and line-of-sight requirements have risked some CSPs prioritizing vertical alignment, rather than nationally led and context-relevant priorities. However, some new CSPs have made progress in being more selective in their SOs and activities.¹¹³ The newly reconfigured Programme Policy and Guidance Division started consolidating technical programme comments from its services, and the Strategic Coordination Service is drafting a streamlined CSP development and approval approach.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ MTE survey of WFP country offices. Overall, 73 percent of country office survey respondents agreed that WFP policy and guidance supports an enabling environment for implementing the SP. However, in MTE interviews, country office and regional bureaux attitudes about WFP policy and guidance were much less positive.

¹⁰⁷ WFP, 2023am – The Compendium of Policies relating to the SP covers 33 active policies approved by the Executive Board, not including thematic/programme strategies approved by WFP management. The 2020 synthesis of evidence and lessons from WFP's policy evaluations found a “diffuse and complex policy environment...lack of policy coherence, coordination and prioritization [that] risks both coverage gaps and confusion and competition between overlapping policy areas.”

¹⁰⁸ MTE KII

¹⁰⁹ WFP, 2023y

¹¹⁰ MTE KII regional bureaux

¹¹¹ WFP, 2020d

¹¹² As found in WFP, 2023k and confirmed by MTE KIIs

¹¹³ MTE analysis of CSPs approved in 2022 and 2023. In 2023, of the 19 CSPs or ICSPs approved, seven included planned work under all five corporate SOs. Four CSPs approved in 2023 included work under only two SOs, two with work under three SOs, and six with work under four SOs.

¹¹⁴ MTE KII Headquarters

66. **WFP policies are broadly aligned to the SP.** Policies that existed previously influence the SP, and revised policies are guided by the SP.¹¹⁵ Policies help align WFP programme design to global developments and best practices. They articulate the ToCs for how WFP activities contribute to outcomes. For example, the 2020 Protection and Accountability Policy aligns with SP commitments to identifying barriers to access to food and nutrition assistance, and the risks that affected populations are exposed to.¹¹⁶ The policy includes a ToC that maps the logical chain from WFP actions to intended results.

67. **The volume of policy, strategies and guidance remains difficult for country offices to absorb.** Since adoption of the current SP, six new WFP policies were approved by the EB. This brings the total number of active policies to 33 (one more than at the beginning of the SP).¹¹⁷ Most policies adopted since 2021 relate to prominent aspects of the SP's modalities (cash), cross-cutting priorities (gender), strategic outcomes (CCS), and principles/enablers (evaluation).¹¹⁸ Yet, given resource constraints and competing demands in country offices of all sizes, and as reflected in strategic and policy evaluations,¹¹⁹ many staff report being only vaguely familiar with WFP policies. Policies are often not read until they need to be consulted, reducing their usefulness in SP implementation. Country offices also see a **gap between theoretical policy and guidance and the operational realities in the field**, where limitations of time and resources, and the interests of donors and partners constrain practical application.¹²⁰ Absorption of critical policy concepts and their application depends significantly on the level of effort WFP invests in introducing the policy and translating it into practical tools and information. Technical programme units in headquarters play a major role in this. Regional bureaux also report investing substantial effort in translating policy and guidance into more accessible forms (and into languages used by national staff). In emergencies, guidance for operational response planning is perceived as weak, and processes as lacking sufficient structure.¹²¹

68. **Policies and policy updates currently under development appear to be projecting a more prioritized approach.** Under direction of the senior leadership team, and based on consistent Executive Board feedback and past policy evaluations, policies being developed or updated in 2024 are including more emphasis on what WFP should and should not engage in. This is based on comparative advantages relevant to the policy area and the WFP mandate, in different programme areas and circumstances.¹²² Newer policies also include costed implementation plans to ensure that actions enable policy implementation to be financed.¹²³ The recently released Interim Programme Strategy affirms the validity of the current SP and prioritizes work under SOs 1, 2, 3 and 5. The strategy also concentrates and embeds CCS work under SO1 (for preparedness and anticipatory action) and SO2 (for school feeding and social protection). Paragraph 118 discusses this further.

69. **Overall, demand from the field is for more practical, simplified, and consolidated guidance and support.** While key informants cited good progress over the SP period in developing certain conceptual frameworks and programme guidance (e.g. for nutrition integration and CCS), they also noted that the CCS tools developed are very heavy. With mainstreaming CCS support across the new Programme Policy and Guidance Division services and units, some fear that efforts to translate these tools into useful

¹¹⁵ Since adoption of the SP, new or updated policies approved include gender (2022), country capacity strengthening (2022), aviation (2023), cash (2023), and South-South and triangular cooperation (2023). Policies planned for 2024 include climate change, resilience, school-based programmes, and localization.

¹¹⁶ WFP Protection and Accountability Policy WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2

¹¹⁷ WFP, 2022m

¹¹⁸ Including new policies on aviation, cash, and South-South and triangular cooperation, and updates to the policies on evaluation, gender, and country capacity strengthening.

¹¹⁹ WFP Gender Policy Evaluation (2020), Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Policy Evaluations

¹²⁰ MTE KII country office and qualitative responses to the MTE survey

¹²¹ MTE regional bureaux consultations

¹²² MTE KII and review of WFP, 2024I

¹²³ Such as WFP, 2023z and WFP, 2023aa

support will diminish. Key informants also expressed hopes that the revised Resilience policy, will enable WFP to clarify key concepts and offer practical support to developing their approach in relation to other actors. There were also issues of timeliness – for example, the revamped CSP Policy took much longer than anticipated, and the gaps between the old and new policy put a strain on regional bureaux in supporting country offices.

Programme integration

Finding 6. There was progress towards more integrated programme design, in line with SP principles, but also a tension between integration and the vertical line of sight (LoS) requirements meant to trace resources from activities to results. The MTE found some good examples of integrated programme implementation, but a lack of organizational support to operationalizing integration plans hinders fulfilment of this SP principle.

70. **Programme integration became a stronger feature of WFP programme design, as called for in the SP principles.** First-generation CSPs were criticized for their separate design and architecture.¹²⁴ Work on developing concepts for integrated programming pre-dates the SP; an initial focus was on resilience.¹²⁵ At meetings of the second-generation (2G) CSP Working Group throughout 2022 and 2023, working papers¹²⁶ were presented on integrating specific programme areas into CSPs. These papers often provided examples of synergies among different programme areas and how they could be integrated and aligned to various corporate SOs.

71. CSPs increasingly describe the interrelationship between activities and across outcomes. CSPs also articulate more consistent integration of cross-cutting priorities.¹²⁷ The introduction of ToCs as part of CSP design (although not mandatory) also favours synergies, complementarities, and stronger combinations of activities.¹²⁸ More recently approved CSPs include clear references to ToCs in the Programme Review and Approval Process (PRP), pre-PRP line of sight (LoS) discussions, and are sometimes summarized in CSP narratives.¹²⁹ WFP country offices confirmed that the SP enabled progress in integrated programme design.¹³⁰ This is partly attributed to advice received from regional bureaux and in the PRP process.¹³¹ This builds on references to mutually supportive activities in WFP policies, strategies and guidance. However, the MTE did not find evidence of any comprehensive overarching guidance on when to integrate, sequence and/or layer activities.¹³²

72. Integrated programme design was supported by progressive normalization of activity bundling,¹³³ but tensions remain between programme guidance and vertical CRF, LoS, and budgeting imperatives. Initial implementation of SP 2022–2025 included a decision to normalize activity bundling, which allowed for nested primary and sub-activities and activity tagging to track sub-activity outputs and expenditures. This

¹²⁴ WFP, 2023k

¹²⁵ WFP, 2015

¹²⁶ Evaluation team analysis of the 2G CSP Working Group notes and related documents (27 meetings held almost monthly between January 2021 and December 2023).

¹²⁷ Review by MTE of second-generation CSP contents

¹²⁸ WFP, 2023ab

¹²⁹ Of the CSPs approved in 2023, 50 percent include narrative language that summarizes a TOC (Cambodia, Haiti, Iran, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, and Sao Tome and Principe).

¹³⁰ MTE survey of COs - 63 percent of survey respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, and 30 percent a neutral effect

¹³¹ MTE review of s-PRP minutes and RB consultations

¹³² Section 5.4 of the CSP Manual on Technical Guidance includes two related resources, one on integrating anticipatory action and social protection and one on nutrition integration. Other sections cover individual programme areas or approaches, though some of those cover alignment across groups of WFP activities and approaches that can be combined for integrated programmes.

¹³³ WFP, 2023ac- According to the WFP LoS Guidance activity bundling is the combination of several activities in a single “broad” activity, usually intended to facilitate programme integration, reduce transaction costs, and retain flexibility in the allocation of resources.

aimed to introduce greater opportunities for country offices to combine activities that contribute to the same outputs and outcomes while still complying with requirements to report the link between resources and results.¹³⁴ This possibly enabled better activity sequencing and layering of activities within a coherent programme pathway if activities were targeted to the same population and geographical area, and funding was available for all activities.

73. Requirements for an unimpeded LoS from resources to results along the results chain remain uncertain with a preference for more integrated programming.¹³⁵ The CSP Policy Evaluation is limited in its ability to link resources to results.¹³⁶ This is because budgets are focused on activities and outcomes, not outputs and outcomes. After authorizing bundling in CSPs, WFP Headquarters launched an “activity unbundling” exercise in late 2023, which requested that country offices break down their needs-based plan budgets for capacity strengthening and service delivery in the COMET database at sub-activity and output levels.¹³⁷ This exercise acknowledges that country offices are allowed to bundle to promote integration and flexibility in managing resources. The breakdown is sometimes necessary internally to provide more granularity on actual expenditures required for WFP and United Nations reporting.¹³⁸

74. **Some good examples of implementing more integrated programming have emerged during the SP period.** Positive examples and valuable lessons are emerging from these efforts. The integrated WFP programme in the Sahel is evidence of improved integrated programming. In close cooperation with governments and multisectoral partners, the programme is implementing an integrated package of activities, including food assistance for assets, school feeding, nutrition, CCS, and seasonal support interventions with positive results.^{139,140} In Senegal¹⁴¹ and Nepal¹⁴² positive effects of integrating humanitarian assistance with more development-oriented actions and CCS activities are also in evidence. In Malawi,¹⁴³ the layering of activities in a geographic area had increased food and nutrition security outcomes. Good examples of nutrition integration were identified in Zambia¹⁴⁴ and Bhutan.¹⁴⁵ Progress was made in home-grown school feeding by integrating school meals into food systems programming, with a view to building community resilience and improving nutrition.¹⁴⁶ However, lessons on implementing layered, sequenced and integrated programmes are not being captured and synthesized across the organization. These could be very valuable to programming and should be informing WFP’s ongoing organizational changes.¹⁴⁷

75. Integrated programme design is negatively affected by internal competition, fragmentation of country office workstreams and teams, and gaps in overarching programme management. Once CSP design is completed, country offices are not given sufficient organizational support on how to operationalize and facilitate the management of integrated portfolio components.¹⁴⁸ While SP 2022–2025 narrative emphasizes the HDP nexus, only 46 percent of MTE survey respondents agreed that the SP helped their country office work across this area. Recent evaluations have pointed out problems stemming from

¹³⁴ WFP, 2023ad

¹³⁵ WFP, 2023k and reinforced by multiple CSPEs (WFP, 2023o, WFP, 2023ae) and WFP, 2023s

¹³⁶ WFP, 2023k

¹³⁷ WFP, n.d.a

¹³⁸ MTE KII regional bureaux and country offices

¹³⁹ WFP, 2023f

¹⁴⁰ WFP, 2023s

¹⁴¹ WFP, 2023u

¹⁴² WFP, 2023v

¹⁴³ WFP, 2023m

¹⁴⁴ WFP, 2023w

¹⁴⁵ WFP, 2023t

¹⁴⁶ WFP, 2023e

¹⁴⁷ MTE regional bureaux and country office KII

¹⁴⁸ MTE Survey, MTE KII country office

competition and lack of coordination mechanisms among SO teams and activity managers, separate work teams, and the absence of an overarching programme manager position.¹⁴⁹

Regional support to SP implementation

Finding 7. Regional bureaux play a crucial role in supporting country offices in SP implementation, including through support on specific enablers and guiding principles of the SP. However, fulfilling this role was difficult due to resource shortages and a lack of clarity on the respective roles of headquarters and regional bureaux.

76. Regional bureaux play a very important role in bridging between global normative, compliance and reporting requirements and implementation at country office level. The MTE found that country offices view regional bureaux support as useful and conducive to SP implementation.¹⁵⁰ Regional personnel are closer to the field; they have knowledge and language skills that align with the country context; and they provide the most timely and accessible support, which helps with agility.¹⁵¹ There is also strong demand for training on programme integration for SO and activity managers, but headquarters and regional bureaux do not have such tools available. The CSP Policy Evaluation¹⁵² recommended strengthening support and resources for the early stages of CSP implementation.

77. The Country Office Support Model Optimization and Simplification (COSMOS) initiative was piloted in March 2023 in Regional Bureau Cairo (RBC). The intention was to focus country offices' work on operations while headquarters aimed to "reduce country office workloads by streamlining oversight and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the support they provide".¹⁵³ Renamed the Single Accountability Model Initiative (SAMI), the project introduced Global Teams (combining regional and headquarters assets) to provide country offices with simpler access to functional support and services. The pilot focused on simplified global support for technology, CBTs and supply chain management. A draft end of pilot assessment¹⁵⁴ was disseminated internally in December 2023. The assessment found evidence of benefits from the simplified support structure, particularly for smaller country offices, and during emergencies. There was also a reduction in support providers giving contradictory advice (this related to clarified accountabilities). The piloted model allowed regional bureau staff to be more focused on supporting the country office, but the lines of accountability needed clarification. The effects of COSMOS/SAMI could not yet be ascertained at the time of this evaluation.

78. The role for regional bureaux as an intermediary between headquarters and country offices proved to be relevant to advancing the SP's specific enablers and guiding principles. All regional bureaux allocated resources to diversifying funding sources by: enhancing financial partnerships with international financial institutions (IFIs), the private sector and climate financing mechanisms¹⁵⁵ (e.g. the Green Climate

¹⁴⁹ CSPs completed in 2022 or 2023 for Chad, Central African Republic, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic Madagascar and Rwanda; WFP, 2023e; WFP, 2023k

¹⁵⁰ MTE Survey of WFP country offices – 63 percent of country office respondents agreed and only 16 percent disagreed. Country office respondents in Country Director/Deputy Country Director (67 percent), programme (72 percent) or administrative and finance (74 percent) roles were slightly more positive than supply chain (53 percent) and partnerships (43 percent) about the role that regional bureaux play in supporting SP implementation, likely reflecting where they most draw support from.

¹⁵¹ MTE KII country office and regional bureaux

¹⁵² WFP, 2023k

¹⁵³ WFP, 2022c

¹⁵⁴ WFP, 2023al

¹⁵⁵ Aligned with WFP, 2023. Annual Partnerships Consultation, where WFP with non-governmental organizations committed to further "contribute to the establishment of functional climate financing mechanisms" and enabled by WFP Climate Change Policy (WFP, 2023. Evaluation of WFP's Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Policies: "The Climate Change Policy and the highly focused, technical team at headquarters that was established to implement it have enabled WFP to access the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund and other climate-related funding opportunities.")

Fund and the Adaptation Fund);¹⁵⁶ advocating with donors for more flexible funding; or using advance financing mechanisms to support country offices. While country offices recognize these efforts, effects on CSP financing remained limited. Regional bureaux greatly increased their capacity to form strategic partnerships¹⁵⁷ that could help country offices support the Changing Lives agenda¹⁵⁸ (e.g. resilience,¹⁵⁹ social protection, and nutrition). Regional bureaux also improved evidence generation¹⁶⁰ and evaluation functions. They achieved this through improved connections with United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with academia and (in certain regions) with regional organizations – for example, Regional Bureau Panama (RBP), and Regional Bureau Johannesburg (RBJ). Regional bureaux also became vehicles for promoting or pursuing innovations, such as around identity management and CBT, with Regional Bureau Nairobi (RBN) and RBP creating their own innovation hub. Finally, regional bureaux were strong advocates for the importance of programme integration in their engagement with country offices, and structured themselves in a way that enabled integration.¹⁶¹

79. The ambitious range of SP topics made it challenging for regional bureaux to provide technical expertise and guidance – especially at a time of reduced resources and insufficient clarity on the division of roles between headquarters and regional bureaux. In line with recent global evaluations and policy updates,¹⁶² expert positions were established or secured at regional bureau level, notably in: context analysis;¹⁶³ nutrition; resilience; gender; conflict sensitivity; Disaster Risk Reduction and Management/climate change; and (to a certain extent) CCS and protection. When leveraged, this expertise enhanced and supported programming at country office level, which aligned with the SP vision. But the provision of technical expertise to country offices by regional bureaux was restrained by lack of funding,¹⁶⁴ challenges in identifying the right profiles, and absence of technical rosters for new areas such as climate change. There was also duplication of work between regional bureaux and headquarter (including commenting on CSP drafts, a point that also emerged from the BOOST analysis).¹⁶⁵ To address this challenge, RBC initiated a leadership programme for Country Directors, with particular attention on retaining and attracting talent to achieve the SP vision.

¹⁵⁶ For example, RBB – up to six Green Climate Fund projects funded; and seizing Asian Development Bank climate action window with WFP submitting 22 proposals, mainly jointly with UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

¹⁵⁷ Dedicated partnership units and development of regional partnerships strategies in some regional bureaux (e.g. RBP, RBD)

¹⁵⁸ RBD, RBN, RBJ consultations

¹⁵⁹ WFP, 2023. Evaluation of WFP’s Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition (most regional bureaux have supported their resilience work by increasing partnerships with academics, including universities).

¹⁶⁰ WFP, 2023. Evaluation of CSP Policy (regional bureaux initiated efforts to support integration of evidence into programming); RBD consultations

¹⁶¹ RBB, RBN, RBP consultations

¹⁶² WFP, 2023. Strategic Evaluation of WFP’s work on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS; WFP, 2023. Evaluation of WFP’s Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition; WFP, 2023. Evaluation of WFP’s role in Peacebuilding; WFP, 2023. Evaluation of WFP’s Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Policies; WFP, 2022. Country Capacity Strengthening Policy Update

¹⁶³ CSPE Algeria, Bhutan and Burkina Faso

¹⁶⁴ For example, the Resilience Toolkit team relying on extra-budgetary funding, and regional bureaux staff hired using this could not be sustained.

¹⁶⁵ The upcoming streamlined CSP approach, with changes in development and approval processes, aim at removing duplications.

Optimizing use of evidence

Finding 8. Under the SP, there was growing emphasis on the use of evidence for accountability and learning. However, resources for gathering evidence were heavily weighted towards monitoring for aggregable reporting based on CRF requirements, which have become increasingly cumbersome. Knowledge management remains a weakness, with evidence insufficiently linked to decision making.

80. Overall, the MTE found that the SP supported a growing appreciation of the importance of using evidence in decision making and to demonstrate effectiveness and accountability. The SP firmly commits WFP to “the collection and use of more robust, timely and relevant evidence throughout the programme cycle”, for WFP’s own learning, accountability, and programme management, and to support other partners. By including evidence as a guiding principle (evidence-driven) and an enabler, and through frequent references in all SP sections to existing evidence or the importance of generating it, the SP content seems to clearly suggest use of evidence is a priority for WFP. In interviews, WFP stakeholders noted that this content inclusion was helpful in advocating internally for more focus on generating and using evidence. In 2023, WFP met or exceeded some targets for evidence and learning management, including the use of evidence in CSPs and policies, the number of joint and system-wide evaluations, and the number of evaluation products accessed.¹⁶⁶ Yet, targets for implementing the number of outstanding audit and evaluation recommendations were not met, largely due to the increased number of these recommendations issued in 2023.¹⁶⁷

81. Important impediments persist that limit the use of all the evidence WFP generates, particularly weak knowledge management systems that remain insufficiently linked to decision making. Country offices agreed that WFP support for learning and evidence generation is conducive to SP implementation.¹⁶⁸ However, few felt that WFP made progress on developing new ways of knowledge management under the SP,¹⁶⁹ and recent evaluations continue to raise concerns about the weakness of these systems.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, the recently completed assessment of WFP by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment (MOPAN) network concluded: “WFP is a strong generator of knowledge but does not have effective knowledge management systems to share learning ... in a form useful for decision makers at country level”.¹⁷¹ There is no central repository for evidence (with evidence-generation split across units and levels of the organization) and knowledge exchange between regions remains limited.¹⁷² The importance of AI for knowledge management is a topic of interest that came up frequently during MTE consultations. However, without a better archival information management system, AI will not be able to draw on a sufficient knowledge base.

82. **This weakness is increasingly recognized, and was reflected in the priorities of the 2022 Evaluation Policy.** The policy emphasizes evaluation, including through the growing body of demand-driven summaries of evaluation evidence, which consolidate independent evaluative evidence in a format accessible to support decision making. Nonetheless, significant weaknesses continued to be highlighted in MTE consultations. The evaluation function for CSPs is acknowledged to be better aligned as a result of deliberate efforts, but is still a long and cumbersome process that does not optimally feed decision making.¹⁷³ The revised CSP evaluation coverage norms and changes to the Evaluation Quality Assurance System are intended to address these issues with a more selective and strategic evaluation coverage, a

¹⁶⁶ WFP, 2024e

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ MTE Survey of WFP country offices

¹⁶⁹ MTE Survey of WFP country offices

¹⁷⁰ WFP, 2024d

¹⁷¹ MOPAN, 2024

¹⁷² MTE KII regional bureaux and country offices and MTE survey of country offices

¹⁷³ MTE KII regional bureaux and country offices

limited set of standard evaluation questions, and greater flexibility to adapt evaluations to country context and priorities.¹⁷⁴

83. The vast majority of WFP evidence-generation resources remain focused on monitoring for aggregable reporting based on CRF requirements. WFP's ability to learn and demonstrate results is partly a function of how the organization invests in and focuses its monitoring efforts. Much of WFP reporting focuses on upward generation of data for Executive Board consumption. It does not reflect the wide range of projects or the more innovative work that WFP does; nor does it sufficiently capture WFP's more innovative efforts.¹⁷⁵ Country offices and regional bureaux have mixed views on the value of changes in the new CRF, with more positive views from programme staff and more negative views from country office leadership.¹⁷⁶ The CRF is criticized in the field as too rigid and complex: changes are too frequent, and guidance often comes late in implementation cycles.¹⁷⁷ One indication of the continuing challenges of realigning country office work under the new SP and CRF is the degree of misalignment of indicator reporting to SOs in Annual Country Reports (ACRs) compared to CRF requirements. Analysis of 2023 APR data,¹⁷⁸ which aggregated country office reporting on the CRF indicators, shows that 21 percent of outcome indicators were not aligned to the SO required by the CRF in 2023 – SO1 shows the most frequent alignment, and SO5 the least. Output indicators showed better overall alignment with the CRF output categories, with the lowest alignment recorded in SO3 (30 percent). Since 2023 was the first year of reporting against the new CRF, much of the misalignment is attributed to challenges in retrofitting log-frames, but also may demonstrate instances where country offices chose to deliberately select indicators not aligned because of their programme design, or cases where a country office provided assistance under an SO, but there was no CRF associated indicator, even though data was available that they wanted to capture in their ACR.

84. Substantial efforts to improve programme indicators may help to measure what matters. However, country offices are challenged by the expanded number of indicators and increasingly complex and changing methods. The length of the WFP Indicator Compendium is frequently criticized. As of August 2023, this was 1,365 pages long, compared to 400 pages in 2020, and just 215 pages in 2015.¹⁷⁹ As noted by previous evaluations¹⁸⁰ and confirmed by the MTE, WFP field staff feel that the overall performance measurement and reporting system does not adequately inform adaptive programme adjustment and design: it does not capture the full range of WFP's efforts to address underlying drivers of food insecurity, provide systems support, or the reasons for change over time (partly due to frequent changes in indicators). Country offices continue to set up parallel systems to meet their needs, alongside parallel donor requirements, as the CRF explicitly allows. Many staff stress that WFP continues to report mostly on the number of people reached, the amount of food or cash transferred, and quantities of food consumed. One MTE informant noted: "the APR doesn't show [the] richness of what we do in the field, and we can't put everything cross-cutting either... in the end, we still report metric tons, dollars and number of beneficiaries. How do we capture systems building work, all the work on cross-border trade, work ... through technical assistance?"

¹⁷⁴ WFP, 2024s

¹⁷⁵ WFP (2023) Annual Evaluation Report (2023)

¹⁷⁶ MTE KII with regional bureaux and country offices and MTE survey of country offices

¹⁷⁷ MTE KII and qualitative responses to MTE survey of country offices

¹⁷⁸ Evaluation team analysis of data compiled for Annual Performance Report 2023, adjusted for frequency of occurrence (number of countries).

¹⁷⁹ MTE KII with regional bureaux and country offices and MTE review of CRF indicator compendium evolution. Increase in length primarily due to the inclusion of Management Results' indicators, high-level targets and some country-specific indicators not part of the previous CRF. Advance guidance on methodology for data collection, applicability and exceptions was also added based on country office feedback.

¹⁸⁰ WFP, 2023k, Synthesis on Monitoring

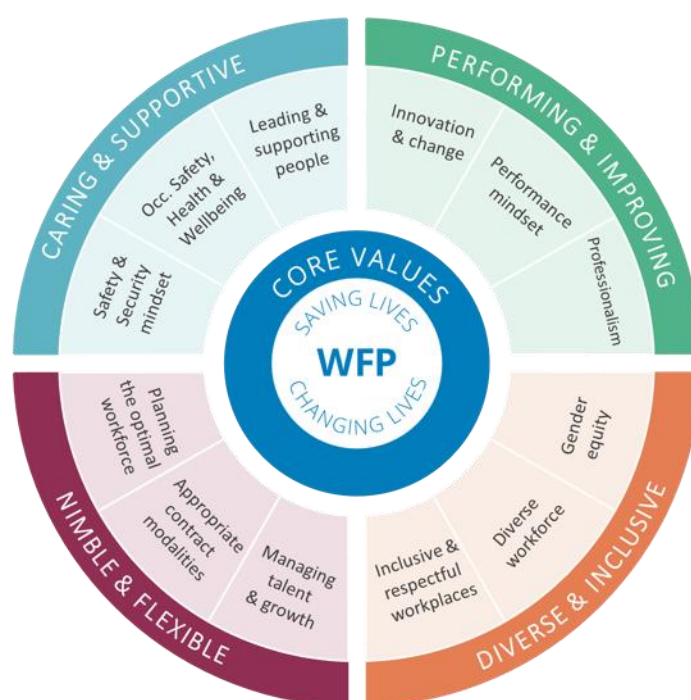
People/human resources (HR)

Finding 9. WFP made progress towards the SP’s “people enabler” ambitions, including strengthened workforce management systems. While the reduced dependence on short-term personnel supports SP objectives, it has potentially gone too far, resulting in a dramatic rise in fixed employee costs and reduced flexibility to adapt to funding changes. There continue to be areas of insufficient staffing and mismatch between HR profiles and the planned strategic shifts and ambitions embodied in the current and previous SPs. WFP global and regional management lack timely and precise data to strategically monitor whether skills and profiles match the programme ambitions in the SP and CSPs.

85. **SP 2022–2025¹⁸¹ includes “people” as the first of six enablers.** It highlights the risk of “a lack of alignment between the scale, nature and skills of WFP’s workforce and its organizational and operational needs” which it says will be mitigated by applying its strategic workforce planning framework.¹⁸²

86. The SP’s content regarding the people enabler is well aligned with the 2021 People Policy.¹⁸³ The policy identified four priority areas, and 12 elements that support implementation, as depicted in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Four priorities for “people excellence”



Source: WFP, 2021h

87. **WFP invested significant resources to enhance its HR systems, wellness, and workplace culture under this SP.** To implement the ambitions of the People Policy, WFP developed several strategies, frameworks, and initiatives. The Human Resources Strategy (2021–2025)¹⁸⁴ outlines six strategic goals¹⁸⁵ and related outcomes and outputs to guide the HR function across WFP. This is framed around the

¹⁸¹ WFP, 2021g

¹⁸² As of July 2024, 31 country offices and 11 WFP functions have a workforce plan established to proactively address HR needs.

¹⁸³ WFP, 2021h

¹⁸⁴ WFP, n.d.b

¹⁸⁵ The six goals of the HR Strategy relate to: equipping leaders for people management; building strategic workforce planning and management; reinforcing performance and accountability mindsets; enhancing employee experience to strengthen engagement; advancing people management technology and analytics; and strategic HR and service excellence.

ambition of serving as strategic business partners for all WFP employees and leaders. Initial efforts to implement the HR Strategy have included work to develop a new WFP leadership framework, an induction programme for field leaders, a global mentoring programme, and career development programmes for international staff and national officers (which country office interviews showed are highly appreciated).

88. In 2022, the Executive Board approved a CCI on “investing in WFP people” to support implementation of the People Policy,¹⁸⁶ and allocated USD 84.9 million for 2022–2024 to implement the plan for this CCI,¹⁸⁷ with 53 percent allocated to regional bureaux and country offices in the first two years.¹⁸⁸ In 2022, the HR Division PSA budget was increased by USD 8.5 million to deliver strategies and instruments linked to the People Policy.¹⁸⁹ It may be too early to evaluate the results of these investments in people management and HR, and the current reorganization and budget cuts are expected to slow progress.¹⁹⁰ However, it is possible to see progress in a few areas.

89. One example of success under the SP “people enabler” is the human capital management (HCM) workday, which should increase efficiency. HCM workday was partially funded by a USD 13.3 million loan from the WFP Capital Budgeting Facility.¹⁹¹ It is a technology and analytic platform to facilitate efficient and effective HR services, and data-driven people management decisions. In addition to the efficiencies from automating many HR processes, it is projected to lead to lower third-party payroll processing costs in regional bureaux and country offices.¹⁹² There is also an expectation among WFP HR professionals that if the inefficient manual HR management tasks are significantly reduced, then WFP managers will have more time to focus on performance management and staff support, though this will require greater incentives to encourage quality management.¹⁹³ The HCM workday was launched on 1 July 2024.

WFP made steady progress on decreasing the percentage of staff on short-term contracts. This increases the likelihood of attracting and retaining people with the skills needed to implement the SP’s Changing Lives and systems-strengthening agendas. Since adoption of the SP, the WFP workforce grew from 21,259 people in 2021 to 24,025 in 2023 (13 percent increase). Over the same period, the overall percentage of staff in fixed-term, continuing (country office) and indefinite appointments grew from 45 percent to 52 percent, continuing a long-term trend, as shown in Figure 9. In 2023, these longer-term contracts represented 50.4 percent of headquarters staff, 66 percent of regional bureaux staff, and 52.4 percent of country office staff.¹⁹⁴ The steady growth of WFP employees through 2023 shown in Figure 9 does not reflect the effects of the recruitment freeze and reduction in PSA-funded positions that began in late 2023. The effect of these reductions is discussed further in Section 2.2.4, under Finding 13.

¹⁸⁶ WFP, 2022c – KPIs for the CCI include increased workforce planning, decreased percentage of staff on short-term contracts, increase in applications for people with disabilities, reduced number of days to fill a post, reducing risks associated with skills mismatches in country offices, more respectful and inclusive workplaces, improved security management, and improved employee health and well-being.

¹⁸⁷ WFP, 2023g – Allocations of USD 25.3 million in 2022, USD 27 million in 2023, and USD 27 million in 2024.

¹⁸⁸ WFP, 2022c

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

¹⁹⁰ MTE KII Headquarters

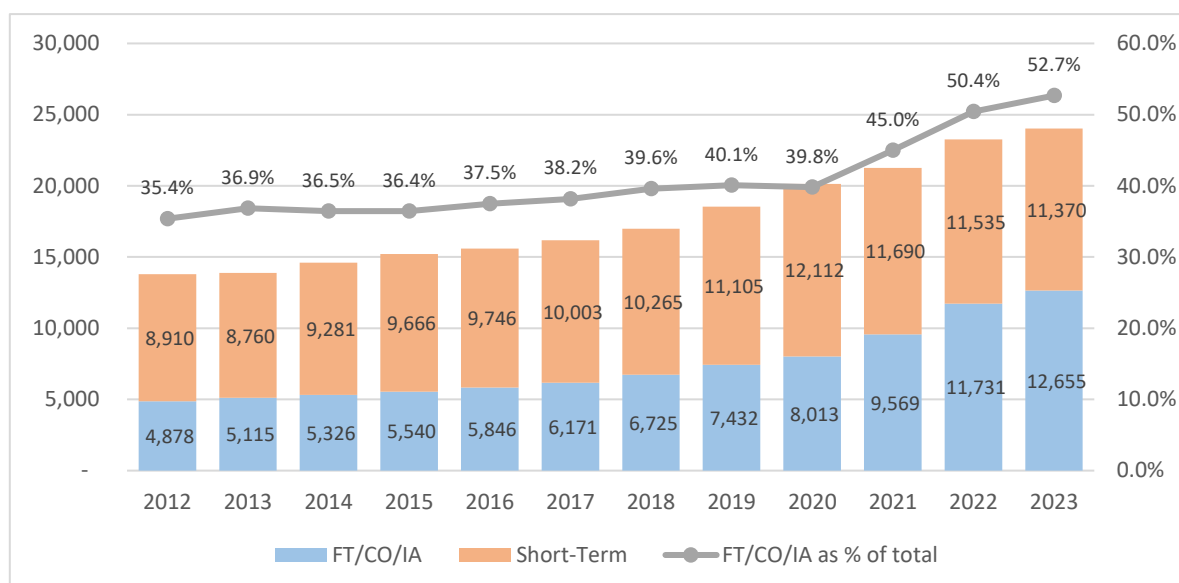
¹⁹¹ Ibid – the Capital Budgeting Facility was established in 2014 as a revolving fund to enable WFP to implement large-scale initiatives that improve efficiency by reducing long-term costs. The HCM Workday loan was due to be repaid over six years beginning in 2023.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ MTE KII regional bureaux

¹⁹⁴ WFP, 2023af

Figure 9: WFP total staff by appointment category, 2012-2023



Source: MTE analysis of WFP data in WFP, 2023af

90. The shift to longer-term staff contracts is an important strategic priority¹⁹⁵ but generated additional fixed costs. In a voluntary funded organization, these costs may be difficult to sustain and they reduce flexibility. Shifting positions to longer-term contracts was initially prioritized through the application of the Staffing Framework at country office level, with the aim of ensuring that WFP has the right people in the right place for CSP and SP implementation, while also providing better job security and retention, especially for national staff. One downside and risk of this shift is that it increased WFP's total employee costs, as longer-term contract holders receive better benefits.¹⁹⁶ Between 2021 and 2023 the number of full-time equivalent employees funded by PSA grew by 68 percent, driven largely by a 119 percent growth in the PSA-funded positions at headquarters.¹⁹⁷ Over the same period, PSA-funded employee costs rose 85 percent,¹⁹⁸ based on the first version of the Management Plan for 2024–2026. The revised utilisation plan PSA budget from May 2024 shows an employee cost base that is 51 percent higher than 2021.¹⁹⁹ The second related risk of shifting more people to longer-term contracts relates to WFP's flexibility to expand or reduce projects based on funding, as workforce reductions for fixed-term positions trigger separation expenses.

91. HR and related funding for gender slightly improved at headquarters and regional bureaux over the period, but country office capacity in this area remains limited. Headquarters' Gender Unit received some funding from the SP implementation CCI and received an increase in PSA budget (from USD 1.7 million in 2021 to USD 2.7 million in 2023)²⁰⁰ allowing it to bring additional expertise on board, though the CCI funding is temporary. Regional bureaux were more robust in their efforts to resource gender in their structures and all regional bureaux now have at least one person working on gender, which was attributed

¹⁹⁵ As identified by WFP and highlighted in United NationsUN, 2023b, which cites numerous risks to United Nations system organizations related to misuse of affiliate contracts for personnel, including turnover and productivity loss, reputational risks due to unfair labour practices, and potential abuse, exploitation and harassment.

¹⁹⁶ MTE KII Headquarters

¹⁹⁷ MTE analysis of PSA budget and post-count data in management plans approved for 2021, 2022, and 2023

¹⁹⁸ Comparison of total employee costs in the PSA budgets included in Management Plans 2021–2023, 2022–2024, 2023–2025, and 2024–2026

¹⁹⁹ WFP, 2024h

²⁰⁰ MTE analysis of PSA budget tables in WFP management plans. The initial budget for 2024 remained at USD 2.7 million but details on how this was affected by recent budget cuts are not provided in the new utilization plan.

to the Gender Policy rather than the SP. Capacity across country offices remains unclear as budget and expenditure tracking for gender-related positions and activities remains deficient. A solution is needed by the end of 2025 to meet a United Nations data standard for budget and expenditure tracking for gender. Cross-cutting priorities, including gender, tend to be covered part time by a few country office staff who already have a wide range of other responsibilities.²⁰¹ Headquarters staff capacity to provide support on cross-cutting priorities was reduced overall as part of PSA budget cuts.²⁰²

92. Capacity to support country offices for CCS initially increased under the SP, but these capacities are at risk, and many country offices are still under-equipped to implement CCS ambitions. Prior to SP 2022–2022, headquarters had already started to strengthen its capacity to provide support to country offices for CCS through the establishment of the Country Capacity Strengthening Unit in 2020, (though this unit was disbanded in the 2024 headquarters reorganization).²⁰³ With the Country Capacity Strengthening Policy update in 2022, new CCS advisers were appointed to regional bureaux,²⁰⁴ but these positions were abolished in some regional bureaux due to ongoing funding cuts.²⁰⁵ Several evaluations²⁰⁶ also point to a lack of skillsets within the organization to work towards national capacity strengthening, especially for the enabling environment at country level through policy work. Internal stakeholders acknowledge that there are relatively few senior national staff who can engage with the government at policy level.²⁰⁷ This was confirmed by internal stakeholders, who explained that WFP staff in most regions lack the knowledge and expertise to engage with governments to strengthen national systems.

93. WFP evaluations conducted in 2023²⁰⁸ continued to find that misalignment between HR volumes and skills remains a barrier to the planned strategic shift embodied in the previous and current SPs. While strategic workforce planning linked to CSP cycles offers the potential to plan for the workforce WFP needs to achieve its ambitions, stakeholders note that implementing these plans is contingent on funding. This creates a “chicken and egg” dilemma as WFP is challenged in mobilizing resources for certain long-term areas of its work without having the requisite expertise to engage and demonstrate credibility. Country offices are left without adequate technical staff and support to mobilize such resources. Specific issues pertained to the number of staff and skills to match CSP areas of work (particularly enabling and systems strengthening functions),²⁰⁹ staff overload, inability to engage in certain technical areas, and poor alignment between CSP ambitions and staffing. A few recent CSP evaluations detected progress in recruitment and development of specialized skills that led to enhanced programming capacity,²¹⁰ but many others continued to cite the predominance of generalist staffing backgrounds and the negative effects of staff turnover in building and retaining country office technical expertise. The ongoing restructuring and budget cuts are likely to further exacerbate these issues. These are discussed further in Section 2.2.4.

94. WFP global and regional management lack the timely and precise data to strategically monitor whether skills and profiles match the programme ambitions in the SP and CSPs. Detailed data on the functional roles and expertise of WFP employees is not available in a format that would allow assessment of whether the types of positions and individual skillsets match WFP’s strategic ambitions (under the SP and

²⁰¹ MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux, country office; Evaluation of WFP’s Gender Policy (2020)

²⁰² MTE KII Headquarters – exact figures for staffing related to different cross-cutting priorities and the impact of budget cuts is not yet available. PSA budget tables in various management plans did not break down figures for staffing and budget related to environmental sustainability, protection and Accountability to Affected Populations, or nutrition integration.

²⁰³ Human resources from the former CCS Unit have reportedly been integrated into other programme units. It is too early for the MTE to judge whether this will reduce the quality and availability of support to country offices or not.

²⁰⁴ WFP, 2023k

²⁰⁵ MTE KII, regional bureaux

²⁰⁶ WFP, 2023k; WFP, 2024g; WFP, 2023q

²⁰⁷ MTE KII, regional bureaux and country offices

²⁰⁸ WFP, 2024d

²⁰⁹ MTE KII

²¹⁰ For example, CSP Evaluations published in 2023 for Kenya, Nepal, and Malawi.

specific CSPs). This is the case for programme functions, which generally fall under the generic Programme Policy Officer job title. This makes it impossible to systematically assess whether WFP is on the right trajectory to build the skilled workforce it needs, whether employees who were moved to long-term contracts were selected by strategic prioritization, and whether positions eliminated in budget-cutting exercises were more or less critical for implementing the SP and CSPs. While the HCM workday may have the functional capacity to systematically capture such information once implemented, procedures for populating such sub-job title information would have to be introduced and consistently enforced.

Innovation

Finding 10. WFP recently enhanced attention to strategic prioritization of innovation, and systems for promoting innovation have evolved positively. However, coverage is limited and there is a continuing tension between innovation and risk aversion. Knowledge management of innovation is weak and criteria, methods and procedures for innovation scale-up are insufficiently systematic or clear.

95. **The SP recognizes innovation as one of six explicit enablers of results.** Three other SP enablers – technology, funding, and partnerships – also stress the importance of innovative approaches, but do not fully elaborate on their main characteristics. This includes KPIs in the WFP People Policy to encourage the organization to come up with new and better ways of doing things.²¹¹

96. Systems and structures to support innovation are evolving positively, with greater clarity and cohesion than previously, but they remain limited in coverage. The Innovation Accelerator and the network of WFP regional innovation hubs and country office innovation units constitute the key corporate vehicle to support innovation activities. Its model is primarily geared to helping innovation challenge applicants and scaling up innovation pilots by providing access to funding, mentorship and assistance.²¹² However, it does not provide a clear corporate vision on innovation, and success rates into acceleration services remain very low.²¹³ WFP is working on creating coherence of its corporate vision on innovation through a WFP Innovation Strategy, which was being finalized at the time of this report drafting. Innovation support mechanisms are also unevenly spread over WFP's geographical areas of action due to different factors, including budget constraints and local prioritization.²¹⁴ Despite a strong culture for innovation, and increased strategic prioritization, financial resources for dedicated innovation initiatives are highly constrained and sourced almost entirely externally, and this affects the capacity to take innovations to scale. Feedback from consultations also emphasized inconsistent corporate incentives for innovation. Also, corporate indicators in the CRF do not fully capture innovation outcomes, focusing rather on efficiency-related results and not the outcomes of innovations. HR systems challenge the adoption and consolidation of innovative practices with WFP's rotational system, enhancing cross-fertilization and putting challenges on the continuity needed to consolidate innovative practices. Knowledge management remains a weak link.²¹⁵ To address this weakness, an Innovation Database and Innovators' Playbook were being established at the time of writing.

97. WFP is seen internally as fostering a culture of "enquiry and learning" which progressed over the SP implementation period. WFP also provides incentives to explore new ways of doing things, although a tension exists between scope for innovation and perceived risk aversion.²¹⁶ Most MTE survey respondents

²¹¹ WFP, 2021h

²¹² WFP, 2024m, p. 11

²¹³ For example, the 2023 relief and resilience challenge window for SDG2 received 1,419 applications (including 64 from WFP) of which only eight innovations were selected to participate in the Bootcamp.

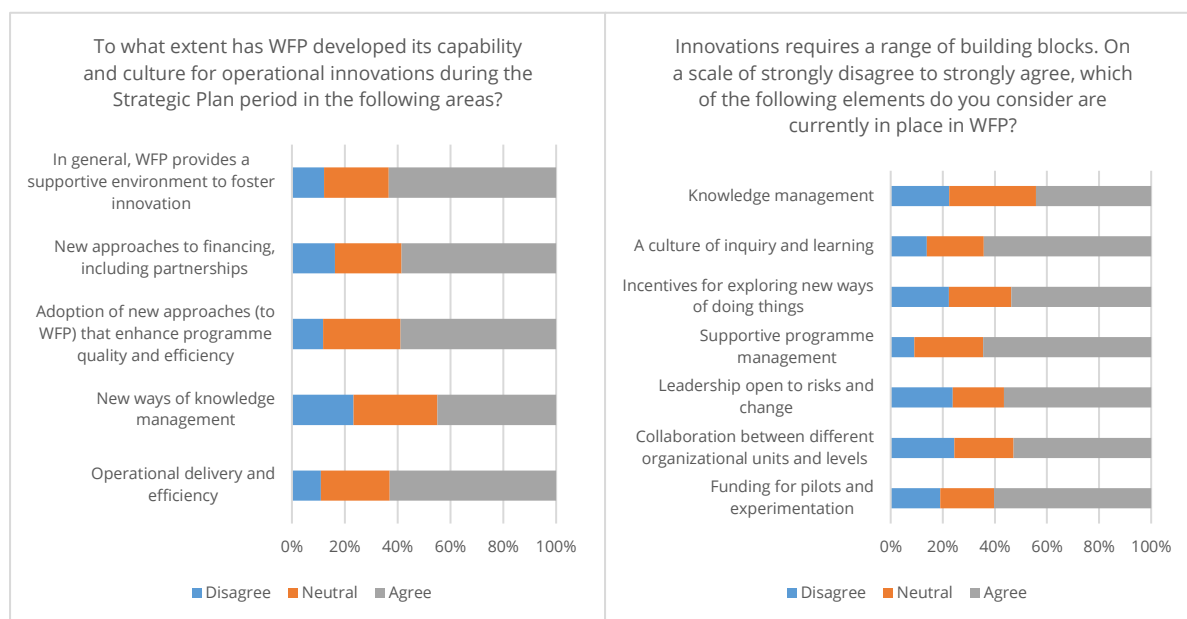
²¹⁴ This includes two regional innovation hubs (East Africa, based in Nairobi, and Latin America and Caribbean based in Colombia), 17 country office innovation teams or focus points (mostly concentrated in the regions with hubs), and more than 400 Innovation Champions.

²¹⁵ MTE Survey; WFP, 2020e

²¹⁶ MTE KI interviews

reported SP progress on developing WFP capabilities and culture for operational innovations, and existence of supportive “building blocks” for innovation, with the exception of knowledge management.²¹⁷ Impact Assessment guidance references the assessment of innovation pilots, but criteria, methods and procedures are not specified. Therefore, it is unclear on what basis the scope for innovation scale-up is conducted. While some CSP Evaluations (CSPEs) show extensive conduct of pilot activities, especially in development-focused contexts, the same evaluations highlight insufficient use of monitoring and evaluation to assess potential for scale-up.²¹⁸ The new Innovation Strategy is expected to provide greater clarity on these criteria.

Figure 10: Capability, culture and building blocks for innovation in WFP



Source: MTE survey of CO staff

98. **The assessment of WFP’s capability, culture and building blocks is positive**, with staff responses emphasizing the culture of inquiry and learning, supportive programme management, and funding for pilots and experimentation. However, staff in Country Director/Deputy Country Director and partnership functions were less positive that WFP has incentives for exploring new ways of doing things, and highlighted challenges in collaboration and openness to risk. One Country Director/Deputy Country Director remarked: “innovation requires a shift in culture. By nature, it fosters an environment that isn’t punitive when there is failure. Over time we, WFP, have become more, not less, risk averse.” This view was also reflected in other MTE country consultations. Regional disparities in perceptions were also in evidence with RBP (which has a majority of middle-income countries) being less positive, likely reflecting challenges related to the upstream work with national governments and the work done by WFP in development programming.²¹⁹ (Additional details on country office survey results are presented in 0.)

99. **WFP recently enhanced strategic prioritization of innovation.** This is reflected in communications by the new WFP Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director, and in the elevation of innovation (together with partnerships) in the organizational organigram. Also, ongoing at the time of this MTE, was drafting of the first organization-wide Innovation Strategy. These developments should help

²¹⁷ MTE Survey

²¹⁸ For example, in CSPEs in Namibia, effectiveness of school feeding pilots was not measured; Burkina Faso CSPE makes a similar point on cash transfers for vulnerable families in Ouagadougou.

²¹⁹ MTE Survey, KII regional bureaux

address the lack of common understanding of what innovation means, which was evident in MTE interviews and documentation review.

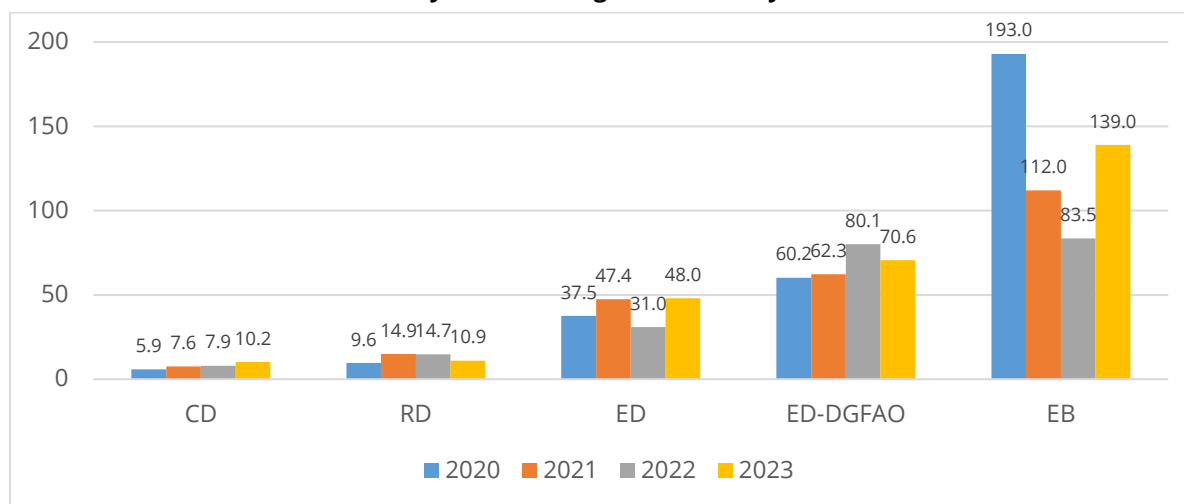
100. Other WFP strategies also highlight the importance of innovation. The 2023–2026 Information Technology Strategy²²⁰ includes a focus on strengthening research and development for scalable innovation solutions, automation, and modernizing legacy systems. It also commits to supporting knowledge management innovation by creating “reliable systems for capturing, storing and sharing information”. The 2024 Finance Strategy includes various efforts to continue automation and digitalization of WFP finance processes. During the SP period, reported efficiency gains include: the United Nations Sanctions ‘checkbot’, which automates screening and vetting sanctions lists; integration of local staff payroll posting with WINGS (for an expected 53 percent time saving in payroll processing); automation of CBT file transfers with financial service providers, and streamlining their evaluation processes; and automation of the regular ACR review, which cut reviewing time from 16 hours to 20 minutes.²²¹

Other corporate systems and structures and operational agility

Finding 11. The SP’s ambition for improved operational agility continued to be supported by mechanisms and processes such as the budget revision system (though approval times did not improve) the Immediate Response Account, and the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF). The creation of the Changing Lives Transformation Fund (CLTF) provides an important vehicle for investing in the SP’s key ambitions, including developing better knowledge and evidence.

101. Budget revisions continue to serve as a key mechanism for country offices to adapt to volatile contexts, though the time to approval did not improve. The 16 CSPs evaluated in 2023 included 48 budget revisions,²²² an average of three per CSP cycle. Past evaluations have criticized the average number of days budget revisions take to be approved.²²³ The MTE did not find a clear improvement in the approval time – with some categories of approval authority getting slightly better and others worse as shown in Figure 11).

Figure 11: Average number of days required for a budget revision 2020–2023 by level of delegated authority²²⁴



Source: MTE analysis of data from SPA Tracking File

²²⁰ WFP, 2023ag

²²¹ WFP, 2024n

²²² WFP, 2024d

²²³ WFP, 2023k, many CSPs, WFP, 2022h

²²⁴ The number of days is calculated as follows depending on the level of delegated authority: CD & RD (actual date of approval minus actual date of submission for approval). ED (actual date of approval minus start of E- Programme Review and Approval process (PRP process)), Director General FAO (ED-DGFAO) (actual date DGFAO approval minus start of E-PRP process), EB (actual date Executive Board approval minus start of E-PRP process).

Note: EB (inc corresp) = Executive Board including correspondence; ED = Executive Director; ED-DG- FAO = Executive Director WFP and Executive Director Director-General, FAO; CD = Country director; RD = Regional Director

102. WFP advance financing mechanisms remain a strength in WFP's organizational readiness and continue to enable operational agility. The only references to advance financing in the SP are under SO1 and relate to the GCMF and the Immediate Response Account.²²⁵ The account's stated ambition was that "WFP will increase response speed, effectiveness and efficiency through its donor-funded Immediate Response Account". On the GCMF, the SP states: "WFP will increase the flexibility and agility of its supply chain to anticipate and respond to unfolding humanitarian emergencies more efficiently by reviewing and expanding (the GCMF)." MTE evidence shows that both ambitions were met.

103. **During the SP period, WFP substantially reinforced the Immediate Response Account** with decisions to transfer resources to it twice – from the PSA Equalization Account and the General Fund, totalling USD 130 million in 2022 and USD 150 million in 2023. This greatly increased its capacity to allocate funds.²²⁶ Contributions to the account also grew significantly, from an average of USD 39 million in 2014–2021 to an average of USD 104 million in 2022–2023. Under the SP, total revenue to the account increased from an average of USD 184 million from 2014–2021, to an average of USD 448 million from 2022–2023. As a result, under the current SP, WFP was able to increase allocations to an average of USD 409 million per year from 2022 to 2023, compared to an average of total annual allocations of USD 179 million between 2014 and 2021.²²⁷

104. The Immediate Response Account serves as WFP's advance financing of last resort to cover critical life-saving activities and operates as a revolving fund, though unrepaid advances at the end of a CSP can be converted into grants. In 2022 the account provided USD 385 million in advances to 36 country offices. In 2023, the account advanced USD 433.5 million for activities in 31 country offices, with 72 percent of these funds concentrated in five country offices.²²⁸

105. **The GCMF was expanded and serves a valuable role in WFP's agility.** As an advance purchasing mechanism, the GCMF facilitates shortened procurement lead times (three months faster than conventional procurement) and consistent food supply to country office, representing 57 percent of country office food purchased in 2023. The GCMF ceiling steadily rose under the SP, from USD 660 million in 2021 to USD 1 billion in 2023.²²⁹

106. Introduced in 2004, **WFP has an important mechanism for internal project lending**²³⁰ that is meant to enable country offices to fund commitments and spend money before contributions for CSP activities are confirmed, on the basis of either a specific forecast contribution, or total projected funding for a CSP. Internal project lending operates as a revolving fund, with advances intended to be repaid once contributions are received.²³¹ In 2022 lending advances totalled USD 2.6 billion and benefited 60 country offices.²³² The total advanced in 2023 dropped to USD 1.2 billion, benefiting 53 country offices, a 54 percent

²²⁵ WFP, 2022a

²²⁶ WFP, 2023ah and WFP, 2024o

²²⁷ WFP, 2024o – Evaluation Team analysis of data

²²⁸ WFP, 2024o – Democratic Republic of Congo, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Türkiye

²²⁹ WFP, 2024o

²³⁰ WFP, 2005 – Known as the Working-Capital Financing Facility until 2014.

²³¹ WFP, 2024o

²³² WFP, 2024o

reduction in funding, attributed to the overall decrease in contributions received by WFP.²³³ Of the amount advanced through internal project lending, 64 percent was concentrated in seven operations.²³⁴

107. However, there are mixed views across country offices about the degree to which WFP's advance financing mechanisms support implementation of the SP.²³⁵ This ambivalence may be explained by lack of familiarity among some country office staff with advance financing mechanisms, and also the CSP portfolios that tend to benefit most from advance financing - the vast majority of advance financing supports the largest WFP emergency operations and unconditional resource transfer activities.²³⁶

108. The creation of the Changing Lives Transformation Fund (CLTF) provides an important vehicle for investing in better developing knowledge and evidence of what works in the longer-term programming. The CLTF was approved by the Executive Board in June 2022 with the aim of "enabling country offices to invest in areas of comparative advantage and complementarity that position WFP to support national development priorities and gain access to new streams of financing, including for implementing government-led approaches that contribute to SDG 2".²³⁷ In addition to providing funding to test potentially transformative programmes, the CLTF is set up to catalyze complementary funding, generate an improved body of evidence through impact measurement, and ensure integration of the SP's cross-cutting priorities. It also has a knowledge sharing and management component. In 2023, the fund received 38 country investment proposals, and a dedicated committee selected proposals from ten country offices to receive funding totalling USD 63.8 million for projects under one of three "thematic windows" related to: i) transitions from humanitarian assistance towards increased self-sufficiency; ii) systems strengthening; and iii) climate change adaptation.²³⁸

109. **All of the CLTF's design elements reinforce and aim to operationalize important aspects of the SP.** Initial Executive Board consultations on the CLTF revealed a split among the membership about creating the CLTF, with some strongly in favour and others voicing concerns that it could distract from WFP's focus on saving lives in emergencies. The MTE found only two areas of criticism of the CLTF by WFP staff:²³⁹ demand for support exceeds its funding capacity, and emergency programmes are deliberately excluded. While the latter makes some sense given more prevalent funding options for emergency work, there could be some value to considering proposals in the future that more specifically look at early adaptations of emergency assistance to build pathways to self-reliance. CLTF-funded projects only started in 2024, and it is too early to assess their success in reducing needs and generating learning.

²³³ WFP, 2024o – The Executive Board approved a ceiling for internal project lending in 2022, equivalent to 10 percent of the prevailing contribution forecast at a given time. For 2023, the ceiling for outstanding advances was initially set at USD 1.1 billion, then reduced to USD 1 billion following reduced global forecasts. Despite reduced contributions, "no specific measures to delay or reject advance requests were implemented" and outstanding advances did not "exceed USD 468 million at any point in the year".

²³⁴ WFP, 2024o – Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, State of Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen

²³⁵ MTE Survey of WFP country offices

²³⁶ MTE analysis of data from WFP, 2024o and WFP, 2023ah shows that, of the combined amounts of internal project lending (non-Macro-Advance Financing) and Immediate Response Account advance financing in 2022, 73 percent was linked to unconditional resource transfers, crisis response for affected people, and general food distribution. In 2023, 82 percent of combined advance financing was allocated to unconditional resource transfers.

²³⁷ WFP, 2022c

²³⁸ WFP, 2024p

²³⁹ MTE KIIs at Headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices

2.2.3 How does the ambition of the SP compare to the evolving reality of funding?

Finding 12. The ambitions of the SP were realistic in relation to the funding landscape at the time of its adoption. The funding landscape evolved under the SP. There was a dramatic surge and then decline in funding, leaving the organization with an unsustainable level of core operating costs. However, the SP was developed based on funding assumptions that match current forecasts for 2024 and the emerging narrative that the SP's ambitions are outdated because it was developed when WFP had extraordinary growth in funding is false. There was progress in diversifying funding, notably with IFIs, but WFP remains heavily dependent on its base of governmental donors. Barriers to funding the SP include continued earmarking and short-term funding, which hamper WFP's medium-term programme planning and implementation, linking crisis response to resilience, and efficient adaptation to changing needs.

110. **SP 2022–2025 includes “funding” as one of its six enablers.** It emphasizes that WFP is a voluntarily funded organization, entirely reliant on contributions, and thus the importance of developing a compelling evidence-driven value proposition; optimizing the relevance, quality and range of its interventions, enhancing the flexibility of its programmatic offer; and increasing efficiency where possible. It restates long-standing language from previous strategies about the importance of increasing flexible and multi-year funding. It also discusses in general terms pre-existing ambitions around growing funding and financing from the private sector and IFIs, as well as thematic resource opportunities (e.g. climate risk financing), and innovative financing (e.g. by scaling up debt swaps).²⁴⁰

111. **The ambitions of the SP were realistic about the funding landscape when it was adopted.** The SP does not set any specific ambition for the total level of contributions throughout its implementation period, as those details are consolidated in the two-year management plans based on contribution forecasting, alongside the operational requirements for funding. When the SP was approved in November 2021, WFP projected that contributions would reach USD 8.6 billion in 2021 and USD 8.4 billion in 2022,²⁴¹ following a then record high of USD 8.4 billion in contributions for 2020.²⁴² In the absence of specific financial scale ambitions, the SP is essentially scalable to a wide range of total contribution levels.

112. The WFP funding landscape evolved dramatically during SP implementation, yet the emerging narrative that the SP's ambitions are outdated because it was developed when WFP had extraordinary funding growth is false. Evidence gathered by the MTE contradicts a frequent narrative at all levels of WFP²⁴³ that suggests the SP was overly ambitious because WFP funding levels had increased so much. In the end, contribution levels did rise far above WFP expectations to reach USD 9.6 billion in 2021 and USD 14.2 billion in 2022, before dropping back to USD 8.3 billion in 2023.²⁴⁴ This is in line with projections at the time the SP was written. The primary challenge caused by funding fluctuation is that, during the period of funding growth, WFP substantially increased its core operating costs (due to expansion of the PSA budget and the shift to longer-term employee contracts).

113. WFP made progress in diversifying its donor base, including for resilience building, but remains heavily dependent on traditional government donors. WFP's overall reliance on its top ten donors remained stable, from 79 percent in 2021²⁴⁵ to 78 percent in 2023,²⁴⁶ but WFP attracted new donors, as called for in the SP. Private sector resource mobilization yielded USD 205 million in 2021, USD 540 million in 2022,²⁴⁷

²⁴⁰ WFP, 2022a

²⁴¹ WFP, 2021i

²⁴² WFP, n.d.c

²⁴³ MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices

²⁴⁴ WFP, 2024e

²⁴⁵ WFP, 2021e

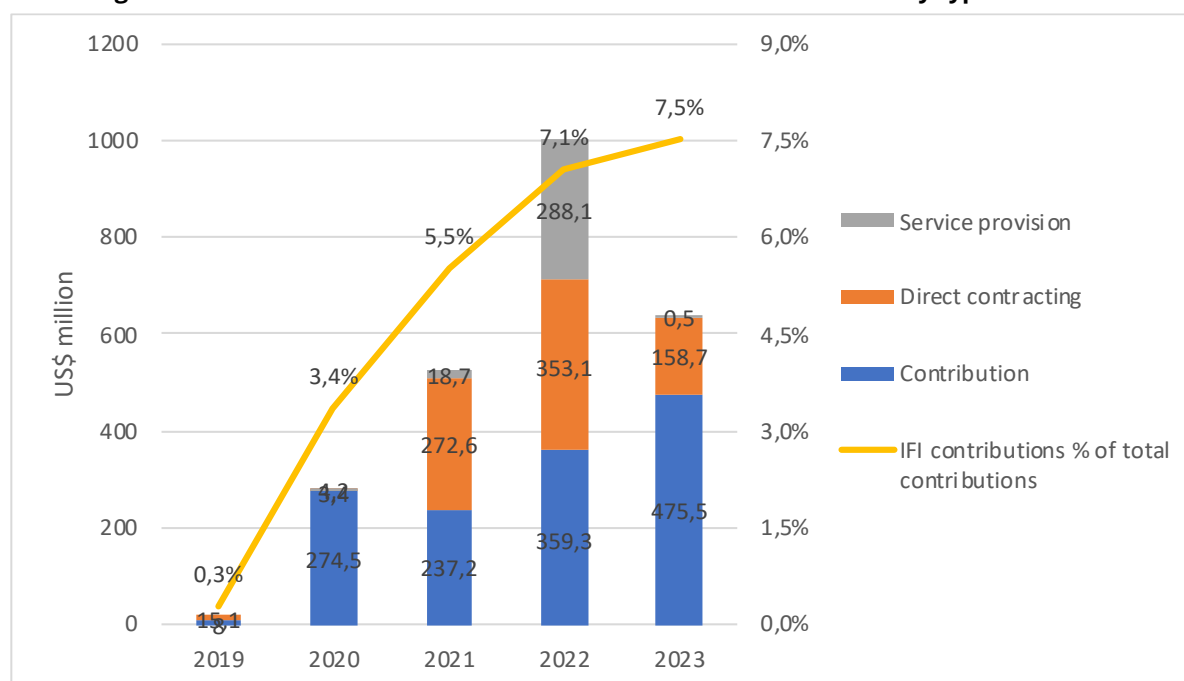
²⁴⁶ WFP, 2024e

²⁴⁷ WFP, 2023f

and USD 272 million in 2023.²⁴⁸ Although global economic uncertainty reduced the total contributed by private foundations, charities, corporations and corporate foundations in 2023, individual giving continued to increase from USD 91 million in 2021²⁴⁹ to USD 104 million in 2022,²⁵⁰ and USD 115 million in 2023.²⁵¹ The framing of the SP across Saving Lives and Changing Lives is perceived as supporting longer-term ‘resilience’ partnerships with the private sector.²⁵² WFP also reduced reliance on the top four resilience donors²⁵³ by successfully securing growth in contributions from three sources: i) existing government donors;²⁵⁴ ii) the private sector;²⁵⁵ and iii) IFIs, trilateral agreements with IFIs and governments, and host governments.²⁵⁶ The SP and WFP focus on innovation facilitated in-kind partnerships with the corporate sector.²⁵⁷

114. **The engagement with IFIs experienced strong growth.**²⁵⁸ Country partnerships and agreements channelled directly or indirectly from national governments to WFP and financed with IFI-sourced resources resulted in a dramatic increase in funding under agreements with 43 governments. IFI-sourced financing grew from USD 23 million in 2019 to USD 1 billion in 2022,²⁵⁹ before settling back to just over 600 million in 2023 (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Finance sourced from international financial institutions by type of contract



Source: WFP Partnerships

²⁴⁸ WFP, 2024e

²⁴⁹ WFP, 2021b

²⁵⁰ WFP, 2023f

²⁵¹ WFP, 2024e

²⁵² MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux

²⁵³ MTE analysis of WFP Distribution Contribution and Forecast Statistics 29 May 2024 – reliance on the top four donors for the resilience focus area dropped from 81 percent in 2019 to 56 percent in 2023.

²⁵⁴ For example: 2019–2023 France (588 percent growth), Norway (415 percent growth), Switzerland (236 percent growth), and Italy (342 percent growth).

²⁵⁵ Private sector contributions for resilience building grew by 42 percent between 2019 and 2023.

²⁵⁶ This category represents most of the donors that contributed under this SP, but not the previous SP (including the Asian Development Bank, Cameroon, the Republic of Guinea, Madagascar, Nepal, and South Sudan).

²⁵⁷ MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux

²⁵⁸ Executive Board consultations, regional bureaux and country office consultations

²⁵⁹ WFP, 2023ai

115. The IFI engagement straddles funding, advisory, advocacy and implementation roles. It involves transferring finance from governments, and occasionally directly from IFIs to facilitate the implementation of national programmes “where WFP has technical and operational comparative advantages”.²⁶⁰ Over the past five years, 70 percent of IFI-sourced financing was associated with crisis response, though in 2023 IFI-sourced financing is equally distributed between the SP’s three focus areas. It represents an attractive source of funding for an organization that struggles to secure funding for its longer-term resilience building and root causes work. In this context, working through, or to strengthen, national social protection systems is a major area of engagement with IFIs, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁶¹

116. Key barriers to funding the SP’s work include: continued earmarking and short-term funding, which hamper WFP’s medium-term programme planning and implementation; linking crisis response to resilience; and efficient adaptation to changing needs. WFP evaluations conducted in 2023 and MTE interviews continued to highlight the adverse effects of heavily earmarked funding on WFP’s ability to adapt to context changes, plan for the medium term, shift to an enabling role, and deliver food and nutrition security to all those in need.²⁶² Since the start of the SP, WFP had moderate success in growing its base of flexible funding, with fully unearmarked contributions of USD 487 million in 2023 compared to USD 445.2 million in 2021.²⁶³ Total flexible funding also grew to 14 percent of WFP contributions in 2023,²⁶⁴ though it remains far behind the Funding Compact and Grand Bargain target of 30 percent. Earmarking at activity level initially increased under the SP in 2022 to 70 percent of contributions, before reverting to 64 percent in 2023 (the same as 2021).²⁶⁵ Country offices were more negative about WFP’s progress against ambitions to diversify funding and to secure more flexible contributions than any other area of organizational readiness.²⁶⁶

117. Multi-year contributions decreased under the SP, and the average length of funding reverted to previous levels in 2023. This limits WFP’s ability to plan and programme across the HDP nexus. WFP is more focused in its discussions with donors on securing multi-year funding than on addressing earmarking, given traditional donor policy constraints.²⁶⁷ Predictable multi-year contributions are important for making appropriate investments, particularly under SO2, SO3 and SO4, and for establishing predictable cooperation with national and other development partners. Multi-year contributions to WFP have decreased since the start of the SP from USD 1.46 billion (15 percent of total contributions) in 2021 to USD 904 million in 2023 (10.7 percent of total contributions).²⁶⁸ Figure 13 shows that, while grants for less than 12 months initially decreased as a percentage of overall funding in 2022, they increased above levels prior to the SP in 2023.

²⁶⁰ WFP, 2023ai

²⁶¹ MTE KII and WFP, 2023ak

²⁶² MTE KII and WFP, 2024d

²⁶³ WFP, 2024e

²⁶⁴ As of 2022, WFP includes “softly earmarked” contributions, in addition to unearmarked and Immediate Response Account contributions, in its calculation of flexible funding to better align with the Grand Bargain definition. Comparison of the combined unearmarked and Immediate Response Account contributions shows growth from 6 percent of contributions in 2021 to 7.2 percent in 2023.

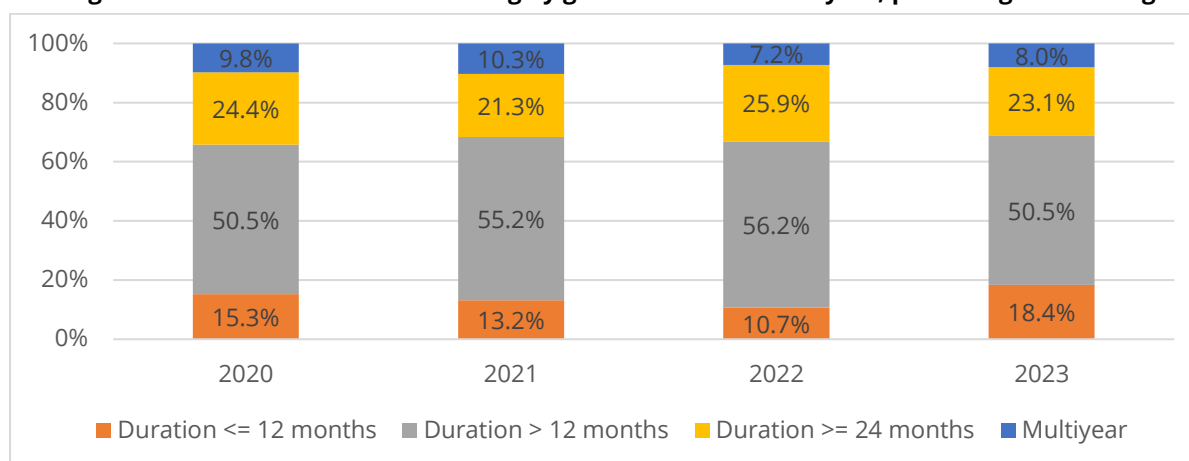
²⁶⁵ WFP, 2024e – In 2023 64 percent of contributions were earmarked at activity level compared to 70 percent in 2022.

²⁶⁶ MTE Survey of WFP

²⁶⁷ MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux

²⁶⁸ WFP, 2024e

Figure 13: Distribution of WFP funding by grant duration²⁶⁹ and year, percentage of funding



Source: MTE analysis of WFP provided data from FACTory

118. **Funding the Changing Lives agenda remains challenging, but some regions have demonstrated success.** Several evaluations²⁷⁰ recognize that resourcing medium-term and systems strengthening activities remains a challenge, particularly because of the voluntary funding nature of WFP and traditional donor prioritization of the Saving Lives agenda. Country offices mostly rely on short-term, project-based funding for non-emergency programmes. This results in hiring short-term consultants, which poses difficulties in planning and implementing activities with a longer-term vision. The skills needed to mobilize resources for the Changing Lives agenda also differ from what WFP country offices are used to with traditional donors that fund the Saving Lives agenda.²⁷¹

119. The SP introduction of a standalone SO on CCS was intended to provide more visibility to WFP's role and contribution in CCS. However, it hindered the organization's ability to mobilize resources for CCS and stood in the way of generating strong evidence of WFP's work in this area. Country analysis by the MTE provided ample evidence of drawbacks related to the isolation of CCS as a separate SO. There were also challenges in raising funding for CCS. Across contexts, donors are less inclined to fund capacity and systems strengthening work that is not linked to emergency-related activities or other priority programme outcomes. Isolating such work under SO4 reportedly made it more difficult for country offices to tell a coherent story about their contribution to strengthening national systems. It separated CCS efforts from the broader set of interventions which aim to achieve goals in a specific domain (e.g. social protection, school feeding).²⁷² The capacity strengthening modality encompasses individual as well as institutional capacity strengthening, and can be included across any of the corporate outcomes. The MTE acknowledges the challenges in disaggregating these aspects without undermining programme integration.

120. Overall, the SP does not seem to have affected the balance of WFP's earmarked contributions by focus area, yet there are interesting regional variances. Figure 14 compares the proportion of earmarked contributions by focus area and the total amount of contributions for each region in 2019 (pre-pandemic) and 2023. RBP demonstrated significant growth in resilience funding over this period, followed by RBB, RBD and RBJ. Only RBC and RBN experienced a decline in contributions earmarked for resilience building.

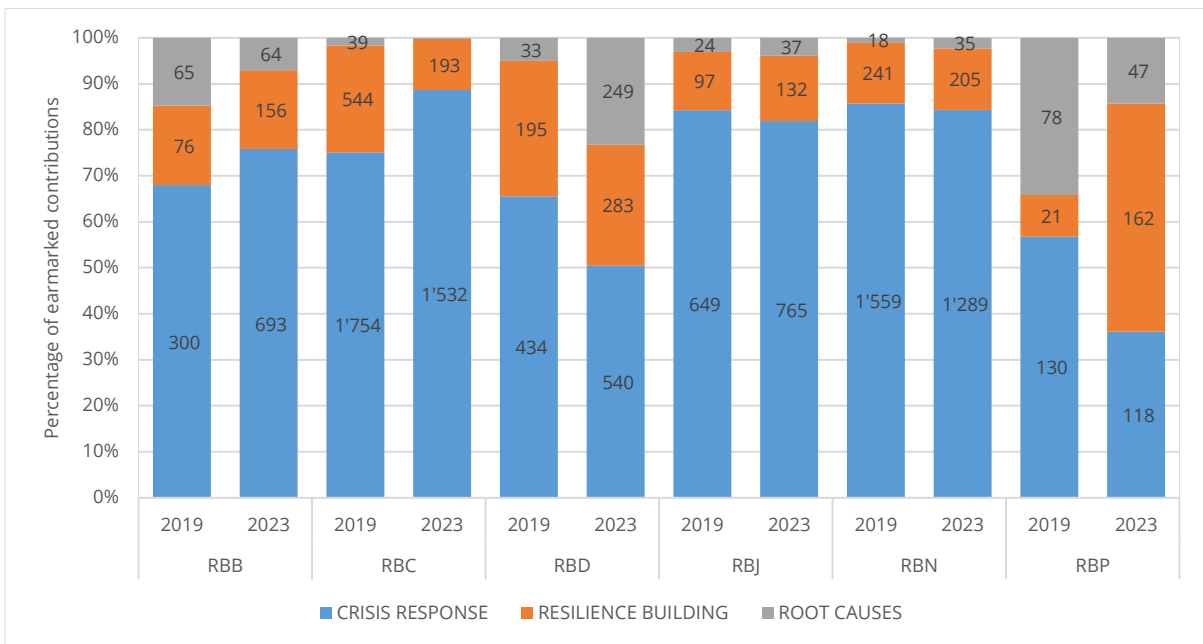
²⁶⁹ Multi-year contributions are a special case of long-duration grants where the donor specified in advance the years in which each part of the contribution will be valid. WFP is required to use the funds according to this agreed yearly implementation schedule.

²⁷⁰ WFP, 2023q; WFP, 2023d

²⁷¹ MTE KII, regional bureaux

²⁷² MTE KII, regional bureaux and country offices

Figure 14: Percentage of earmarked contributions and total contribution amounts (USD millions), by focus area and region, 2019 and 2023



Source: MTE analysis of WFP Distribution Contribution and Forecast Statistics 29 May 2024

121. **Key corporate initiatives in support of the SP funding enabler are ongoing to strengthen WFP’s resource base.** In 2022, the Executive Board approved the third and final year of investment in a CCI to support the Private Sector Partnership and Resource Mobilization Strategy. The investment was USD 17.1 million – following USD 35.3 million allocated over 2020 and 2021. (See 0 for all CCI investments to support SP implementation.)²⁷³ A new CCI “Fit for future in a changed funding landscape” was approved by the Executive Board in November 2023, with a total investment of USD 7.9 million to help “secure and increase existing partnerships, diversify resourcing pathways and better support field and regional offices”. This CCI also absorbed a WFP Innovative Finance Strategy which was developed in 2022. This is currently under review by the Headquarters Oversight and Policy Committee.²⁷⁴ The draft strategy sets ambitious goals, with an initial stage aiming to secure USD 100 million for WFP activities, an additional USD 100 million for aligned activities (non-WFP-run projects and partners contributing to WFP SOs), and USD 5 million in efficiency gained or funds through recurring mechanisms by 2025. By 2030, the strategy aims to grow innovative financing to USD 1 billion for WFP activities, and USD 1 billion for aligned activities.

²⁷³ WFP, 2021i

²⁷⁴ MTE KII

2.2.4 How do restructuring, budget reductions and other major change initiatives impact SP implementation?

Finding 13. Ongoing restructuring could potentially strengthen focused support to SP implementation, but its effects are too early to assess. Budget cuts are impeding SP implementation through loss of technical capacity and negative effects on employee morale. Yet, rationalizing operational budgeting by more closely aligning to the funding landscape should strengthen clarity and focus of WFP ambitions under the SP. The Interim Strategy on WFP's Programmatic Focus calls for more focused programme design; while affirming the SP, it mainstreams CCS under programme priorities, potentially undermining the spirit of elevating CCS in the SP. Implementation of the Global Assurance Plan's Reassurance Action Plan addresses basic but fundamental weaknesses that undermine external confidence in WFP, serving as an important risk mitigation initiative to support SP implementation.

122. Implementation of the SP has been overlaid by major initiatives including budget cuts responding to volatility of funding, the assurance review, and the organizational structure review which coincided with the MTE.

123. **The ongoing restructuring shows potential to strengthen focused SP implementation, but it is too early to assess its effects.** In August 2023, the Executive Director commissioned an organizational structure review. The aim was to consider how WFP can more efficiently address challenges facing operations and adapt to rising needs and declining funding through strengthened collaboration, streamlined activities and increased focus on operations and employees in the field.²⁷⁵ Based on internal consultations with directors (headquarters and field), external benchmarking and internal data analysis, the review concluded that there were problems related to fragmentation, unclear roles and responsibilities, increased bureaucracy and lack of agility, suboptimal allocations of resources and unclear vision and prioritization of activities. Many of these concerns resonated with the CSP Policy Evaluation, this MTE and other previous evaluations and audits. The outcome of the first phase of the organizational review is a reconfigured and streamlined headquarter organizational structure with greater integration of the emergency preparedness and response service under Programme Policy and Guidance, more coherent groupings of technical programme areas under Programme Policy and Guidance and full integration of the former CCS Unit within these new technical programme services. The next phase of the review looks at regional bureaux configuration, and the relative roles and responsibilities of headquarters and regional bureaux, with a view towards improving support and oversight to field operations.

124. Budget cuts are impeding SP implementation, and elimination of strategically important technical capacities and weak communications are fuelling employee uncertainty and having negative effects on morale. During the period being evaluated, a financial surge followed by significant shortfalls gave impetus to an acute, perhaps blunt, effort to rapidly bring costs in line with funding levels – with an initial round of cuts aiming to reduce PSA-funded budgets at headquarters and regional bureaux by 25 percent.²⁷⁶ The evaluation found limited evidence that this urgent cost-cutting was guided by overarching strategic direction, especially in regional bureaux, which only received a directive to cut budgets, with no guidance on what to cut. Rather, in interviews with regional bureaux, cuts were reportedly made prior to the now ongoing analysis of regional bureaux functions and structure. This was often on the basis of convenience and consideration of what was most humane for fixed-term staff (eliminating vacant positions, positions about to rotate, and consultancies), and resulted in the elimination of strategically important technical capacities.²⁷⁷ This is a point of considerable concern that was consistently raised to the MTE by senior internal and external stakeholders who highlighted potential implications for loss of the skillset that makes

²⁷⁵ WFP, 2024h

²⁷⁶ MTE KII Headquarters and regional bureaux; and WFP, 2024h. Actual percentages of budget cuts varied by regional bureau, with some being lower, after some funding was reprogrammed and reallocated.

²⁷⁷ MTE KII and round tables regional bureaux

WFP unique.²⁷⁸ Stakeholders also raised concerns about weak internal communications about cuts, and the uncertainty and negative effect on employee morale; they also questioned whether the equal application of 25 percent cuts in headquarters and regional bureaux was strategic, or whether headquarters should have been cut more.²⁷⁹ The regional bureaux budget and workforce cuts were disconnected from the Executive Director's organizational structure review.

125. With the growing gap between operational requirements and funding, WFP is introducing sensible measures to “calibrate” ambitions under the SP and increase focus in CSPs and country office budgets. Country offices' experiences with the current funding situation differs: the degree of budget shortfalls is directly driven by donor earmarked funding decisions rather than PSA allocations; and, in some circumstances, funding actually increased in 2023.²⁸⁰ While outside WFP's control, current operational funding shortfalls pose significant implications for country office capacity to implement their CSPs and thus the SP itself – many have been forced to make drastic reductions in levels of assistance, number of beneficiaries, and/or geographic coverage of programmes and assistance. Part of the challenge stems from what some perceived as an overly aspirational needs-based planning system, which sometimes results in ambitious targets beyond WFP's capacity to implement, even if maximum funding were available.

126. Recent efforts to “calibrate” WFP ambitions include plans to replace the Needs-Based Plan CSP budget mechanism with Country-Aligned Plans. Guidance on developing these plans²⁸¹ sets new funding confidence thresholds for all WFP focus areas and recalibration requirements based on previous funding levels and expenditure patterns. It aims to shift WFP focus from quantity to quality of assistance by making more realistic requests to donors. It also aims to enhance confidence in WFP's planning and delivery capacity, and design programmes more closely aligned to WFP capacities, strengths and resources, while taking into account the roles, capacities and plans of other partners. While logical, it remains unclear to the Evaluation Team whether the detailed guidance on realistically assessing the assistance to be provided by others is feasible for country offices. This is due to external stakeholder reluctance to share such detailed information in a competitive environment, and country offices' capacity to complete such an exhaustive landscape analysis during CSP development.

127. The Interim Strategy for WFP's Programmatic Focus intends to “sharpen WFP's focus” while affirming the SP's content and better aligning headquarters and regional bureaux support to country offices with strategic priorities. Issued in June 2024, the Interim Strategy intends to provide a bridge between the current SP (2022–2025) and the next SP (2026–2030). The MTE review noted that, while the strategy affirms the validity of the current SP, it prioritizes work under SOs 1, 2, 3 and 5 while mainstreaming and embedding CCS work under all priority areas of work. While this reflects the overall alignment preferences found in the MTE for regional bureaux and country offices, it seems to go against the spirit of the SP, which endeavoured to elevate CCS by making it a standalone SO. The Interim Strategy also steps short of clarifying contextual priorities, and does not clarify what engagements WFP will only pursue in partnership with others.

128. Implementation of the Global Assurance Plan's Reassurance Action Plan addresses fundamental weaknesses that have undermined external confidence in WFP. This serves as an important risk mitigation initiative to support SP implementation. Another shock affecting WFP's organizational readiness during the SP's early implementation period was a crisis of confidence in the organization's ability to ensure that food assistance is not diverted from intended end recipients. Implementation of the plan is ongoing and is intended to reinforce systems and capacities for basic monitoring, and identity management and traceability assistance, with emphasis on operations deemed “high risk”. Assurance work initiated in 2023 was reinforced with USD 31.5 million in recurring PSA activities for 2024 and new CCI funding for 2024 and

²⁷⁸ MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux, country offices and Executive Board

²⁷⁹ MTE KII Headquarters, regional bureaux, country offices and Executive Board

²⁸⁰ MTE KII regional bureaux –For example, in RBP, total operational/programme resources increased in 2023.

²⁸¹ WFP, 2024q

2025 totalling USD 23.7 million.²⁸² The understandable attention given to the Reassurance Action Plan is intended to mitigate key risks and protect external support for implementation of WFP's work under the SP. Yet, it presented its own risk, in that it shifted focus away from some aspects of WFP programme outcome monitoring to move back to prioritization of basic compliance on identity verification and post-distribution monitoring. Country offices and regional bureaux did not question the importance of these assurance initiatives, but also did not feel they would contribute to better measurement of the outcomes WFP aims to achieve.²⁸³

Summary of findings on organizational readiness

WFP took many important steps to equip the organization to deliver the SP's objectives. Progress is noted in early systems realignment, which increased focus on integrated programme design, growing emphasis on the use of evidence, strengthened workforce management systems, increased prioritization of innovation, and investments in financing systems to ensure operational agility. While the ambitions of the SP were grounded in a realistic projection of funding, and WFP successfully diversified funding sources, dramatic funding fluctuations, and how WFP managed this internally, led to a period of internal volatility and uncertainty. This puts gains in organizational readiness at risk and reduces focus on SP implementation. Important efforts to simplify processes, focus programming and strengthen assurance are underway, but it is too early to assess progress.

2.3 PROGRESS ON EXTERNAL COHERENCE AND COMPLEMENTARITY

129. This section reviews SP partnership priorities, examines partnership evolution, and reflects on partnerships' coherence and complementarity.

2.3.1 To what extent and in what ways has the SP enabled WFP to strategically pursue partnerships?

Finding 14. During the SP implementation period, WFP's partnership work expanded, but certain areas were selectively consolidated. Partnerships with IFIs, the private sector, and national governments continued to mature, and the SP is perceived as having supported this growth. Partnerships with other United Nations agencies, while acknowledged as important in the SP, made less progress. WFP's relationship with cooperating partners, and its efforts on localization, made the least progress, and the SP did not specifically advance WFP's relationship with this important group of actors.

130. **SP 2022–2025 places greater emphasis on partnerships.** The SP narrative has a strong focus on partnerships across all SOs and cross-cutting priorities. It emphasizes doing things with others in all spheres, as well as enabling other partners. It explicitly acknowledged that the partnership landscape is fragmented and that "silos and insufficient capacity limit the potential to respond effectively to complex new problems". The SP also points out that governance challenges impede progress; it refers to disempowerment of local communities, recognized to be "essential for the effectiveness of all efforts". Recommendations from the SP 2017–2021 mid-term review included: strengthening strategic partnerships and country collaboration; cooperation across United Nations agencies; and greater clarity on WFP's value proposition.

131. **A wide range of partners are identified as being critical to SP implementation.** SP 2017–2021 already prioritized a wide range of partnerships, and put forward the priority of working with partners from the perspective of WFP's potential advantages.²⁸⁴ SP 2022–2025 reinforced this by including partnerships as one of its enablers, with WFP striving "to be a credible and relevant partner across the humanitarian and

²⁸² WFP, 2023f

²⁸³ MTE KII regional bureaux and country offices

²⁸⁴ WFP, 2017

development system". The SP highlights that such partnerships include national governments, other United Nations entities, IFIs, NGOs, civil society organizations, and the private sector. The SP also suggests that some partners are more suitable in certain contexts. The SP also identifies priorities for specific partnerships – for example, with United Nations agencies, the private sector, and national governments. However, the SP does not provide specific reflection on the relative value or specific contribution that WFP will make regarding the work of these partners.²⁸⁵

132. Overall, the SP implementation period has seen considerable efforts on partnership expansion and consolidation in line with the SP priorities. The SP is broadly perceived by WFP staff as having enhanced awareness of the need to work with others, and as facilitating and providing legitimacy for continuing to prioritize partnerships, in particular with national governments, IFIs and the private sector. SP 2022–2025 facilitated partnering,²⁸⁶ including in areas that previously lacked clarity, such as national capacity strengthening, and work across the HDP nexus.

133. National governments: The SP supported WFP efforts in being more prominently engaged in work around CCS, such as strengthening national policies and capacity building. WFP is gradually becoming a partner of choice for governments in some regions.²⁸⁷ WFP scaled up its capacity strengthening initiatives from 49 countries in 2021 to 65 in 2022, and 69 in 2023.²⁸⁸ Earlier CSPEs noted some challenges in the nature of the relationship with national governments.²⁸⁹ However, more recent CSPEs are more positive, and highlight that strategic partnership agreements have clarified relationships and responsibilities, and contributed to more sustained engagement and approaches.²⁹⁰ In some contexts nutrition was an important entry point (e.g. Pakistan, Cambodia, Ghana, Uganda). In others, climate and disaster risk reduction are key priorities for CCS.²⁹¹ In protracted crises, WFP worked with relevant government institutions to begin to build capacity (e.g. Somalia, South Sudan, and Syria).²⁹² The SP facilitated and further enhanced engagement with governments by recognizing the importance of this relationship and focusing on CCS as a key objective. However, it is still perceived by MTE informants as not sufficiently clarifying *how* and *in what areas/ways* WFP is best placed to serve and support governments. Views also converge that, while WFP is a clear knowledge broker in some areas, it does not always have the requisite expertise and therefore struggles to respond to some of the requests for support in policy and system strengthening and capacity building.²⁹³

134. **SP implementation continued to expand South-South and Triangular Cooperation** as a major part of engagement with governments, with potential for stronger links to WFP's global food security agenda. In 2022 this involved 24 field projects. Some regions have developed strategic approaches to this cooperation (e.g. West Africa).²⁹⁴ Centres of excellence in Brazil (2011), China (2016), and Côte d'Ivoire (2019) are perceived as influential in building relationships at the regional level. The SP period continued WFP's efforts on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, much of which predates the period under review by this evaluation, with no direct evidence that the SP enhanced these efforts. Consultations by the MTE suggest potential in some regions (e.g. Latin America and Caribbean) to further build these relationships, and make them more strategic.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁵ WFP, 2021d

²⁸⁶ MTE survey results.

²⁸⁷ In particular, in the Panama and Bangkok regions, with efforts also in the Dakar and Johannesburg regions.

²⁸⁸ WFP, 2023f; WFP, 2024e

²⁸⁹ Cf. WFP, 2020c, WFP, 2022d, WFP, 2022e.

²⁹⁰ Cf. CSPEs WFP, 2023q, WFP, 2022f, and WFP, 2023i, WFP, 2023m, WFP, 2023n, WFP, 2022g.

²⁹¹ WFP, 2023d

²⁹² WFP, 2023e

²⁹³ KII, MTE country consultations

²⁹⁴ WFP, 2024b

²⁹⁵ Cf. WFP, 2023o about the different national coordination fora

135. During the SP implementation period, WFP scaled up its engagement in advocacy in global policy. Global engagement is broadly perceived as useful and strategic but somewhat disconnected from country work. WFP was engaged in the Food Systems Summit, including acting as the anchor agency for “Track 5 – Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress” which focuses on building the resilience of food systems to counter all shocks and ensure that no one is left behind. As an anchor agency, WFP supports the joint chairs, contributes to developing content, and helps implement actions from the summit. Involvement in the summit helped catalyze engagement on specific issues such as Indigenous Peoples within WFP, and stronger engagement with groups such as the Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems Coalition.²⁹⁶ WFP is involved in advocacy initiatives such as the “Global Shield”, which aims to help countries prepare financially against climate risk, and the School Meals Coalition, which focuses on a comprehensive response to the global food crisis from all partners, and is seen as playing a prominent role in enlisting partners for school health and nutrition.²⁹⁷ WFP also continued to engage in global nutrition initiatives, including the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and the Global Alliance for Nutrition (GAIN). WFP is perceived as having had a valuable role, with valuable work in coordinating partners on wasting, on affordability of diets and nutrition sensitive social protection, (although engagement at country level is often more modest, reflecting capacity challenges). The SP brought stronger gender partnerships, driven by the Gender Policy, including through a collaboration with Care International, and a tripartite agreement with United Nations Population Fund and UN Women. However, while these efforts were valuable, they were not consistently linked to WFP’s work at country level, so opportunities exist to capitalize on the global and regional dynamic at country levels.²⁹⁸

136. **The SP supported significant efforts at further strengthening and expanding the relationship with IFIs.** Work with IFIs predates the SP by a number of years, and the SP raised the profile and importance of this relationship. Country partnerships and agreements channelled directly or indirectly from national governments to WFP and financed with IFI resources increased from ten in 2019 to 31 in 2022. There was an exponential increase in funding through IFI-sources (see EQ 2) and covering agreements with 43 governments. Partnership successes build on efforts that predate the SP (e.g. with IFIs), as these require long-term investment. However, for the first time, the current SP elevated the importance of this partnership and formulated ambitions for strong growth in this area. The MTE found an overall view that there was a lot of progress – especially in the relationship with the World Bank.²⁹⁹ The Multilateral and Programme Country Division at WFP supports IFI engagement to increase WFP’s resource base, while also focusing on assisting national governments in achieving the SDGs. Contractual and system issues impede this work; many WFP systems for transactional relationships focus on the delivery of goods and services,³⁰⁰ as illustrated by the following quote to the MTE: “Ensuring that our financial rules and regulations can accommodate these types of partnerships is another pain point. We have to accommodate and go through painful and bureaucratic negotiations in order to sign a contract.” Across headquarters, regional bureaux, and country offices, a significant number of informants were of the view that WFP does not have the range of expertise it needs to engage with IFIs. There are concerns that the headquarters team has limited support capacity, and also whether the quality and standard of WFP work meets IFI expectations. An MTE informant expressed a personal view that, “the next step around the SP is a re-profiling, or rescaling of WFP, being much better at anticipating programme needs and use the timeframe between the scoping, negotiations and implementation, to equip [country offices] with the resources they need.” WFP ambitions and work funded by IFIs are perceived (internally and externally) as having tensions, particularly in regions such as Latin America and Caribbean where government debt levels are high, and IFI-sourced loans risk

²⁹⁶ KII

²⁹⁷ WFP, 2023f

²⁹⁸ WFP, 2024b

²⁹⁹ WFP, 2024b

³⁰⁰ KII regional bureaux and country offices

increasing the debt burden for countries.³⁰¹ Also, WFP service delivery roles funded by IFI resources can challenge reconciling WFP's enabling role with the situation where WFP becomes a service delivery partner for governments, substituting rather than strengthening capacity. This also creates tensions around humanitarian principles, particularly perceptions of neutrality.

137. Private sector engagement continued to expand, continuing a trend that preceded this SP. There was a focus on innovation and there are untapped opportunities to more strongly influence food quality and ethics. There are ample examples of private partnerships being pursued with innovative purposes, such as to develop analytics, to expand food fortification, and to strengthen evidence generation.³⁰² There are also strong links to the private sector through WFP supply chain work.³⁰³ Nutrition partnerships with the private sector have evolved to include work on improving products, capacity strengthening, demand creation, and access to more affordable products. In climate and disaster risk reduction, WFP engages with the private sector on micro-insurance, energy, climate information services, and anticipatory action.³⁰⁴ There is, however, untapped potential to leverage WFP's substantial procurement power to increase attention on nutritious foods, and influence companies' policy on ethical marketing.³⁰⁵ WFP reports label some of the global engagements as "strategic innovative impact partnerships", such as the food systems support by the Mastercard Foundation. At the time of writing, WFP was close to achieving its targets for private sector impact partnerships.³⁰⁶ Internal systems are not entirely aligned with the evolving relationship, with informants across regions pointing out challenges with procedures and, in particular, the due diligence process – as illustrated by the following quote: "...we still can't engage in a useful way with private sector – it takes ages to be able to do joint projects because we treat them as donors and not partners to help solve a problem".³⁰⁷ Private sector funding also brings potential challenges of coherence with WFP's strategic aims, if the primary purpose is to increase WFP's finances. Various informants also pointed out that some areas of WFP work – such as social protection and South-South and Triangular Cooperation – are not ideally suited to private sector investment.

138. The SP was a useful support to planning engagements at country level, and its implementation encouraged further work on joint programmes with United Nations partners.³⁰⁸ However, **the SP brought less progress in strengthening WFP engagement with United Nations partners at country level, and in partnerships with United Nations at global level.** In line with United Nations system reforms, the second- and third-generation CSPs are informed by common country analyses developed by United Nations Country Teams, which are informed by SDG 2 and aligned with national priorities.³⁰⁹ WFP Country Directors are actively involved with the United Nations Country Teams, and CSP design is influenced by national priorities, and other United Nations actors.³¹⁰ Various WFP country teams referenced using the SP in discussions with partners to explain WFP's ambitions and as part of the United Nations Common Country Analysis. The role of WFP as a service provider to the United Nations continues to be seen as very important.³¹¹ WFP also has a particularly important role in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, and in Cluster Leadership as part of the Humanitarian system.³¹² Nonetheless, WFP's global coordination with important United Nations partners has gaps, with issues present around operational coordination

³⁰¹ The MTE requested a breakdown of grants versus loans from IFI-sourced funding, however, this could not be provided by WFP as data is not systematically monitored and is not scientific enough to warrant publication in a formal report.

³⁰² Reflecting priorities of WFP's Private Partnerships Strategy 2020–2025, which has "innovation" as one of its objectives

³⁰³ KII Headquarters

³⁰⁴ WFP, 2023d

³⁰⁵ WFP, 2023e

³⁰⁶ WFP, 2023f

³⁰⁷ MTE Survey response (Country Directors)

³⁰⁸ KII, Executive Board consultations.

³⁰⁹ WFP, 2022a, Annex II on Country Strategic Plans

³¹⁰ MTE regional round tables

³¹¹ KII with Resident Coordinators

³¹² KII Resident Coordinators

challenges and competition. External perspectives agree that WFP made a genuine effort to align with cooperation frameworks and brought valuable perspectives into joint planning.³¹³ At global level, external views converged around WFP's "timid" presence in key coordination spheres in New York, although there had been recent efforts to strengthen strategic engagement at this level. In this context, a senior external interviewee noted that "a crucial issue for WFP is its failure to properly advocate and position itself in New York... [WFP] has not sold itself properly, leading to missed opportunities for inter-agency activities". This view was triangulated with those held by a number of external and internal informants. While examples of collaboration with United Nations partners are evident across many countries (helped in some cases by strong encouragement from national governments),³¹⁴ challenges persist in operationalizing complementarities. This is exacerbated by funding shortages that reinforce competition between agencies, including other Rome-based agencies. WFP skillsets are also insufficient to complement the technical expertise of other agencies.³¹⁵ Conversely, there is evidence of efforts to strengthen the relationship – for example, while the link to the SP is tenuous, joint missions with UNICEF and UNHCR in the Sahel region are credited with having given visibility to the partnership and contribute to stronger relationships at country levels in that region.³¹⁶ WFP also invested in its relationship with UNHCR through its engagement in the UNHCR-WFP Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub. However, this engagement predates the SP by a number of years, and no clear link could be made to the SP having influenced this engagement.

139. No shift is observed in the partnerships with civil society organizations, which continued to demonstrate strong transactional features over the SP period. The COVID-19 pandemic response also brought positive examples of a more equal approach to collaboration.³¹⁷ Consultation with NGOs remained uneven³¹⁸ and relationships based on joint programming and leveraging expertise remain the exception.³¹⁹ WFP's Annual Partnership consultation in 2023 continued to emphasize a critical need for more equal partnering with NGOs, and more transparency on funding. In an increasingly challenging global context, the consultation also focused on breaking down divides between sectors, and more engagement in joint advocacy.³²⁰ WFP staff also acknowledge limitations in WFP's work with civil society partners: field-level agreements are not conducive to equal partnerships; and discontinuity in partnership agreements affects the quality of operations. WFP's recent Interim Programme Strategy includes localization as a priority, but it does not elaborate on how to achieve this.

2.3.2 What progress was made in partnership coherence and complementarity, including working from WFP's comparative advantage?

Finding 15. The SP helped clarify WFP's role in the Changing Lives agenda, but its strategic positioning to ensure complementarity in key areas such as resilience, climate change, food systems and CCS is not sufficiently clear. The organization's comparative advantage is not static but is often context specific.

Finding 16. In practice, incentives for WFP to pursue partnerships, especially at country office level, are strongly linked to opportunities for fundraising, and partnerships were insufficiently focused on contexts where WFP has a clear comparative advantage.

140. Overall, the SP helped WFP to better position itself in the Changing Lives agenda, but the organization's positioning around CCS, food systems, and resilience still lacks clarity to partners. Internal and external stakeholders agree that WFP's strategic positioning around its humanitarian mandate is clear,

³¹³ KII with Resident Coordinators

³¹⁴ For example, in Madagascar, Guatemala and Tajikistan

³¹⁵ KII Headquarters, regional bureaux, country office and Executive Board consultations

³¹⁶ WFP, 2024b

³¹⁷ WFP, 2022h

³¹⁸ WFP, 2023k

³¹⁹ WFP, 2023k analysis of CSPes, augmented with analysis of more recent CSPes by the MTE

³²⁰ WFP, 2023p

but ambiguities regarding WFP's development mandate remain. Country offices mentioned that the current SP helped clarify WFP's ambition in the Changing Lives agenda, which facilitated communications with donors and partners around WFP's enabling and development role. This was helpful for the development of funding proposals and donor briefs, and also in strategic discussions with governments, or in international fora on climate change (i.e. United Nations Climate Change Conference).³²¹ However, the SP does not sufficiently clarify WFP's specific offering related to the Changing Lives agenda.³²² WFP's value proposition is clear in some areas – such as social protection – and safety nets, school feeding, supply chain, disaster risk management,³²³ but is less clear in others, such as resilience, food systems, and climate change.³²⁴

141. SP implementation through CSPs resulted in WFP expanding its range of engagement areas, contributing to a growth in partnerships. Despite valuable consultative and analytical inputs into country planning, first- and second-generation CSPs included a much broader array of intended aims and activities than WFP had capacity and resources to implement. This had implications for the expansion of partnerships (see Section 2.1.1). Different priorities also contributed to pulling WFP in various directions. For example, the valid interest in livelihoods and self-reliance as a means of more sustainably reducing food insecurity, also contributed to extending WFP partnerships. WFP's field presence is attractive to partners and reportedly increasingly sought out, (e.g. by IFIs), but this also contributes to involving WFP in a wide range of work areas. This challenge is reflected in the absence of any major examples of instances where WFP chose not to engage in certain areas when funding was available, regardless of whether projects contributed to WFP's comparative advantage.³²⁵

142. **WFP's comparative advantage is not always static, but can be context specific.** Externally, WFP is recognized for its roles in emergency response and supply chain and telecommunications capacity.³²⁶ WFP is also perceived as having valued expertise in school feeding and niche areas such as cash transfers for social protection. These SP-stated comparative advantages reflect those of an Overseas Development Institute study³²⁷ presented to WFP's Executive Board in 2021, (when the SP was being drafted), and which considered WFP's comparative advantage in aggregate, as well as across different areas of thematic involvement. The study found that: "Globally, WFP is a major player in food assistance, supply chains, emergency telecommunications (ETC) and analytics. But otherwise, WFP is a niche player in any individual area, and is seen as such."

WFP globally acknowledged comparative advantages (as reflected in external views to the MTE)

- Emergency response
- Emergency telecommunications
- Analytics
- Food delivery and supply chain
- Field presence
- Cash-based programmes
- School meals

143. The study emphasized that, given its resource envelope, expertise and generally short-term or temporary time horizon, WFP is rarely the lead agency in-country on development themes that require long-term investment and systems development. In line with the definition of "potential comparative advantage" presented (see box), the study concludes that WFP's comparative advantage will be determined by context and will be situated somewhere at the intersection of the saving and changing lives spectrum and the delivery and enabling functions. Therefore, the term "potential comparative advantage" may be more useful to underscore that comparative advantage is not a static attribute, but rather a function of the

³²¹ MTE KII, regional bureaux and country offices

³²² MTE KII, regional bureaux and country offices

³²³ WFP, 2023t.

³²⁴ MTE external KII

³²⁵ MTE review of recent CSPs and design documents

³²⁶ CSPE's

³²⁷ ODI, 2021

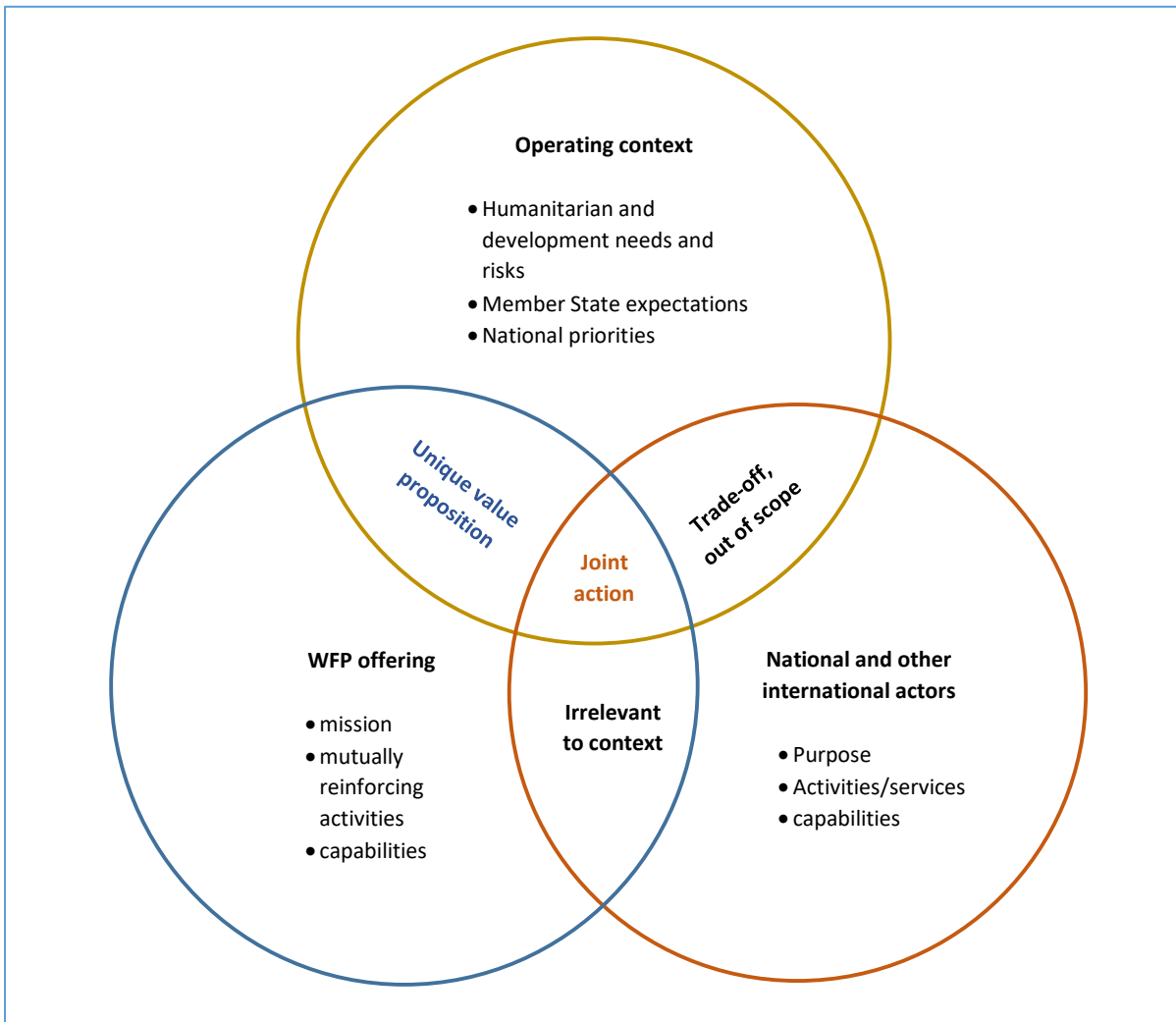
interplay between: a) things that WFP can potentially offer and do; b) the broader context; and c) what others are doing and how.

144. WFP's internal narrative on comparative advantage is often broader than the perspectives that external actors share with the MTE. WFP's stated comparative advantages, as reflected in institutional narrative, including in CSPs, are not fully seen or validated by external actors. In particular, WFP's stated comparative advantages are perceived as insufficiently focused on sub-areas/specific skills within broader domains where WFP is clearly seen as playing a supportive rather than a lead role. For example, WFP's role and comparative advantage in the Climate agenda was frequently mentioned by external MTE informants as being not well articulated and unclear about the role of other United Nations agencies. Equally, in social protection, informants see WFP playing a role in selected domains, but defer to other United Nations agencies as having stronger expertise and more strategic entry and leverage points. A similar point applies to WFP's work in food systems.

145. **Strategic positioning at the country level was strengthened where regional strategies were in place.** Corporately, there are no requirements for the development of regional strategies. One region (RBC) developed a Regional Strategy that identifies four outcomes for the region as a result of a bottom-up consultation process that identified key priorities in country offices. Interviews indicate that this process was helpful for countries to strategically position their offer, and identify which partnerships to nourish and for what purpose. Thematic regional strategies were also developed in RBP and RBB and have helped guide country offices in their strategic positioning (e.g. the Regional Social Protection Strategy in Latin America and Caribbean helped country offices to strategically position themselves in shock-responsive social protection).³²⁸ This approach aligns with the definition of comparative advantage (originating from trade economics) which emphasizes the importance of establishing comparative advantage through a deliberate set of choices based on the skills that an organization can offer, and what others are doing. This is schematically reflected in the diagram in Figure 15.

³²⁸ WFP, 2024g

Figure 15: Dimensions of strategic positioning



Source: Adapted from Porter, 1996; Porter 2001 and Johnson, 2008

146. **Corporately, WFP's prime driver for external engagement continues to be the need to mobilize resources.** Comparative advantage and context are framed in the SP as defining choices made by WFP. This suggests that strategic positioning should be a function of: a) intended aims; b) comparative advantages; and c) partnership approaches, in a given context. However, in practice, country planning and partnership engagement predominantly includes as many ambitions as possible so as not to limit potential funding opportunities, reflecting the voluntary funded nature of the organization.³²⁹ The framing of partnerships as playing a key role in funding is shown in WFP's management plans,³³⁰ reporting to the Executive Board,³³¹ and Interim Programme Strategy.³³² It also reflects the internal incentive structure of the organization where partnership-building is rewarded based on the monetary values accrued. As noted by one MTE informant: "WFP seems to be a digestive system of money. Partnerships most of the time are with a focus on making this system work."³³³

³²⁹ WFP, 2023k

³³⁰ WFP, 2022c; WFP, 2023g

³³¹ Executive Board Partnership reporting

³³² WFP, 2024c

³³³ KII

147. **Partnership guidance and support fell short of WFP's ambitions.** Corporately, WFP enhanced its communication on partnerships over the SP implementation period. Together with innovation, partnerships are also a priority for the new Executive Director at WFP. However, there are insufficient resources and guidance for country partnering approaches. The primary purpose of partnerships is not well understood internally, and there is a lack of support for specific new types of partnerships, such as those involving IFIs.³³⁴ Partnership positions within country offices play only a limited role in strategic positioning. Partnership development and practice are mostly concerned with fundraising. At WFP Headquarters, a central function to guide partnership development has been lacking, and the myriad global strategic memoranda of understanding with other United Nations agencies and partners are difficult to operationalize at field level, especially where there is no clear implementation lead.

148. Assessments of partnership effectiveness are not yet systematic, and priorities and boundaries for different types of partnerships could be more clearly defined.³³⁵ WFP is not consistently evaluating its partnership efforts. In this context, the recent evaluation of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Policy notes that “delivering is easier than partnering” and that “partnerships require different sets of skills, as well as senior staff with long-term contracts”. The same evaluation also underscored the need for more strategic support to partnership planning and monitoring, to ensure focus and prioritization and avoid partnerships that are mainly influenced by funding opportunities.³³⁶ Analysis of CSPEs highlighted that, while there is a dedicated section in the evaluation report for the assessment of partnerships, the treatment of this topic shows considerable variation from one CSP evaluation to the other. This makes it challenging to form a clear picture across regions and types of partnerships. Similarly, current experience and projected growth in the relationship with IFIs (and the private sector) suggests it will be important to reflect on priorities for these partnerships, including boundaries and where WFP may choose not to partner.

149. WFP works with its partners on gender priorities; however, progress was constrained by limited resources and organizational challenges.³³⁷ WFP collaborated extensively with UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund at country office level, and WFP prioritized strengthening these partnerships at global level. Limited resources at headquarters and regional bureaux for gender equality work, as well as institutional organizational challenges, have constrained the implementation of the tri-partite initiative. This is in spite of the identification of target areas of collaboration between WFP and UN Women to take forward these priorities globally. Regional and country evidence suggests that the SP implementation period did not result in a substantial shift in partnerships with organizations that are strong on gender transformative work.³³⁸

Summary findings on external coherence and complementarity

This SP foresaw and validated a broad scope of engagements, including new types of partnerships and engagements. During the SP implementation period, WFP expanded partnerships with IFIs, the private sector, and national governments, but effected limited change on its partnerships with other UN agencies and local partners. While the SP helped clarify WFP's role in the Changing Lives agenda, its strategic positioning in key areas remains unclear. Also, partnerships were often driven by fundraising opportunities rather than work to leverage WFP's comparative advantages, which ensures complementarity and adaptation of contextual priorities.

³³⁴ CSP PE, corroborated in regional bureaux and country office interviews and Executive Board consultations by the MTE

³³⁵ WFP, 2023d

³³⁶ WFP, 2023d

³³⁷ WFP, 2024b; WFP, 2023h and WFP, 2023i

³³⁸ WFP, 2024b

2.4 PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS

150. This section discusses whether the high-level targets (HLTs) – introduced for the first time with this SP – provide a realistic overview of WFP efforts to support delivery of the SP’s five strategic outcomes (SOs). The rest of the chapter explores to what extent WFP made progress towards the SP ambitions in three different areas: SOs; enablers; and cross-cutting priorities. The guiding principles and enablers defined in the SP are discussed in other sections of this report.

2.4.1 To what extent are the HLTs set out in the SP fit for purpose?

Finding 17. WFP is unusual among United Nations agencies in having introduced a layer of reporting above outcomes. HLTs provide a more strategic view of performance. There is limited ownership across the organization of the HLTs, which are not currently used to inform management decisions or better communicate about WFP’s work.

151. **The introduction of the HLTs added a layer of reporting to WFP results architecture.** HLTs provide a more strategic view of performance. The targets combine aggregated CRF indicators and additional data collection from other WFP and external sources. This created a new level of reporting, with implications in terms of resources (i.e. for collecting and assessing information and reporting the results).

152. The use of HLTs is not common in the United Nations system, which generally uses outcome targets to reinforce the link between strategic planning and institutional result frameworks. A review of six other entities in the United Nations system,³³⁹ revealed that none developed a separate set of targets to guide SP implementation, but instead use their result frameworks for reporting. Only UNHCR specifically refers to 11 of its “core outcomes” in its SP.³⁴⁰ Selected United Nations peers reinforce the link between strategic planning and results by providing an overview of intended changes, a description of the institutional contribution to the envisioned changes, and by establishing baselines and targets for indicators.³⁴¹

153. The function of the HLTs within the broader results architecture is not well defined, and ownership across the organization is low. The CRF is defined as “the operational tool for the implementation of the new strategic plan, defining what WFP will deliver [...] and how this will be achieved through management results, based on organizational enablers.”³⁴² The HLTs build on the CRF to provide a clearer vision of WFP’s “level of ambition for each strategic outcome. [...] and represent WFP flagship aims and achievements. In essence, they narrate the main thrust behind each distinct strategic outcome”.³⁴³ Beyond defining what the HLTs do (i.e. defining WFP’s level of ambition), the CRF and related documentation do not describe the specific function of the HLTs within the WFP results architecture, in particular how the HLTs relate to the broader CRF, and how they serve the organization in its planning, management and monitoring functions. According to some interviewees, this can be partially attributed to the CRF and SP development processes not being fully aligned, leading to inconsistencies in the way the HLTs integrate with and support the SP.

154. There are two broad views on the function of the HLTs within WFP: i) a tool for SP accountability and implementation; and ii) a tool for communicating to a broader audience what WFP does.³⁴⁴ The accountability and guidance function requires different units to understand their contribution to the HLTs,

³³⁹ The analysis covers OIM, UNDP, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO. Annex X

³⁴⁰ UNHCR, 2021, p.15

³⁴¹ Baselines and targets are defined for virtually all indicators adopted by UNDP, UNFPA and WHO.

³⁴² WFP, 2022I, p. 2

³⁴³ WFP, 2022I, p. 4

³⁴⁴ For example, different documents and KIIs describe the HLTs as an accountability mechanism for SP implementation, a bridge between the SP and the CRF, an incentive for the organization to move in the right direction, a tool providing a sense of prioritization across the five strategic outcomes, and a way of helping WFP tell “the story” of its work.

and to use this information to steer their efforts. However, to date there is limited ownership of the HLTs, especially by regional bureaux and country offices.³⁴⁵ Apart from those directly involved in the development and monitoring of the HLTs at headquarters level, interviewees were only very vaguely familiar with the framework and did not see it as particularly relevant to their activities.

155. **The HLTs present some limitations connected to the underlying CRF indicators they build on.** For example, SO4 is an area where WFP stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation process highlight continued issues in measuring WFP contributions to CCS and systems strengthening. The limitations of corporate indicators to record progress on capacity strengthening also come up strongly in the evidence from evaluations.³⁴⁶ Capturing the effects of CCS is inherently difficult. However, WFP is making important efforts to develop and introduce new and effective indicators, even if these efforts have not yet resulted in consolidated reporting.

156. Some of the HLTs' specific targets did not reflect the increased organizational efforts in certain areas. The CRF compendium shows that most HLTs were defined based on past trends and linear projections and did not consider alternative scenarios.³⁴⁷ This approach can lead to targets that are easy to meet, especially in areas where WFP shows increased participation. One such example is food systems, where WFP played a stronger role since the Food Systems Summit, and where it attracted increased funding and resources. A similar situation occurs in climate shocks and smallholders, which are closely related to the work on food systems, and received a positive response from donors.³⁴⁸

2.4.2 Progress towards the HLTs and SOs

Finding 18. The single year of available performance data from 2023 provides limited insights on progress against the SP's SOs. For SO1 (urgent food and nutrition needs), WFP reached more beneficiaries than planned, but with inadequate rations, due to available funding not matching expanding needs. Overall, corporate data shows good performance in WFP efforts to provide access to better nutrition, health, and education (SO2), but the effects were lower than expected. WFP managed to reach a significant number of people under SO3 (people have improved and sustainable livelihoods), but outcome data suggests that actual effects were moderate. While targets under SO4 were met or exceeded, evidence collected by the MTE suggests that the indicators used for this SO have low internal validity and so question reported achievements. Targets on the provision of mandated and on-demand services (SO5) were exceeded, and WFP achieved strong user satisfaction rates.

157. WFP addressed urgent food and nutrition needs (SO1), but performance was challenged by expanding needs, reduced funding, access constraints, and increased food prices. HLT indicators (Annex X) reflect that 2023 was a difficult year: there were multiple emergencies, and five countries experienced famine conditions, which explains the observed performance under HLT indicator 1. Faced with an increased number of food-insecure people,³⁴⁹ and with reduced funding and increased prices, in many contexts, WFP opted to sustain beneficiary coverage while reducing rations. Low performance against the WFP indicator on macronutrient and micronutrient content (Indicator 1.3) brings out the tension between trying to reach all those in need and the quality of the assistance provided.³⁵⁰ At the same time, WFP increased the number of countries where it implements some form of cash operations, and exceeded the expected improvement in response time to sudden-onset emergencies (Indicators 1.4 and 1.5).

³⁴⁵ MTE regional bureaux and country office consultations

³⁴⁶ WFP, 2024d, p.6

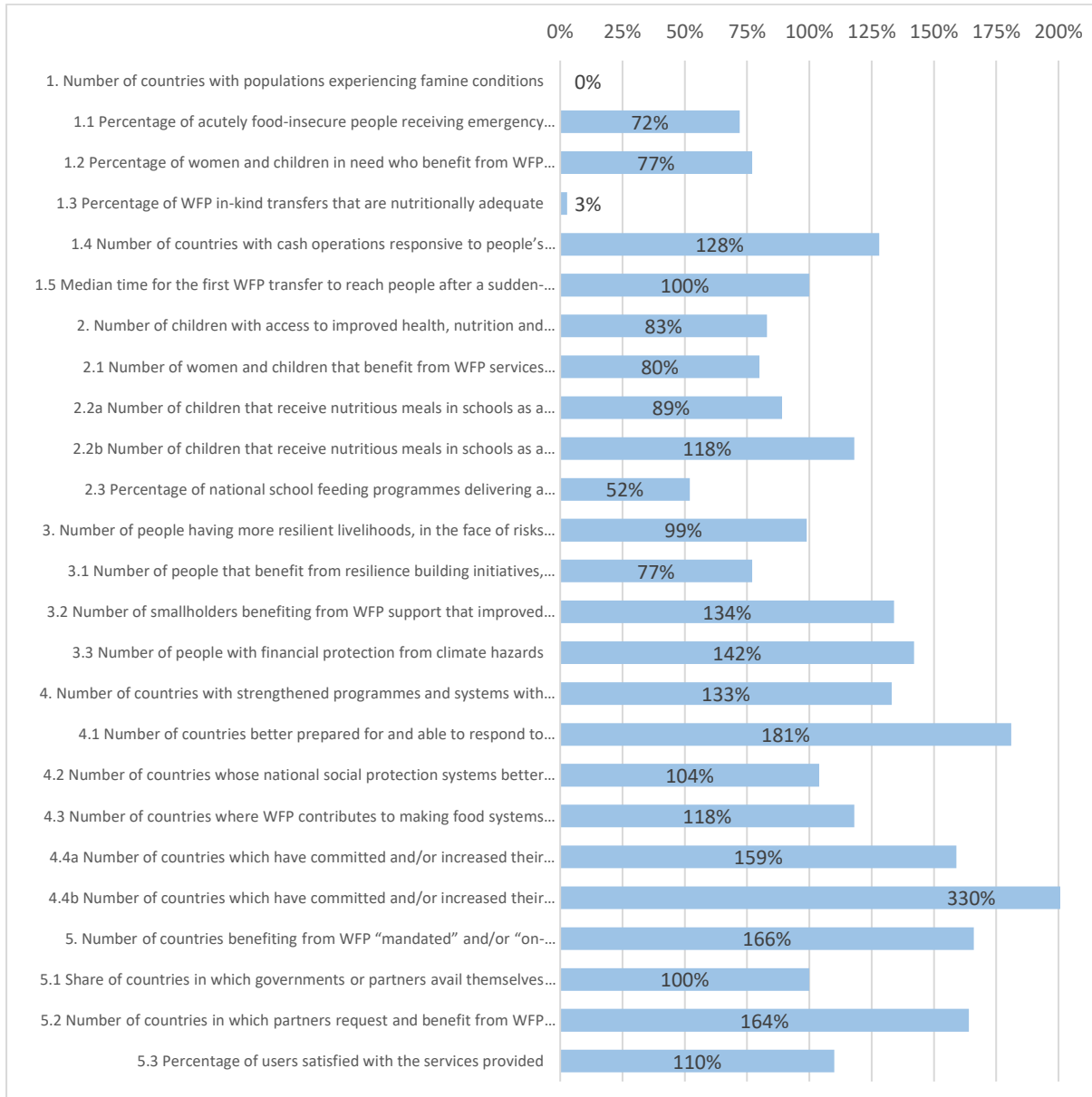
³⁴⁷ WFP, 2022l, p. 1165-1263

³⁴⁸ WFP, 2024e, p. 32

³⁴⁹ WFP, 2024e, p. 27

³⁵⁰ WFP, 2024d

Figure 16: HLT 2023 performance against 2023 target



Source: WFP, 2024e

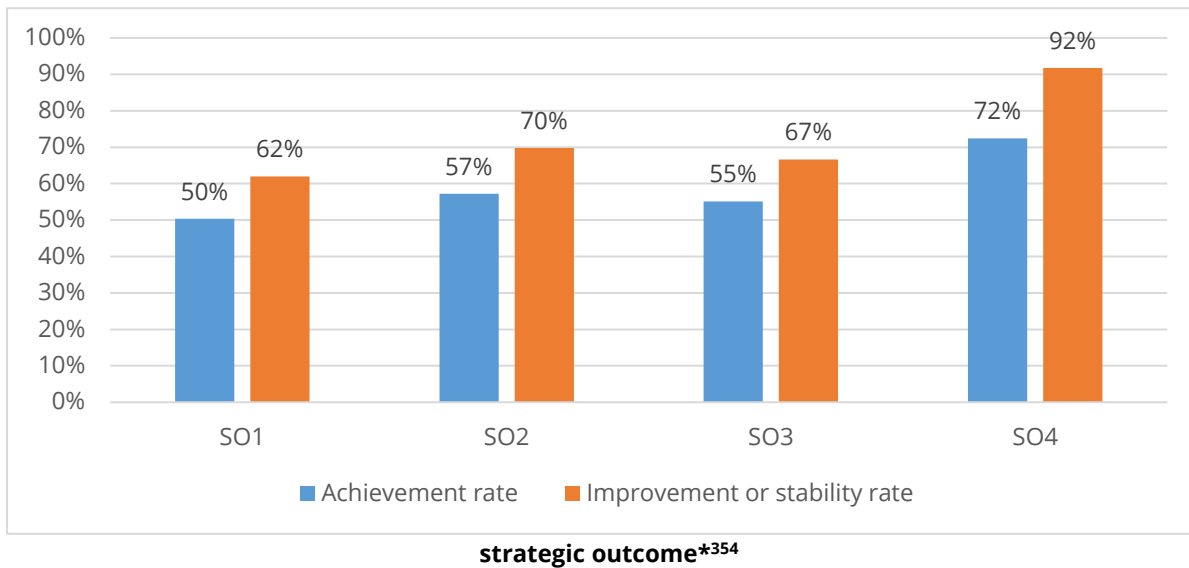
158. **The broader set of CRF outcome indicators for SO1 complement the analysis based on the HLTs.**³⁵¹ In general terms, WFP faced challenges in meeting outcome indicators for SO1, with an average achievement rate³⁵² of 50 percent (see Figure 17). Nonetheless, despite the challenges recorded, just under two thirds (62 percent) of the indicators remained stable or improved in relation to their baseline (improvement or stability rate)³⁵³ suggesting that WFP managed to make an overall positive contribution to SO1 (see Figure 17). A detailed breakdown of the outcome indicators for SO1 can be found in Annex X.

³⁵¹ The analysis is based on the outcome indicators prepared for the APR 2023 by WFP's Corporate Planning, Budgeting and Reporting service.

³⁵² Achievement rate: percentage of measurements that met or exceeded their target. See WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C.

³⁵³ Improvement or stability rate: percentage of measurements that improved or were stable compared with their baseline. See WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C.

Figure 17: “Achievement rate” and “improvement or stability rate” for outcome indicators, per



*No achievement, improvement or stability rates reported for outcome indicators under SO5

Source: WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C

159. Overall, there was good performance in WFP efforts to provide access to better nutrition, health and education (SO2), but the effects were lower than expected. Figure 16 shows that WFP reached 83 percent of its target for indicator 2, with an increase of 16.1 million children in relation to the baseline.³⁵⁵ Indicators 2.1 and 2.2 also show strong performance (Figure 16).³⁵⁶ However, performance against “national school feeding programmes delivering a comprehensive package of school health and nutrition services thanks to WFP and partners’ support” is comparatively poor and represents a significant drop in relation to the baseline.³⁵⁷ This is attributed to the effect of COVID-19 on education systems in partner countries.³⁵⁸ The pandemic also led to a significant increase in government commitments in this area, as reflected in HLT 4.4. WFP supported this process, including through the School Meals Coalition. The broader set of outcome indicators for SO2 show a 57 percent achievement rate across all outcome indicators (Figure 17), suggesting that it was difficult for WFP to meet the outcome targets in a constrained environment, with the exception of some indicators related to the treatment of Moderate Acute Malnutrition. Overall, 70 percent of the outcome measures remained stable or improved in relation to the baseline.

160. WFP reached a significant number of people under SO3 (strengthening food systems and resilience), but outcome data suggests that actual effects were moderate. HLT data shows that WFP assisted 19.9 million people in developing more resilient livelihoods, a 42 percent increase in relation to the 2021 baseline.³⁵⁹ The number of people who benefited from resilience-building initiatives that strengthened the livelihood and ecosystem asset base contracted slightly (HLT target 3.1). This was most likely related to

³⁵⁴ Improvement or stability rate: percentage of measurements that improved or were stable compared with their baseline. Achievement rate: percentage of measurements that met or exceeded their target. See WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C

³⁵⁵ The target was an ambitious 57.9 million children, compared to a baseline of 32.3 million.

³⁵⁶ Indicator 2.1 recorded an 80 percent performance (27 million) against a target of 33.8 million and a baseline of 17.2 million. Indicator 2.2a recorded a performance of 89 percent (21.4 million) against a target of 24 million and a baseline of 14 million.

³⁵⁷ The target and the baseline were set at 61 percent; performance in 2023 was 32 percent.

³⁵⁸ WFP, 2024e, p.30

³⁵⁹ For HLT Indicator 3, the baseline was 14 million and the 2023 target was 20 million.

the funding environment.³⁶⁰ WFP greatly exceeded targets for support to smallholders (HLT target 3.2) and people receiving financial protection from climate hazards through anticipatory action or climate risk insurance (HLT 3.3).³⁶¹ Strong performance in these areas reflects the scale-up of WFP's support for national food systems and increased support from donors, to anticipate and mitigate the effects of climate shocks. It is also likely that the use of past trends and linear modelling to set HLT targets³⁶² led to targets that underestimated the increased organizational thrust in areas such as food systems and climate action.

161. Despite the good performance suggested by the HLTs, outcome indicator data shows that the effects were more limited. The "achievement rate" was 55 percent across outcome indicators (Figure 17) and the "improvement or stability rate" was 67 percent in relation to the baseline. The difference in performance observed between the HLTs and the broader set of outcome indicators reflects challenges in measurement. Also, some SOs have no qualitative indicators, which would provide a complementary understanding of progress towards the envisioned changes. There are constraints in the definition of targets and baselines, a predominance of output indicators rather than outcome measures.

162. WFP expanded efforts to strengthen national programmes and systems (SO4), but indicators to measure progress in this area remain weak and lack internal validity. Data from the HLTs show that all targets under SO4 were met or exceeded (Figure 16). This reflects the shift in WFP interventions towards technical support and advice to governments to strengthen national systems capacities. South-South and triangular cooperation played a supportive role in this trend.³⁶³ CCS is a central part of WFP work in regions such as RBP and RBB, and to a lesser extent in RBD and RBJ, which are seeing a gradual shift towards more CCS engagement. Support expanded across all areas, including emergency response (HLT Indicator 4.1), social protection (HLT 4.2), food systems (HLT 4.3) and school feeding (HLT 4.4). SO4 also shows the best performance when the broader set of outcome indicators is considered (Figure 17). Evaluations cite WFP contribution to CCS in areas such as national social protection systems, disaster risk management, and school feeding.³⁶⁴ WFP stakeholders consulted in this evaluation highlighted continued issues in measuring WFP contributions to CCS and systems strengthening. Also, many CSPs still lack a clear assessment of capacity gaps and needs that would inform country offices' approach to strengthening national systems and capacities.³⁶⁵ Nonetheless, it is also important to acknowledge the efforts that WFP is making to expand and strengthen the CRF in this area. Country offices are also encouraged to develop their own metrics and use qualitative methods. While this will encourage countries to record CCS work, the use of different metrics across countries creates challenges in aggregating WFP contributions to CCS.

163. WFP expanded the provision of mandated and on-demand services (SO5), exceeded HLT targets, and achieved strong user satisfaction rates. In 2023, WFP provided mandated and/or on-demand services in 83 countries (the target was 50). This shows a stronger demand for WFP support than was anticipated at SP design, and potentially the increased frequency and intensity of crises. WFP provided mandated services in all countries where these services were "activated" by the United Nations Country Teams (HLT indicator 5.1). On-demand services were provided in 82 countries, covering supply chain (42 countries), data and analytics (41 countries), CBTs (42 countries), technology (54 countries), administration (69 countries) and engineering (four countries).³⁶⁶ Most users (89 percent) were satisfied with WFP services.

³⁶⁰ Indicator 3.1 on the "number of people that benefit from resilience building initiatives, which strengthen the livelihood asset base including ecosystems" had a baseline of 10 million and a target of 12.5 million in 2023. The actual number in 2023 was 9.6 million.

³⁶¹ Indicator 3.2 had an actual value of 1.3 million in 2023, compared to a baseline of 0.41 million and a target of 1 million in 2023. Indicator 3.2 had an actual value of 9.2 million, compared to a baseline of 3.5 million and a target of 6.5 million in 2023.

³⁶² WFP, 2022l, 1,165-1,263

³⁶³ WFP, 2024e, p.32

³⁶⁴ WFP, 2023s

³⁶⁵ WFP, 2023k

³⁶⁶ WFP, 2024e, p.33

2.4.3 Progress against management results

Finding 19. Management result indicators show good progress, except in two areas: funding, and evidence and learning.

164. The six SP enablers are captured through seven management results, which are reflected as KPIs in the [CRE](#) and cover 60 indicators. WFP also tracks expenditure in each of these seven areas.

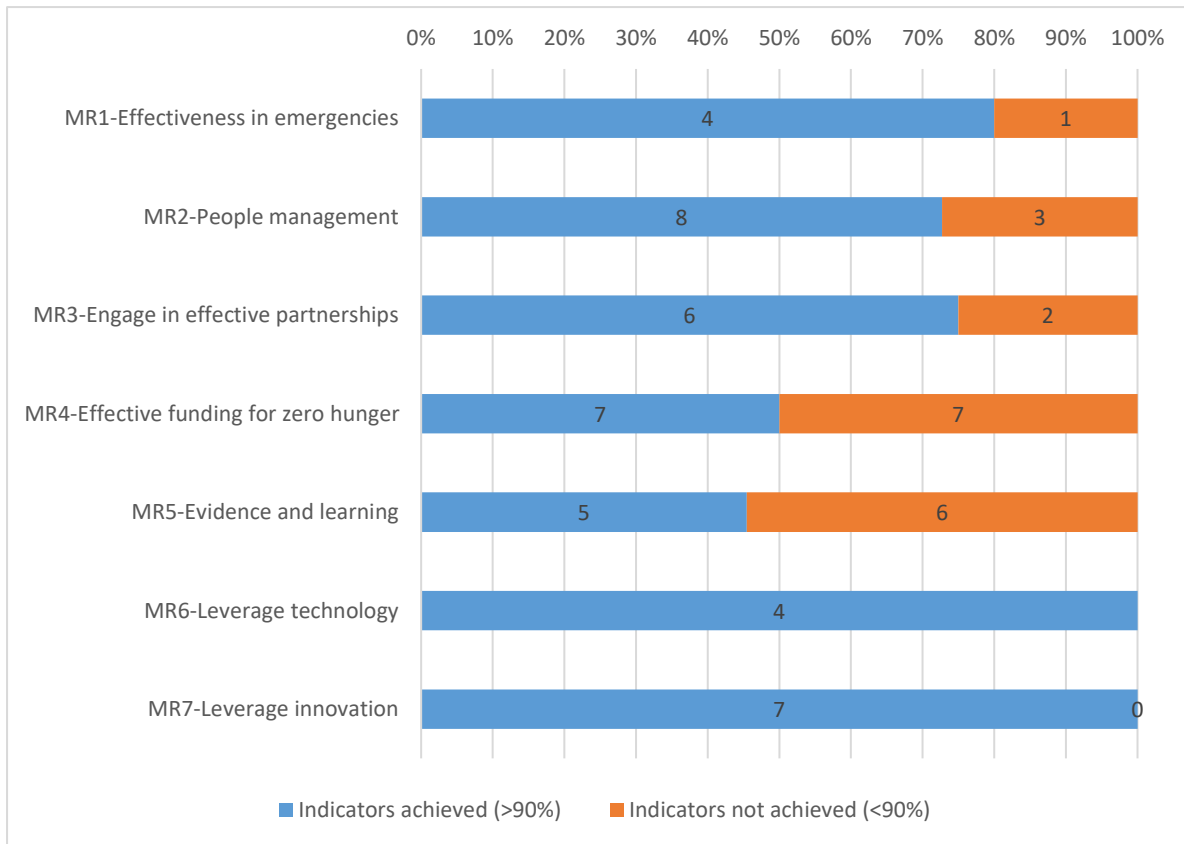
165. Management result indicators show good progress across all results, except two areas: funding, and evidence and learning. Management Result 4 (effective funding for zero hunger) met half the indicator targets, with likely explanations being funding constraints, insufficient diversification of funding sources, and inadequate growth in flexible and multi-year funding. Performance is also weak in Management Result 5 (evidence and learning) with only five out of 11 indicators met or nearly met in 2023. The indicators measuring CSP performance are significantly below their targets.³⁶⁷ This is an area that could have been affected by the reduction in WFP funding. A second factor affecting performance under Management Result 5 is the indicator measuring the implementation of audit and evaluation recommendations. While implementation of evaluation recommendations remained strong,³⁶⁸ there was a spike in audit reports and recommendations in 2023 that resulted in a larger number of “pending” recommendations being recorded in the same year.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ CSP performance is captured through two indicators: percentage of outcome indicators achieved or on track (target 75 percent; actual 52 percent); and percentage of output indicators achieved or on track (target 85 percent, actual 67 percent).

³⁶⁸ WFP, 2024t; Despite a 51 percent increase in the number of evaluation recommendations, WFP implemented a similar number of recommendations in 2023 (65 percent) as in 2022 (66 percent).

³⁶⁹ WFP, 2024e, paragraph 26-28

Figure 18: Number and share of management result indicators achieved/nearly achieved and indicators not achieved in relation to the targets, per management result area

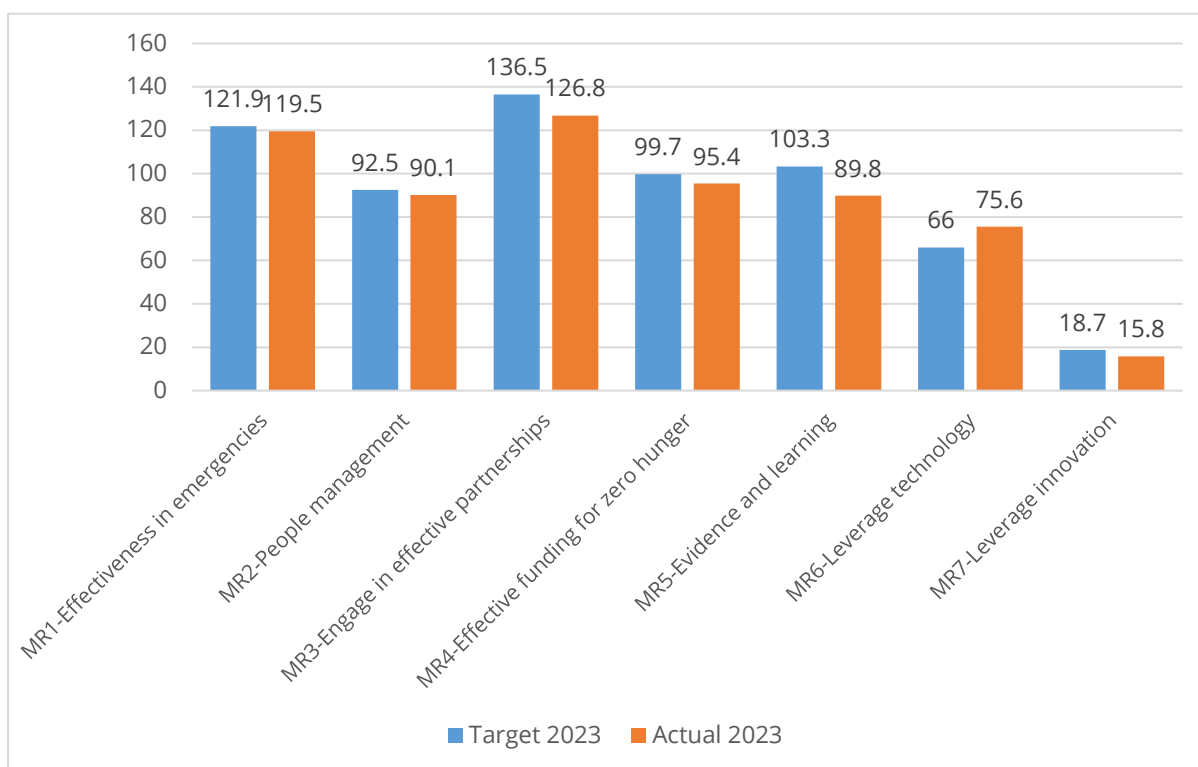


Source: WFP, 2024e, Annex IV-A

166. Expenditure data for each management result is also tracked by WFP. Data shows that WFP fell slightly short of its 2023 targets across most management results. As shown in Figure 19, Management Result 6 on Leveraging Technology is the only one that exceeded its target for the year. These figures need to be considered against the background of the contraction in WFP contributions. The update to the WFP Management Plan keeps the total budget unchanged, including at the management result level, suggesting WFP plans to maintain similar level of investment until the end of the SP implementation period.³⁷⁰ Expenditure data provides a different view on organizational performance, but it does not help to explain performance as measured by the management result indicators. A comparison of Figure 17 and Figure 18 shows that there is little correlation between indicators and expenditure. As discussed above, other factors explain the observed performance.

³⁷⁰ WFP, 2024h, p. 12

Figure 19: Target and actual expenditure (USD million) per management result, 2023



Source: WFP, 2024e, Annex IV-A

2.4.4 Progress against cross-cutting priorities

Finding 20. According to CRF indicators, implementation of cross-cutting priorities progressed well, but with less success in access among people with disabilities and community engagement. However, performance data on cross-cutting issues is not always supported by stakeholder perceptions, suggesting that the indicators do not capture the full scale of the change processes involved.

167. **SP implementation included a significant effort to better capture WFP’s work on cross-cutting priorities.** The CRF 2017–2021 included nine cross-cutting indicators across four different areas.³⁷¹ Under the CRF 2022–2025, the number of indicators increased to 19, covering areas that are broadly equivalent to those available before, plus a new area for nutrition integration (two indicators). Only five of the indicators were continued from the previous CRF.

168. WFP continued to make progress in the integration in CSPs of protection and accountability to affected populations, addressing protection concerns and ensuring access. However, the CRF indicators show comparatively weaker performance in relation to access for persons with disability (

³⁷¹ WFP, 2018, p. 8

169. Table 2:). This indicator shows the number of people with disabilities reached after WFP assistance. CRF data also show room to reinforce community engagement through the development of action plans at country level. CRF performance in relation to disability and community engagement is aligned with the findings from evaluations conducted in 2023.³⁷²

170. As far as its corporate indicators go, WFP data show good performance in relation to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Two CRF indicators are linked to the role of women in decision making³⁷³ Gender also received significant attention from WFP at institutional level. For example, in 2023, all regional bureaux finalized their gender implementation strategies. For the first time, UN-SWAP was included in the CRF for 2022–2025. In 2023, WFP reported that, of the 17 indicators, it exceeded ten, met four, and was approaching two, with one unreported.

171. **WFP met or exceeded all CRF targets in relation to environmental sustainability.** It expanded work on activities and agreements for environmental and social risks; and expanded the use of environmental management systems to 51 country offices.³⁷⁴ WFP also released an annual report on WFP's efforts to reduce their climate and environmental footprint.³⁷⁵ WFP APRs report evaluation evidence related to increasing use of environmental screening, while recommending a systematic approach to addressing environmental concerns, including through consistent use of screening tools.

172. Performance data on cross-cutting issues is not always supported by evaluative evidence or stakeholder perceptions. This suggests that the indicators do not capture the full scale of the change processes involved. Cross-cutting indicators generally record perceptions at beneficiary level or through very specific processes.³⁷⁶ However, these indicators do not show institutional efforts to equip the organization with the capacity and tools required to make cross-cutting issues a mainstream part of work. For example, in the case of gender, these elements are included in the implementation plan that accompanies the policy.³⁷⁷ It is precisely at this level where evaluation evidence and MTE interviews express mixed views. Informants acknowledge that significant efforts are being made on gender, but they feel that capacity remains limited. They also feel that progress on gender transformative efforts is not well recorded or disseminated through existing learning and knowledge management systems. Evaluations in 2023 report that gender was mainstreamed in around half of the evaluated country programmes, but attention to the issue was uneven, lacking a transformative lens. Some CSP narratives lacked adequately transformative gender objectives with indicators, and some countries had insufficient staff capacity and expertise on gender issues.³⁷⁸

³⁷² WFP, 2024d, p. 8

³⁷³ See WFP (2024) Annual Evaluation Report (2023); WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C

³⁷⁴ WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C

³⁷⁵ QCPR

³⁷⁶ For example, the proportion of field-level agreements/memorandums of understanding/construction contracts for CSP activities screened for environmental and social risks.

³⁷⁷ WFP, 2022k

³⁷⁸ WFP, 2024d, p. 8

Table 2: Cross-cutting Indicators performance

Cross-cutting priority	# of CRF indicators	# of indicators with target (2023)	#of indicators met or nearly met (>90%) (2023)	Underperforming areas
Protection	5	4	3	Number of women, men, boys and girls with disabilities accessing food/cash-based transfers/commodity vouchers/capacity strengthening services
Accountability	6	4	3	Percentage of country offices that have a community engagement action plan
Gender equality and empowerment of women	2	2	2	N/A
Environmental sustainability	3	3	3	N/A
Nutrition integration	2	0	N/A	N/A

Five cross-cutting indicators are being submitted for approval to be added to the CRF at the November 2024 Executive Board, to be adopted by country offices in 2024. These include one on nutrition integration, one on conflict sensitivity (under protection), and three on gender equality and empowerment of women. Those will replace the two old indicators. Source: WFP, 2024e, Annex III-C

Summary of findings on results

WFP introduced a strategic reporting layer with the use of HLTs, above outcomes, but these have limited organizational ownership and use in decision making. The 2023 performance data show mixed results. WFP: exceeded beneficiary targets but provided inadequate rations due to funding gaps (SO1); achieved good but lower-than-expected impacts in nutrition, health, and education (SO2); had moderate effects in food systems and resilience (SO3); met or exceeded targets with questionable validity (SO4); and excelled in service provision and user satisfaction (SO5). Management indicators show progress, except in funding and evidence learning. Cross-cutting priorities progressed well, though indicators may not fully capture changes, especially in gender issues, disability access and community engagement.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

173. This section of the report presents the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) conclusions and recommendations. It integrates the assessment of factors that have enabled or hindered Strategic Plan (SP) progress by highlighting priorities for the organization moving forward. Recommendations are high level and relevant to two areas: the remaining SP implementation period; and the next SP.

2.3 3.1 CONCLUSIONS

174. **Conclusion 1:** The main SP value was in supporting continuity of commitment to WFP's goals around food security and nutrition. There were incremental advances in framing WFP work areas, which was appropriate after a period of strained growth and change. The SP clearly articulated continued and enhanced support to WFP's role in country capacity strengthening (CCS), on-demand service provision, and introduced nutrition integration. The SP was a useful document that clearly expressed the organization's intent in these areas, and for communicating externally. It anticipated the main trends and remains relevant, even in the changing context. There is value in preserving this function of continuity, looking to the horizon for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to allow for consolidation in key areas – given that change takes time and too much change is disruptive.

175. **Conclusion 2:** The SP ambitions were broadly realistic and continue to be appropriate and relevant, but opportunities have been missed to clearly link ambitions, programming and targets. The introduction of high-level targets (HLTs) gave WFP an opportunity to clearly emphasize what WFP is most focused on achieving over the SP's timeframe. HLTs have the potential to more strategically focus the organization and its priorities on higher-level goals. HLTs could be strengthened by including more outcome vs. output indicators, greater emphasis on quality vs. quantity, and incorporating a qualitative element to better tell the story of how and what WFP is trying to achieve (and is actually achieving), in systems-strengthening and resilience work. While according to WFP's own reporting, progress against HLTs is generally positive at the mid-point of the SP, WFP will need to make a concerted push to reverse negative trends related to global food insecurity and malnutrition, and to provide better coverage and quality for the people it serves.

176. **Conclusion 3:** The overall structure of the SP is sound. However, the content under each SO could better articulate prioritized activities based on different types of operating contexts. The SP is appreciated for providing a framework that is broad and flexible enough to allow country offices to adapt their programmes to the country context, (as required in Country Strategic Plan (CSP) Policy). However, there is a tension related to strategic outcomes (SOs) – SO4 and SO5 (CCS and service provision). While these are presented as separate SOs, they also constitute project delivery modalities linked to SO1, SO2 and SO3. More broadly, the SP has not significantly guided the organization in working to its comparative advantages in relation to the specific needs and opportunities in different regions and types of engagement. Nor did it guide prioritization. As a result, by implementing the SP through CSPs, WFP engaged in an increasingly wide spectrum of activities. This brought risks of work fragmentation and decreased coherence in internal programme integration. Diffusion stretched staffing capacities and management attention. WFP's recent Interim Programme Strategy consolidates its work in four SOs. It streamlines CCS under priority areas. These changes are part of a wider effort at enhancing work focus. However, they fall short of making a step change, and do not provide further clarity on contextual priorities (e.g. by region or type of country). Furthermore, the Interim Strategy's treatment of CCS under WFP work in Saving Lives and school feeding and social protection (i.e. SO1 and selected areas of SO2) is at a tension with SP priorities. Where WFP produced regional strategies (informed by detailed context analysis) this allowed the organization to have a clearer view of where it can add value. Ensuing engagement was tailored to context, to organizational skillsets at decentralized levels, and complemented partnership work.

177. **Conclusion 4:** Continued implementation of the SP in future will require balancing programme priorities while ensuring that internal structure and capacity changes do not undermine SP implementation. The reality of increasing needs and reduced funding will inevitably require difficult choices. However, this should not be at the expense of quality responses to those who need them most. The challenges WFP is currently facing are partly due to external trends outside its control, and partly its own making, given how the temporary surge of funding in 2022 and 2023 was managed. WFP leadership is taking critical actions to bring costs in line with funding, and to boost efficiency and innovation. They are also attempting to focus priorities and adjust structures and systems to better support the field and WFP accountability. Leadership needs to proceed thoughtfully and strategically to ensure that improvements in capabilities and capacities are not lost, and to ensure that staff morale is sustained, particularly for key programme support functions.

178. **Conclusion 5:** WFP continued to invest in strengthening many aspects of its capabilities, capacities and systems. However, knowledge management issues persist, and the way WFP addresses volatility in the external environment could undermine progress. Changes in human resources, resource mobilization and advance financing systems and approaches have progressively supported SP implementation. This included operational agility, although findings indicate that the most recent reorganization has come at the expense of some expertise to the organization. Approaches for evidence generation, programme integration and innovation have improved, although with gaps acknowledged in WFP's work on gender equality and empowerment of women, protection and accountability to affected populations, and community engagement. Knowledge management needs urgent attention to make the evidence-driven ambitions of the SP feasible.

179. **Conclusion 6:** Strategic guidance for implementation proliferated but lacked timeliness. There is demand for more consolidated and prioritized guidance. With a broad SP, management needs to set priorities and instil greater discipline to better focus on WFP's comparative advantage. Regional bureaux have domains of expertise based on their contextual priorities; these could be reinforced and serve as nodes of expertise for the rest of the organization. Policy and guidance (including CSP development and approval), and reporting requirements show a continued need for process simplification; ongoing adjustments should reinforce focus not diffusion. HLTs could be used more strategically as a performance management tool among leaders and across levels of the organization. The SP and HLTs could encourage simplification, provide a better overview of WFP's work linked to its Theory of Change, and more consistently connect with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

180. **Conclusion 7:** Funding reductions, increased needs, and the voluntary funded nature of WFP constrain many of the SP's ambitions. They also limit management's ability to set priorities and reinforce disciplined focus. Increased needs and increased coverage mean that WFP provides less for more people. Continued challenges with funding flexibility and longevity, mean that all of the adjustments to support SP shifts are difficult to put into practice in operations, where donor funding decisions can dictate capacity and implementation priorities. The short duration of funding also constrains WFP ambitions in its Changing Lives agenda and frustrates efforts to ensure sustainability of its interventions.

181. **Conclusion 8:** WFP continued to expand its partnerships, but aspects of strategic positioning have remained opportunistic rather than strategic, and some partnerships have seen insufficient progress. A challenging funding environment combined with WFP's voluntarily funded nature, and insufficient strategic guidance on partnerships, have contributed to an expansion of partnerships for financial means. This is discouraging internal coherence and integration. WFP's support was uneven across different partnership types, and some partnerships did not receive sufficient attention, in particular, non-governmental, civil society and local representative organizations. At a time when all humanitarian and development actors are facing increased austerity and needs, WFP should devote more attention to programme partnerships and integrating with other organizations' interventions to maximize collective efforts towards achieving results.

2.3 3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

#	Recommendation	Rationale	Responsibility	Deadline
1	The next strategic plan should clearly set out WFP's strategic vision for the future. It should reaffirm the centrality of humanitarian assistance, building resilience and addressing the root causes of food insecurity as the heart of WFP's mission and mandate, and clearly define the organization's comparative advantages.	One of the strengths of the current plan is that it is sufficiently flexible to allow response to unforeseen events and to legitimize a wide range of interventions; this flexibility should be retained. At the same time, continued diffusion of focus puts WFP's reputation at risk and undermines confidence in the organization's ability to achieve meaningful results at scale. In being forced to "do better with less", WFP should concentrate resources on high-quality programmes, where they have the greatest likelihood of having an impact. The focus on cross-cutting priorities and a people-centred approach is fundamental to WFP's commitments to first supporting the people left furthest behind.	Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	
1.1	The next strategic plan should be framed with a long-term horizon and provide a clear statement of WFP's intended contributions to global goals for food security and nutrition within a five-year period, in line with the completion of the 2030 Agenda cycle.			November 2025
1.2	Ensure that the next strategic plan includes a clear definition of WFP's core and context-specific comparative advantages in different operating environments and under different modalities of engagement.			November 2025
1.3	To strengthen strategic direction during the remainder of the current strategic plan period, urgently develop a concept paper and related guidance on WFP's comparative advantages that supports the design and implementation of CSPs.			June 2025
2	To operationalize the strategic vision, provide a more sharply defined programme framework, leaving flexibility for adaptation to changing circumstances on the ground.	While maintaining a wide overarching strategic framework that allows the flexibility to navigate	Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	

#	Recommendation	Rationale	Responsibility	Deadline	
2.1	In the results architecture of the next strategic plan maintain strategic outcomes 1, 2 and 3 while framing capacity strengthening and service provision for governments as modalities of intervention in support of these three strategic outcomes. Services provided under the current strategic outcome 5 could be retained as a separate strategic outcome.	across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, the strategic plan should provide more elements to guide country-level prioritization and ability to better link different intervention modalities to WFP’s ultimate goals through consistent country and corporate results frameworks. This will entail actions in relation to the strategic plan results architecture, alignment requirements and minimum standards for programme quality.		November 2025	
2.2	Relax requirements for the alignment of CSPs with the CRF, focusing on the aggregation of basic food and nutrition outcome indicators at the global level, while leaving country offices full discretion regarding the use of additional context-specific outcome, output and process indicators.			June 2026	
2.3	State clearly in the strategic plan document that cross-cutting priorities are minimum standards for programme quality, and ensure they are appropriately invested in and budgeted for.			November 2025	
3	Ensure that WFP’s processes, systems and incentives for management and staff provide the agility and responsiveness required to make the organization an effective player in increasingly complex and dynamic settings.	While assurance mechanisms are essential for transparent management and accountability, many of WFP’s processes are overly complex, time-consuming and inefficient. There is need for systems, management approaches and skill sets that enable the organization to “do the right thing at the right time”. The skills needed include soft skills in negotiation and policy engagement, and the ability to find innovative and effective solutions to complex problems,			
3.1	Resolve the current ambiguity between the roles and responsibilities of central headquarters and regional bureaux in supporting country offices.			Assistant Executive Director Work Place Management	November 2025
3.2	Ensure that the systems and processes for the design, approval and revision of CSPs are strategic rather than process-driven, and appropriately streamlined to avoid unnecessary duplications of efforts and reduce transaction costs. This may also entail expanding the delegation of authority, and corresponding accountability, for granting approval at the regional level.			Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	November 2025

#	Recommendation	Rationale	Responsibility	Deadline
3.3	Provide incentives for managers and staff to stimulate innovation, including innovative approaches to partnerships, in an environment that is risk-tolerant and willing to learn from mistakes as well as good practices.	beyond the diligent management of standardized processes.	Assistant Executive Director, Partnerships & Innovation	November 2025
3.4	Strengthen evidence generation and knowledge management systems to support decision-making, enhance internal cross-fertilization, inform the scale-up of interventions, and feed into national policy debates.		Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department	November 2025
3.5	Continue efforts to attract and retain staff with relevant skills and experience in establishing and nurturing effective partnerships for policy engagement and systems strengthening in fragile and relatively stable institutional settings.		Assistant Executive Director, Workplace and Management Department	November 2025
4	WFP should strengthen its efforts to secure predictable and flexible funding.	Funding gaps and a lack of flexible and predictable funding are key factors hindering strategically focused, effective and sustainable interventions at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. These factors are not under WFP's direct control and depend largely on the choices of Member States and other financial contributors, but there are actions that the organization could take to enhance awareness of the issue.	Assistant Executive Director, Partnerships & Innovation	November 2025
4.1	Formally engage in a structured dialogue with relevant Member States to discuss ways of ensuring more predictable and flexible funding.			
4.2	To support efforts in advocating funding, enhance WFP's capacity to document and report good practices and challenges in multi-year programming.			

Annex I. Summary terms of reference

1. The summary terms of reference can be found [here](#).

Annex II. Evaluation timeline

Table 3: Evaluation timeline

Mid-Term Evaluation timeline		By whom	Dates
Phase 1 – Preparation			March–July 2023
	Initial consultations on concept note	EM	Mar-April 2023
	Presentation/discussion of concept note with steering group	DoE/EM	26 April 2023
	Desk review. Draft 1 TORs submitted to QA2	EM	28 April 2023
	Comments on draft 1 returned to EM; revisions	QA2	05 May 2023
	DoE clearance for circulation of TORs to steering group	DoE	16 May 2023
	Draft TOR sent to WFP stakeholders and LTA firms	EM	16 May (deadline 05 June 2023) 2023
	Comments returned to EM from IRG	RA/EM	29 May 2023
	Revise draft TOR based on WFP feedback	EM	31 May 2023
	Offers from LTA received		05 June 2023
	Contracting evaluation team/firm	EM	30 June 2023
	Final TOR sent to WFP stakeholders and LTA firms	EM	3 July 2023
Phase 2 – Inception			July–October 2023
	Preliminary desk review induction briefings with OEV	Team	24-28 July 2023
	Inception mission (remote)	Team with EM	31 July–18 August 2023
	Desk review and inception interviews	Team with EM	31 July–18 August 2023
Draft 0	Submit draft IN to OEV	TL	27 September 2023
	OEV quality assurance and feedback sent to Evaluation Team	EM	29 September 2023
Draft 1	Submit revised draft IN (D1) to OEV	TL	10 October 2023
	OEV DoE review and clearance	EM	30 October 2023
	IRG review. OEV consolidate all comments in matrix and share them with TL	EM	10 November 2023
Draft 2	Submit revised and final IN (D2)	TL	17 November 2023
	Circulate final IN to WFP stakeholders	EM	24 November 2023

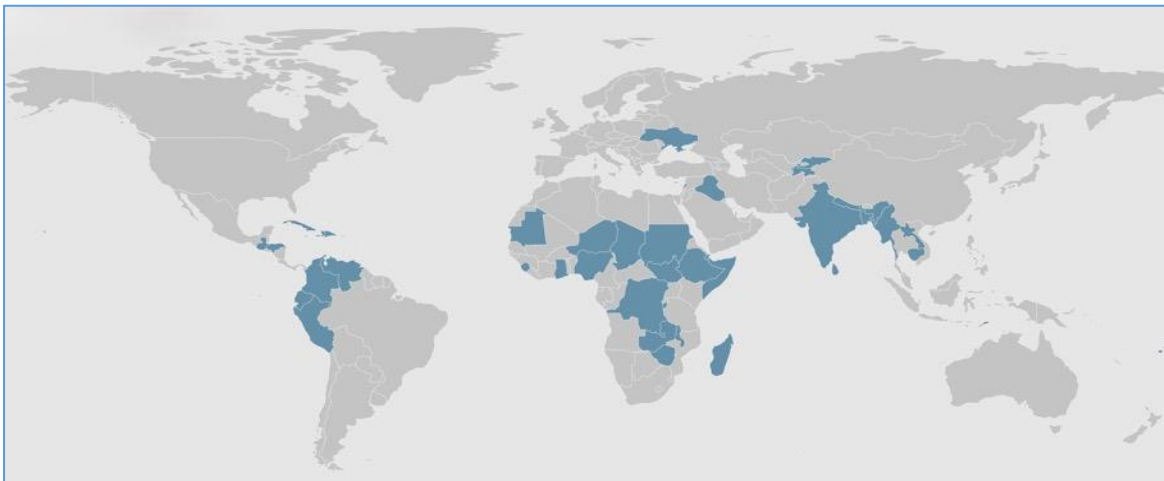
Mid-Term Evaluation timeline		By whom	Dates
Phase 3 – Data collection			November 2023–May 2024
	In depth interviews, selected-survey, focus groups and desk review	Team	13 November–03 May 2024
	HQ data collection Rome visit	Team	27 November–1 December 2023
	Regional bureau visits and remote consultations	Team	19 February–26 April 2024
WP1	Analytical Paper 1	Team	22 January 2024
	Consultation	Team, EM, SG	31 January 2024
	Incorporate EM and SG comments	Team	9 February 2024
WP2	Analytical Paper 2	Team	16 February 2024
	Consultation	Team, EM, SG	28 February 2024
	Incorporate EM and SG comments	Team	08 March 2024
WP3	Analytical Paper 3	Team	15 April 2024
	Consultation	Team, EM, SG	24 April 2024
	Incorporate EM and SG comments	Team	03 May 2024
Phase 4 – Data analysis and reporting			May–September 2024
Draft 0	Submit draft ER to OEV	TL	07 June 2024
	OEV quality feedback sent to the team	EM	14 June 2024
Draft 1	Submit revised draft ER to OEV	TL	21 June 2024
	Submitted to EM and DDoE for QA	TL	25 June 2024
	Comments by EM and DDoE	DDoE	28 June 2024
Draft 2	Submit revised draft to DoE	TL	05 July 2024
	Feedback to Evaluation Team	EM	11 July 2024
	Shared ER with IRG (feedback deadline by 29 July)	EM	15 July 2024
	Stakeholder workshop	EM/TL	W/C 22 July 2024
	OEV consolidate all WFP's comments (matrix) and share them with TL	EM	01 August 2024
Draft 3	Submit revised draft ER (D3) based on IRG comments	TL	09 August 2024
SER	Draft SER and submit to DoE after consultation with TL	EM	26 August 2024
	Comments by DoE	DoE	02 September 2024
	Submit revised SER to DoE for clearance to be shared with OPC	EM	06 September 2024
	SER shared with OPC (Deadline by 16 September)	DoE	09 September 2024

Mid-Term Evaluation timeline		By whom	Dates
	Revise SER based on comments and seek DoE approval	EM	20 September 2024
Phase 5 – Dissemination and follow-up			September–November 2024
	Submit SER to EB secretariat for editing and translation, copy RMPP for MR preparation	EM	September 2024
	Preparation of the Comms pack for EB and ED		September 2024
	Dissemination OEV websites posting EB Round Table etc.	EM	October 2024
	Presentation of SER to the EB	DoE	November 2024
	Presentation of management response to the EB	RMPP/ CPP	November 2024

Workstream 2 – Country reality check on strategic plan implementation progress and results

1. In parallel to the process of drafting the thematic Analytical Papers, the evaluation took stock of country-level Strategic Plan (SP) implementation progress and results through an e-survey and a review of evaluative evidence from Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs).
2. Focus group discussions (FGDs) with a purposive sample of country offices during regional bureau interviews, combined with complementary interviews as necessary, enhanced the focus on country progress. Participating country offices were self-selected by invitation, and outreach to country offices was facilitated by regional bureau focal points. Each regional bureau was invited to identify three to five countries in their region. In soliciting the choice of countries, the following criteria were put forward for consideration:
 - Countries covering the range of operations that exist in the region (emergency, resilience, development – delivering and enabling).
 - Countries covering low and middle-income contexts (where applicable).
 - Countries with different types of partnerships.
 - Countries which represent interesting case study material for the three topics of the Analytical Papers.
3. In total, consultations covered 73 informants from 40 countries, and included a 'light touch' review of relevant country documentation. The following countries were covered through the regional consultations and country office reality checks: Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iraq, Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pacific Multi-Country, Peru, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Figure 20: Countries covered through regional consultations and country office reality checks



4. Findings from country office reality checks were systematically written up as interview notes and added to the secure and confidential central team interview compendium. Findings were also recorded in a regional consultation evaluation matrix (one for each region) which reflected on findings from the region against each question and sub-question, and aggregated findings from regional and country informants.
5. The Evaluation Team organized two-hour remote FGDs with the Country Director and Head of Programme from each country office. The FGD followed a semi-structured format, with probing questions on specific experiences, and explored issues of organizational readiness (EQ2), barriers

to results achievement (EQ5), and what WFP is doing differently (to feed into the Innovation Analytical Paper and EQ4).

6. **Evaluation Country Office Staff Survey:** A global survey was launched at the start of the data collection (November 2023). Respondents for the survey in each country office included:
 - Country Director and Deputy Country Director
 - Head of Programme
 - Head of Administration and Finance
 - Head of Supply Chain
 - Partnership Officer or focal point

7. Survey questions were aligned with the evaluation matrix to cover topics on Organizational Readiness and perceptions of key areas of results (. The final survey included a total of 13 open and closed questions. More details on the Survey questions and responses obtained are in 0.
8. The stratification within the design of the survey enabled gathering of insights from different operating contexts through specific groups of staff, geographic regions, types of country (e.g. macroeconomic status, and types of country offices), through disaggregation of responses.
9. The Evaluation Team worked with the Office of Evaluation to engage regional evaluation focal points in reviewing the questions for clarity and focus. An iterative process helped fine-tune the survey, identify and solve any technical issues, and refine the questioning.

Annex III. Methodology

1. This annex presents an overview of the methodology for this evaluation. It successively discusses the overall approach, evaluation questions and associated criteria,

Overall approach

2. The evaluation methodology combined a **theory-based approach** with elements of development evaluation approaches. Evaluation design was supported by a review of the **Strategic Plan Theory of Change (SP ToC)** (see 0). A reconstruction of the ToC was not deemed necessary. ToC underlying assumptions were made explicit at inception and included in the evaluation lines of inquiry and in the evaluation matrix (0) which reflected the five evaluation questions. The ToC review informed agreed changes to the evaluation sub-questions, with modifications approved at inception. The evaluation matrix provides an overview of the evaluation criteria, sub-questions, lines of inquiry/indicators, data sources, and means of triangulation. The evaluation matrix (0) reflects how different sources of evidence fed into each evaluation question. Employing mixed methods ensured transparency and minimized bias and, as per good evaluation practice, ensured that findings were drawn from a triangulated evidence base.
3. Elements of **developmental evaluation approaches**³⁷⁹ **ensured a focus on learning and inclusion of stakeholder perspectives**. Key stakeholders and leaders responsible for the strategic planning process were engaged as thought partners throughout the evaluation. Stakeholders played an important role in inputting into the development of findings, conclusions and recommendations and building a shared understanding of the ways in which the SP has served or hindered the vision of zero hunger.
4. The evaluation inquiry around EQ2 was guided by the **model of organizational readiness** developed and used by Mokoro for the Strategic School Feeding evaluation³⁸⁰ and used again in the Country Strategic Plan Policy Evaluation (CSP PE). This theoretical model aligns well with the inquiry into the strength of the SP enablers. In addition, the organizational readiness model guided the evaluation in reflecting on WFP's overall organizational capability and coherence (a central feature of the model) rather than considering the enablers in isolation. This was key to ensuring that the evaluation assessed how different dimensions of organizational readiness are working together to enable SP implementation.
5. **Consultation with stakeholders** was supported by the evaluation Internal Reference Group (IRG) and by Thematic Advisory Groups for the three Analytical Papers. The Evaluation Team engaged with the Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee, management of the Programme Operations Department and its Research Assessment and Monitoring (RAM) Unit, as well as other members of the IRG, to collect data and validate evidence and analysis. Engagement with regional bureaux and country offices included facilitated reflection opportunities, including around the evaluation's three thematic Analytical Papers. This provided an opportunity for presenting early synthesis of evidence gathered on key themes and evaluation questions, and promoted learning, validated analysis, and contributed to the thought process for developing the next SP during the course of the evaluation.

³⁷⁹ See Patton, 2010; Patton, 2015; and Patton, 2021

³⁸⁰ WFP, 2020a

Evaluation questions and associated criteria

6. The evaluation questions were presented in the terms of reference. Sub-questions were refined at inception stage. Table 4 provides the final agreed questions together with the relevant Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria.

Table 4: Evaluation questions and criteria

Evaluation questions (EQ)	Evaluation criteria			
	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Coherence
1. Strength and relevance of design: How well has the vision and design of the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan supported WFP to achieve its ambitions over the period?	✓			
2. Organizational readiness: How and to what extent has WFP established an enabling environment (systems, structures, resourcing, culture) to support SP implementation?	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Coherence and complementarity: To what extent has the SP enabled WFP to work more coherently and in complementarity with others?		✓	✓	✓
4. Country implementation and delivery: To what extent has SP implementation supported country offices to adapt to country priorities and plan for the future?		✓	✓	✓
5. Results: To what extent is WFP on track towards achieving the high-level targets set by the SP?		✓		

Source: Strategic Plan Mid-Term Evaluation Terms of Reference (MTE ToR)

7. To guide the evaluation inquiry, an evaluation matrix was drawn up with discrete lines of inquiry for each sub-question, and reflecting how different sources of evidence fed into each evaluation question. Employing mixed methods ensured that findings were drawn from a triangulated evidence base, that they enhanced transparency and minimized bias.

Data collection methods

8. Data collection combined qualitative and quantitative methods and took place under the umbrella of five interlinked evaluation workstreams. Figure 21 below shows the different workstreams and how these were combined during the evaluation process.

Figure 21: Evaluation workstreams and process



9. Subsequent sections provide further details on each of the workstreams.

Workstream 1 – Thematic Analytical Papers

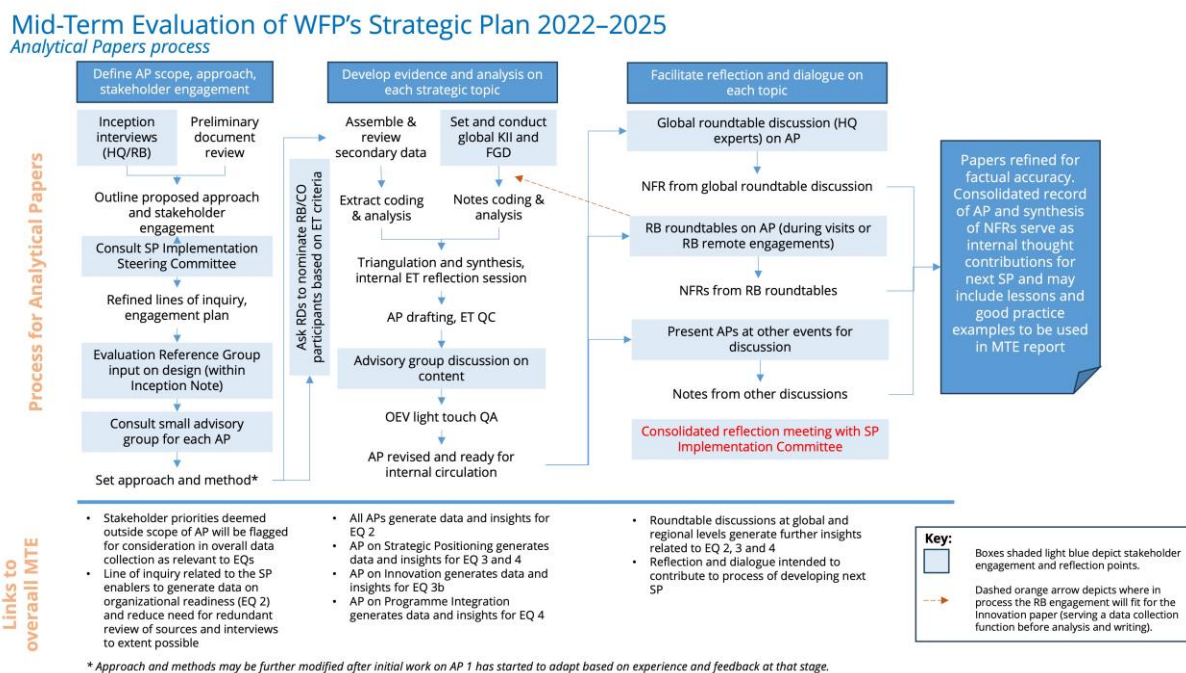
10. The evaluation produced three Thematic Analytical Papers as a key input into the evaluation data collection, analysis, and internal reflection process. The inception phase confirmed the topics for the Analytical Papers as per the Terms of Reference (ToR), and carefully examined the issues that were included within scope and those that were considered out of scope.

Table 5: Analytical Paper topics

Analytical Paper	Topic	Main question
Analytical Paper 1	Programme integration	To what extent has WFP operationalized the guiding principle of programme integration highlighted in SP 2022–2025 to enable layered, integrated, and sequenced humanitarian and development programming (and cross-cutting priorities)?
Analytical Paper 2	Strategic positioning	To what extent has SP 2022–2025 enabled WFP to effectively and appropriately strategically position itself (as implementer and enabler) in a context-specific way, so that it can effectively work together with others to tackle hunger and malnutrition?
Analytical Paper 3	Innovation	To what extent has WFP developed the capability and culture to foster and adopt approaches and operational innovations that facilitate achieving the ambitions of SP 2022–2025?

11. The Analytical Papers were framed as short stocktaking papers that drew from available evidence and formulated critical questions for reflection around opportunities and areas of weaknesses. Development of each Analytical Paper followed a *desk-study plus* approach. Primary data sources included documentary analysis and interviews with key headquarter experts and a small sample of regional bureau and country office people, including through the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) regional bureaux consultations.
12. Analytical Paper design and review processes were supported by an Advisory Group specifically brought together for each topic, comprising between six and ten people representing headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices.
13. The process, scope, and stakeholder engagement plans for developing the three Analytical Papers were refined at inception through iterative engagements with the Office of Evaluation's Evaluation Managers and the Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee (SPISC), and were adapted after consultations with small advisory groups set up for each theme/paper. The process for developing each Analytical Paper is depicted in Figure 22 with some adaptations in practice to this process based on realities at the time of data collection and drafting the Analytical Papers.

Figure 22: Analytical Paper development and reflection process



Source: Evaluation Team

14. Key elements connecting the Analytical Papers to the overall MTE included:
 - Definition stage: Stakeholder priorities deemed outside the scope of the Analytical Papers were flagged for inclusion in the overall data collection for the MTE where they are relevant to answering specific Evaluation Questions (EQs). The data collection for each Analytical Paper included a line of inquiry related to the SP enablers to generate data on organizational readiness (EQ2) and reduce the need for redundant review of documentary sources and interviews wherever possible.
 - Evidence gathering and analysis stage: All Analytical Papers generated data and insights for EQ2. The paper on strategic positioning generated insights for EQ3 and EQ4. The paper on Innovation specifically helps address EQ3.2. The paper on programme integration generates data and insights for both EQ2 and EQ4.
 - Reflection and dialogue stage: Roundtable discussions at headquarters and regional levels were used to generate insights related to EQ2, 3 and 4.

15. Analytical Papers were reviewed by Mokoro Quality Support and the Office of Evaluation prior to being submitted to the advisory group for each paper. Notes for the record appended to each Analytical Paper provide an overview of comments received and a record that can be used further during the process of developing the next SP.

Workstream 3 – Regional Bureau consultations

16. Regional bureaux consultations provided an opportunity for engagement at the junction of the conceptual/policy levels with the realities of country offices translating SP ambitions into practical plans.
17. All six regional bureaux were extensively consulted, with three visited in person for a one-week data collection period, namely Bangkok, Nairobi, and Panama, and three remotely with interviews spread over two to three weeks (Cairo, Dakar, and Johannesburg). Regional bureaux in-person visit selection was guided by the following criteria:
- Representation of the different continents where WFP operates.
 - Representation of different WFP contexts – two regional bureaux with strong changing lives agendas; two regional bureaux with mixed substantial humanitarian and crisis response agendas.
18. Regional bureaux visits included five round tables with each regional bureau (covering the Analytical Paper topics, and sessions on organizational readiness and results) and selected interviews following a semi-structured outline with regional bureaux and country office informants. In light of extreme pressures on the region, for Regional Bureau Cairo (RBC) a less time-intensive consultation was organized where three round tables were collapsed into a single session, complemented by a smaller number of individual follow-up interviews.
19. Regional bureaux consultations covered a total of 221 participants across all regions. Findings were written up as interview notes and consolidated in the regional consultation evaluation matrix (one for each region) which reflected on findings from the region against each question and sub-question, and aggregated findings from regional and country informants.

Table 6: Regional bureau consultation participants

Regional bureau	Key informant interview participants	Round Table participants	Total
Regional Bureau Bangkok	18	34	52
Regional Bureau Cairo	5	9	14
Regional Bureau Dakar	15	19	34
Regional Bureau Johannesburg	7	9	16
Regional Bureau Nairobi	25	34	59
Regional Bureau Panama	20	26	46

Workstream 4 – Headquarter consultations

20. Headquarter consultations: Key informant interviews were held with WFP Headquarters staff at inception and during data collection, and followed a semi-structured interview guideline. Separate two-hour focus group discussions (FGDs) were organized with all five Executive Board (EB) list members. Perspectives were solicited on SP design, relevance, and WFP’s organizational readiness to achieve the results of the SP. A total of 70 EB members participated in the FGDs.
21. External partner interviews covered a selection of resident coordinators in different countries, private sector partners, and international financial institutions (IFIs), as well as other United Nations agencies.

22. Global data pertaining to enablers and corporate performance was analysed. Global document analysis included strategic and policy evaluations, global process records (e.g. 2nd Generation CSP (2GCSP) Working Group minutes), EB documents, SP implementation workstream records, etc. The analysis updated relevant findings from the CSP PE with more recent data. In addition, the team reviewed and analysed the data related to the Strategic Plan high-level target (SP HLT).

Workstream 5 – Synthesis and reporting

23. All interview notes were systematically written up and stored in a team-only interview compendium. Datasets gathered through the first four workstreams were synthesized in an iterative process, initially by data collection methods (against the evaluation sub-questions and using the evaluation matrix), and for each Analytical Paper theme.
24. The Evaluation Team held internal reflection and analysis meetings to reflect on findings from initial data review and from the first round of interviews, to generate further questions to feed into roundtable discussions (global and regional) and country offices' FGDs. These participatory sessions in turn contributed additional evidence to the evaluation process. Weekly team meetings and weekly meetings with the Office of Evaluation ensured regular coordination, and also fed the process of synthesis through reflection on specific topics.
25. All resulting datasets were triangulated and synthesized to generate findings against the EQs, conclusions articulating potential adjustments for the remaining SP implementation period, and implications for design of the next SP. The team ensured that the information collected was systematically triangulated by cross-confirming findings and conclusions through the various sources – documentary review, key informant interviews (KIIs), FGDs and roundtables, surveys, as well as the round tables. A two-and-a-half-day dedicated team workshop at the end of the data collection phase allowed for further synthesis of findings.
26. Summary findings and emerging conclusions and recommendations of the final report were shared with senior management in a dedicated meeting, and with global, regional and country stakeholders in a workshop held in Rome in September 2024. The Evaluation team maintained regular contact with the Office of Evaluation throughout the evaluation process, and incorporated feedback on Analytical Papers in subsequent drafts.

Gender inclusion and disability

27. The evaluation integrated principles of gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. It used the guidance on gender, diversity and inclusion in the WFP Gender Policy 2022,³⁸¹ the Disability Inclusion Road Map (2020–2021)³⁸² and Disability Inclusion in CSP Programme Guidance³⁸³ as key frameworks of reference. Gender, diversity and inclusion (including disability inclusion) were addressed across all evaluation questions, and were integrated into the evaluation matrix.
28. In the coding and extraction of secondary data, the Evaluation Team coded for gender and other cross-cutting issues to analyse the coverage and attention to these issues, and how this evolved. In data analysis, indicators were disaggregated by gender where relevant to the analysis.

Ethical issues

29. WFP evaluations must conform to the 2020 United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical guidelines. Accordingly, Mokoro was responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethical conduct at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting the 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)

³⁸¹ WFP, 2022k

³⁸² WFP, 2020g

³⁸³ WFP, 2023ab

and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities. These commitments are confirmed by Evaluation Team members' signatures on their contract with Mokoro Ltd, and of the pledge annexed to the 2020 UNEG guidelines.

30. During the inception, ethical issues, related risks, safeguards and mitigation measures were identified. The issues shown are drawn from the 2020 UNEG guidelines and shown in Table 7. The table also shows the status of these issues at the time of report writing.

Risks and assumptions

Table 7: Programmatic risks, mitigation strategies and status at the time of report writing

Programmatic risk	Mitigation strategy at inception stage	Status at time of report writing
<p>Scope: There is a risk that the scope of the evaluation, and expectations, will exceed the level of effort specified in the work plan.</p>	<p>We have worked during inception to build clarity on expectations. This is reflected in a realistic work schedule, which meets the needs of this complex evaluation while acknowledging time and resource limitations. Shared expectations and agreement on ways of working are reflected through the Inception Note (IN) on how this evaluation will be conducted.</p> <p>For the IN, Analytical Papers (APs), and Evaluation Report we expect to observe feedback rounds, but note that it will be critical that comments in those cycles are provided in a consolidated and constructive manner in an agreed format. Analytical Papers are primarily a tool for evaluation and institutional learning and will be subject to a commensurate level of internal scrutiny.</p>	<p>AP drafting somewhat delayed compared to initial plans to accommodate the need to feed the AP2 and AP3 with data from the regional bureaux consultations. The Evaluation Team worked with Office of Evaluation (OEV) on the review process, delivering the reports ahead of the draft evaluation report. AP drafting has required considerable resources, but content has been useful to support sections of report drafting.</p>

Programmatic risk	Mitigation strategy at inception stage	Status at time of report writing
<p>Hybrid data collection: There is a risk that the combination of in-person and remote fieldwork and absence of country visits will result in some of the regional bureaux (RBx)/country offices (Cos) being less inclined to engage.</p>	<p>Transparent criteria established during inception for the choice of regional bureaux for remote vs. in-person fieldwork. Close cooperation with the evaluation matrix (EM) for careful management of communications with RBx/COs.</p> <p>Remote working often takes more calendar time and, as necessary, additional support from OEV/RBx will be sought to minimize administrative inefficiency.</p> <p>Mitigation also through carrying out of a survey that covers all countries, ensuring that countries have a chance to provide inputs through this instrument.</p>	<p>OEV identified focal points for each region. Focal points were instrumental, and most regions saw smooth communication and strong engagement (five out of six RBx). Remote RB consultations spread out over a longer period than initially foreseen, but slippage could be accommodated within the timeline.</p> <p>Focal points were helpful in reaching out to invite COs to participate, and engagement has been good.</p> <p>The survey response rate required multiple reminders. Supported by communications from the OEV director, a response rate of 29 percent could still be achieved.</p>
<p>'Light touch' inception: There is a risk that the agreement that the inception phase should be of a lighter touch may not be understood well, resulting in a mismatch of expectations.</p>	<p>Mokoro has followed the agreed inception process with the revised level of effort based on the output from this phase being a lighter touch. The Evaluation Team will liaise closely with the EM to ensure that all relevant parties understand the boundaries and constraints of a remote inception mission as well as the replacement of the inception report with an inception note, especially with regard to its clearance process.</p>	<p>Significant effort was expended in defining at inception what the content of the APs would be. This made the inception less light touch than initially envisioned.</p> <p>The IN drafting and commenting process was not substantially different from a regular inception. Including the effort expended on the AP design, this meant that the inception required more resources than initially foreseen.</p>
<p>Data availability and quality: There is a risk that the quality of data is not sufficient, which may limit what can be drawn from it in support of the assignment.</p>	<p>Forward planning and systematic liaison with OEV, ensuring that data access and requirements are discussed with WFP at the earliest opportunity throughout the assignment. We look forward to continuing the constructive engagement with the designated OEV researcher/analyst to address any issues, and to focal points within RBx to</p>	<p>The Evaluation Team has worked throughout with OEV on data requests. The overall limitation of having only one year of data on SP performance against the High-level Target (HLT) was anticipated, and that data was received on time to inform report drafting. OEV support to data sourcing proved very</p>

Programmatic risk	Mitigation strategy at inception stage	Status at time of report writing
	<p>help facilitate data access at regional and country level. We will also be informed by our recent work on the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) Policy Evaluation.</p>	<p>helpful and the team faced no major issues in access to data, with the exception of data on the nature of International Financial Institution (IFI) grants, which was not provided to the team.</p>
<p>Limitations on country-level primary data collection: There is a risk of limitations to gathering the perspectives of the various national stakeholders because of an absence of country-level primary data collection.</p>	<p>The availability of secondary data from Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs), audits, consolidated financial and performance monitoring data, and other sources is acknowledged. Country perspectives will be emphasized in a survey designed to reach key country WFP management. Furthermore, key person interviews, selected country interviews and the regional bureaux visits will be designed to ensure capture of country feedback.</p>	<p>CO engagement was good with participation by a substantial number of Country Directors, Deputy Country Directors and Heads of Programme in interviews. Survey response rate was sufficient to allow the evaluation report to reflect CO perspectives.</p>
<p>Unexpected shocks, such as sudden conflict or natural disasters: Participation of individuals may be affected at short notice by unanticipated developments.</p>	<p>Events such as conflict or major natural disasters can have implications for availability of stakeholders and/or travel. We will mitigate this by engaging multiple regions and countries, and different methodological ways of drawing on the perspectives of stakeholders. Where planned travel is impeded, we will adopt remote means of consultation.</p>	<p>There were no major shocks over the period, and therefore no effect on the evaluation process. The Evaluation Team worked with OEV to design a compact and less resource-heavy process for RBC in light of the heavy workload this region faces due to the Gaza crisis and other emergencies.</p>

Programmatic risk	Mitigation strategy at inception stage	Status at time of report writing
<p>Stakeholder availability: There may be a lack of timely access to relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>This was achieved through EM liaison as part of stakeholder mapping. We would look to OEV to provide support in reaching out to key global, regional and country stakeholders (where relevant, internally and externally). OEV's support to secure meetings with the more senior managers and officials will, as through inception phase, be critical. We will work with OEV and designated RBx focal points to plan ahead for RBx/CO consultation exercises. The spread of data collection across a number of months should help mitigate this stakeholder access risk.</p>	<p>Some challenges in reaching stakeholders and in engagement with Headquarters senior management, and initial delays in responses from some external stakeholders. However, the timeline could accommodate these delays. OEV support and engagement ensured that most targeted stakeholders could be interviewed.</p>
<p>Global inflation/price changes: There is a risk that increasing costs or changed scope, impact, travel budget, or other expenses.</p>	<p>Within reason, Mokoro would expect to manage this risk within the budget. However, if there were a marked change in prices or scope, we would discuss this and the implications with WFP.</p>	<p>This risk did not materialize during the evaluation period.</p>

Annex IV. Evaluation matrix

Table 8: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
EQ1. Strength and relevance of the design: How well has the vision and design of the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan (SP) supported WFP to achieve its ambitions over the period?		
1.1. To what extent and in what ways has the SP vision and purpose remained relevant to the evolving context, and responsive to changing beneficiary needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which vision and purpose as articulated in current SP reflects conditions and context in 2024 • WFP staff views on the SP vision and goals in relation to the existing context at the time of design • WFP staff views on the relevance of the SP vision and goals in relation to the evolving context and its focus on the needs of beneficiaries • Extent to which the SP was realistic and represented a sufficient and manageable level of ambition • Extent to which vision and purpose address key cross-cutting priorities, such as gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headquarters and regional bureaux interviews • Focus group discussions (FGD) with Country Director (CD) • Textual analysis of the SP in relation to current contextual dynamics

³⁸⁴ The evaluation questions in this Mid-Term Evaluation Report were subsequently adapted and do not necessarily follow the order established in the IR Evaluation Matrix.

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
1.2. To what extent and in what ways do the vision and purpose of WFP as stated in the SP provide guidance to the organization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the SP vision and purpose are reflected in Country Strategic Plans (CSPs) • Perceptions of the extent to which SP vision and purpose have supported CSP design processes • Extent to which SP aims and priorities are reflected in the current WFP policy architecture • Extent to which the SP has supported organizational branding and enabled the organization to present a clear agenda and voice to external partners • Extent to which SP vision and purpose provide clear directions on cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender equality, inclusion, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headquarters and regional bureaux interviews • FGDs with CD • Analysis of CSPs designed and approved under the SP period • Analysis of WFP policy documents/policy evaluations
1.3. To what extent and in what ways is the SP aligned to support WFP in the delivery of the wider normative environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the SP is aligned to support Agenda 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations Reform, Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), the Agenda for Humanity and the outcomes of World Humanitarian Summit, the Grand Bargain, the Committee on World Food Security, the Food Systems Summit, and other normative commitments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation review • Selected interviews
EQ2. Organizational readiness: How and to what extent has WFP established an enabling environment (systems, structures, resourcing) to support SP implementation?		

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
<p>2.1. To what extent and in what ways does WFP policy architecture support the implementation of the SP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which WFP policy architecture is perceived as helping clarify WFP's priority setting and integrated programming • Evidence that policy and programme cycle management enables the development of useful direction and guidance in ways that reinforce implementation of the SP • Evidence that the policy architecture is supporting attention to gender and other cross-cutting priorities and enablers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Readiness (OR) roundtables during regional bureaux visits • FGDs with a selection of CD • Analysis of CSPs designed and approved under the SP period • Content analysis of WFP policies, policy evaluations and process management records • Analytical Paper on programme integration
<p>2.2. To what extent and in what ways has WFP put the right people in the right places to deliver the SP and supported the mindset change that is needed to implement the SP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution in WFP staffing profiles and recruitment practices in line with SP ambitions • Extent to which WFP staff skills/competencies across different levels and parts of the organization are aligned to profiles needed to achieve SP strategic outcomes and mainstreaming cross-cutting priorities • Extent to which WFP has adequate ways of managing staff performance and improving performance • Extent of organizational culture/mindset shift in line with the broader Changing Lives agenda and the key features of the SP • Evidence of institutional support systems to enhance mindset shift – e.g. training, opportunities for staff development, internal Country Office (CO) management, ways of working between different strategic outcomes (SOs), etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Papers (all three) and associated consultations • Updated analysis of staffing patterns and findings from the Country Strategic Plan Policy Evaluation (CSP PE) • OR roundtables during regional bureaux visits • CO staff survey on enablers

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
2.3. To what extent and in what ways has WFP funding, (availability and systems) enabled implementation of the SP?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of funding for the range of SP priorities (including cross-cutting priorities) • Extent to which there have been changes in the predictability, duration and flexibility of funding secured • Evidence of changes in resource mobilization approaches to better support SP implementation (including innovative financing, international financial institution (IFI) partnerships, and private sector fundraising) • Extent to which the funding structure has enabled or hindered WFP ability to achieve the SP objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated analysis of funding patterns and systems from the CSP PE • Analytical Paper on innovation and associated consultations • Relevant evaluations – in particular, the CSP Policy Evaluation and the Strategic Evaluation on Funding as a baseline to compare against • CO staff survey on enablers • FGDs with CD • OR roundtables during regional bureaux visits
2.4. To what extent and in what ways does WFP optimize use of available evidence to deliver the SP, including through the Corporate Results Framework (CRF)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of WFP evidence-generation systems, including the CRF in support of decision making at different levels (CO, regional bureaux, Headquarters) • Alignment between the CRF and the SP • Adequacy of funding/resources dedicated to evidence generation, analysis and learning (e.g. CRF implementation) • Extent to which WFP systems allow for progress to be measured in a coherent way across programmes • Evidence of CSP learning feeding into corporate decision making • Views of external stakeholders on WFP’s role in evidence generation and its use of evidence to inform programming – in particular, on the Changing Lives agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Papers – all three • Updated analysis of findings from the CSP PE • CO staff survey on enablers • OR roundtables during regional bureaux visits • External key informant interviews (KII), including with academia • CRF analysis • Headquarters and regional bureaux interviews • FGDs with CD

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
2.5. To what extent and in what ways do WFP systems and structures enable operational agility?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which CRF/CSP/ Country Portfolio Budget design and implementation guidance enable flexibility to quickly adapt to changing circumstances Degree to which human resources, supply chain, and Emergency Preparedness and Response systems are effective in supporting SP aims around rapid emergency response Evidence on the efficiency and effectiveness of advance financing and strategic resource allocation mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical Papers – all three Analysis of evidence from recent Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs), especially on the inclusion of ‘dormant’ outcomes for emergency response, and internal audit reporting Updated analysis of findings from the CSP PE CO staff survey on enablers FGDs with CD OR roundtables during regional bureaux visits
2.6. To what extent and in what ways do the organizational readiness dimensions (from 2.1 to 2.5) combine to create the necessary enabling environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which evaluations report changes in key dimensions of organizational readiness Overall perception of whether different dimensions of WFP’s organizational setup are mutually supportive of SP implementation at different levels of the organization Perception on key internal and external bottlenecks to organizational readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of a subset of CSPEs Analysis of relevant internal audit reports OR roundtables during regional bureaux visits CO staff survey on enablers FGDs with CD Headquarters round table
EQ3. Coherence and complementarity: To what extent has the SP enabled WFP to work more coherently and in complementarity with others?		
3.1. To what extent and in what ways has the SP enabled WFP to strategically pursue partnerships that allow it to deliver against its goals and comparative advantage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which WFP has pursued and formed agreements with new and different partnerships in line with the SP envisioned shift (including partnerships around cross-cutting priorities) Extent of alignment of global and regional partnerships with SP goals, CSP priorities, and comparative advantages External stakeholder views on WFP’s comparative advantage and positioning, and scope for organizational evolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical Paper on Strategic Positioning Regional bureaux consultations Analysis of recently completed CSPEs Updated analysis from the CSP PE FGDs with CD External interviews with key United Nations partners – FAO, UNHCR and UNICEF

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
3.2. To what extent and in what ways has the SP enhanced opportunities to leverage innovation and technology with partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which WFP capabilities and cultural attributes have (or have not) evolved to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Operational efficiency ○ Knowledge management (development, diffusion, use) ○ Adoption of new approaches (to WFP) that enhance programme quality, efficiency ○ Innovative practices/partnerships for financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical paper on Innovation • Regional bureaux consultations • Analysis of recently completed CSPEs and other relevant evaluations – e.g. Use of technology in constrained environments • Updated analysis from the CSP PE • FGDs with CD
3.3. To what extent and in what ways has WFP strategically and operationally engaged in the United Nations development systems reform agenda?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of the degree to which the SP allows and supports positioning vertically within United Nations Reform to achieve the SDGs to tackle hunger while retaining WFP's comparative advantage • Extent to which the SP has been conducive to WFP's advocacy, voice, reach and reputation, and has furthered common action on SDGs and topics of global concern • Evidence of WFP engagement in key United Nations systems reform at global (e.g. key United Nations Secretary-General fora), regional and country level (e.g. engagement in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework processes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional bureaux consultations • Headquarters consultations • Analysis of documentary evidence – e.g. Executive Board minutes, partnerships analysis • Analysis of recently completed CSPEs • Updated analysis from the CSP PE • FGDs with CD

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
EQ4. Country implementation and delivery: To what extent has SP implementation supported country offices to adapt to country priorities and plan for the future?		
4.1. To what extent and in what ways has the SP supported WFP to adapt its strategic positioning according to context, needs and WFP identified comparative advantage at country level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of the degree to which the SP allows and supports positioning horizontally across national governments and partners to tackle hunger while retaining WFP's comparative advantage Extent to which the strategic shifts identified in the SP are reflected in CSPs Extent to which the SP enables CSP design and alignment with SDGs in ways that allow WFP to tailor its programme offering to the context and needs Extent to which elements of key policies (i.e. gender, disability inclusion, etc.) are reflected in CSPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical Paper on Strategic Positioning Analysis of CSPs drafted under the evaluation period, updating from the analysis done for the CSP PE FGDs with CD Regional bureaux consultations
4.2. To what extent and in what ways has the SP enabled WFP to engage more in systems, capacity strengthening, and policy strengthening, where appropriate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which stakeholders feel that the reformulation of SO4 encourages/supports or hinders engagement in related areas of work Degree to which CSPs fully aligned with SP have a greater focus on national systems, capacity strengthening and policy influence Extent to which systems/capacity/policy strengthening work has been rolled out at country level and covers priority areas Extent to which WFP is able to capture progress and results of its work in systems/capacity/policy strengthening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical Paper on Strategic Positioning Analysis of selected CSPs Analysis of selected CSPEs FGDs with CD Regional bureaux consultations

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
<p>4.3. How timely and fit for purpose has SP implementation been in light of the specific priorities in different country contexts including in light of beneficiary needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which COs feel the strategic shifts embodied by the SP are timely and relevant to their operating context • Evidence that changes initiated under SP implementation workstreams have been timely and helpful to COs as they try to operationalize the SP through their CSP and programmes • Evidence of SP's timeliness and fitness for purpose in view of global challenges, including rapid globalization, climate change, and increased conflict • Evidence of SP's timeliness and fitness for purpose in light of evolving beneficiary needs • Extent to which the SP has supported WFP in meeting its commitments towards greater localization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO staff survey • Regional bureaux consultations • Analysis of recently completed CSPEs • Analysis of SP implementation workstream records
<p>EQ5: Results: To what extent is WFP on track towards achieving high-level targets set by the SP?</p>		
<p>5.1. To what extent are the high-level targets set out in the SP realistic in the current context and in light of progress towards results (see EQ 5.2)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of context (reality) compared to the context analysis that was completed at the start of the SP • Comparison of achievements against SP targets • Analysis of adequacy of (high-level targets) HLTs against SP aspirations and evolving context • Degree of achievement on cross-cutting priorities (including gender transformation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs with CO • Regional bureaux consultations • External interviews

Evaluation sub-questions ³⁸⁴	Main lines of investigation	Data collection/data sources
5.2. To what extent and in what ways is progress towards results on track to achieve the SP ambitions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of WFP managers on the likelihood of achieving targets and whether they were realistic and meaningful • Evidence of any substantial changes in performance against core indicators which are common between CRF 2017–21 and CRF 2022–2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of performance data on stable (between CRFs) core indicators • Analysis of results reported in CSPE completed under the SP implementation period • Roundtables on results during regional bureaux visits
5.3. What has enabled or hindered progress towards results for the SP, taking into account challenges and constraints in the external environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of other enabling or hindering factors not covered under the SP enablers and OR elements • Extent to which changes in the external environment were or were not foreseen in SP context analysis, and the degree to which SP remains an effective instrument in light of these changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will draw on evidence collected against all of the questions above

Annex V. Data collection tools

Country Offices' survey instrument

Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP's Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Statistical questions

Which WFP regional bureau does your Country Office belong to?

Please select from the options below.

*

- RB Bangkok (RBB)
- RB Cairo (RBC)
- RB Dakar (RBD)
- RB Johannesburg (RBJ)
- RB Nairobi (RBN)
- RB Panama (RBP)

What is your role in the Country Office?

Please select from the options below. It is possible to select more than one option. *

- Country Director
- Deputy Country Director
- Head of Programme
- Head of Administration and Finance
- Head of Supply Chain
- Responsible for Partnerships
- Other - Write In

How many years have you been working at WFP? *

- Less than a year
- 1 – 2 years
- 3 – 4 years
- 5 – 10 years
- 10+ years

Please, indicate your sex for statistical purposes.

Select 'other' if you do not identify with the proposed options or you would rather not say.

- Female
- Male
- Other

Questions on country implementation and strategic positioning

1. Please rank on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree the following statements in relation to the Strategic Plan. *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
From my perspective in the Country Office, the current SP represents a significant shift compared to its predecessor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think strategy set forth in the SP is the right one	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, the SP has been a useful document in the formulation of the CSP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The SP has clearly guided the identification of priorities for my CSP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I am satisfied that my Country Office is where it needs to be in order to achieve CSP objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?

Please, rank from no shift to significant shift. *

	No shift	Moderate shift	Significant shift	Do not know
Enabling CSPs to be more context specific	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhancing WFP's CO strategic positioning vis-à-vis national governments and partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating WFP's comparative advantages and positioning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhancing WFP capacity to work across the humanitarian-development nexus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Allowing WFP's to better engage in national capacity strengthening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positioning WFP mandate and expertise within global UN Reform and coordination efforts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enter another option	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. We would like to understand why you do not feel the SP has brought about a meaningful shift compared to the previous one (question 2).

Please rank these statements on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The Country Office was already working in this direction and the 'shifts' in the SP simply recognised a change that was already underway	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The SP has fallen short of the shift needed to match ambitions at the country level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The shifts proposed in the SP have not been matched by institutional efforts (e.g., tools, strategies, systems) to change/support implementation at country level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The dual changing lives – saving lives agenda has created an unnecessary bifurcation in framing of the priorities and has impacted WFP thinking and action	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic Plan implementation is being rolled out at a slow pace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enter another option	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Building on question 2, what do you think is the area where the SP has brought about the most significant shift and what are the reasons that explain it?

Questions on enabling environment

5. For each of the following areas, to what extent has WFP provided an enabling environment that effectively supports implementation of the Strategic Plan since 2022?

Please rank the following areas on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree.

*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
Policy and guidance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human resources/staffing (skill sets and retention)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding (diversification and flexibility)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Budget and finance systems / architecture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advance financing mechanisms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support to learning and evidence generation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support from regional bureaux	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question on programme integration

6. In order for the Evaluation to gain insights into how WFP is operationalizing the Strategic Plan's (SP) principle of integration, please rank on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree the following statements.

*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The introduction of the new SP has enabled progress in integrated programme design across CSP strategic objectives (better than before SP was launched in 2022)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The introduction of the SP and related systems (e.g. CRF, line of sight) enabled progress in integrated programme implementation across CSP objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The introduction of the SP has enabled synergies across WFP activities and modalities to maximise WFP's contribution at country level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The SP has enabled better integration of the cross-cutting priorities in programme design and implementation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compared to the period before the current Strategic Plan, the Country Office is able to work more effectively across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. In your experience, in what ways, has the **SP 2022-2025 facilitated the design and implementation of sequenced, layered and integrated humanitarian and development programming?**

Questions on innovation

8. **To what extent has WFP developed its capability and culture for operational innovations during the Strategic Plan period in the following areas?**

Please rank the following areas on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree.

*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know
Operational delivery and efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New ways of knowledge management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adoption of new approaches (to WFP) that enhance programme quality and efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New approaches to financing, including partnerships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, WFP provides a supportive environment to foster innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Innovations requires a range of building blocks. On a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, which of the following elements do you consider are currently in place in WFP?

*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know
Funding for pilots and experimentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaboration between different organizational units and levels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership open to risks and change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive programme management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incentives for exploring new ways of doing things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A culture of inquiry and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="Enter another option"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Please briefly describe any new ideas, approaches or technologies that have or are likely to drive innovation and that you think this evaluation could usefully look into.

Questions on the CRF

11. Please rank on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree the following statements related to your perceptions of the CRF.

*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know
The CRF indicators are useful to my CO for decision making and results-based management during CSP implementation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The current CRF 2022-2025 has improved WFP's ability to demonstrate results across the saving lives and changing lives agendas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Views on CSP implementation

12. What have been the biggest challenges in implementing the CSP since the SP came into effect?

13. What has been most helpful in implementing the CSP since the SP came into effect?

Semi-structured key informant interview guides

Table 9: WFP Headquarters interview guide

Interviews with WFP Headquarters	EQ ³⁸⁵
<i>Emphasize confidentiality of interviews and provide an overview of the evaluation purpose. Check relevance of each question according to interviewee's role</i>	
<p>1. Do you think the SP design phase was adequately participatory and inclusive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent and in what ways were visions or perspectives of your department/division taken into account in the design? What specific role did your department/division play in the process? 	1.1
<p>2. To what extent has the SP supported the organization in presenting a clear agenda of priorities to external stakeholders in your domain of work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In your view does the SP adequately convey WFP's comparative advantages in a wider context? (Includes probing to what extent the SP provides clear guidance and direction on cross-cutting issues.) Has the SP improved visibility, articulation and understanding of WFP's multifaceted mandate? 	1.2
<p>3. In your view to what extent and in what ways do the ambitions of the SP remain realistic?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the conditions and context in 2024 (two years after its approval), and The likely evolution of this context? [Question for select Headquarters people only] In what ways might some of the major recent developments such as funding decline, internal restructure, and the emergency in Gaza impact the remainder of this SP and/or the next? 	1.1
<p>4. From your perspective, to what extent and how has the SP helped CO planning and implementation in the past two years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what ways has the SP allowed for clearer prioritization, alignment (and partnerships), and stronger delivery? Where are the key gaps? Any examples of countries that have faced special challenges or which have been particularly successful? 	2.1, 3.1
<p>5. Are you confident that the SP is on track to deliver results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the SP HLT targets realistic and do they remain achievable? Please explain (<i>probe sources and possible internal analysis that we may not be aware of</i>). What in your view are the factors that are and will enable or hinder SP results achievement? 	5

³⁸⁵ The evaluation questions in this MTE Report were subsequently adapted and do not necessarily follow the order established in the IR Evaluation Matrix

Interviews with WFP Headquarters	EQ ³⁸⁵
<p>6. To what extent and how has WFP's policy architecture supported the implementation of the SP, in particular, with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority setting, integrated programming, and attention to cross-cutting priorities? • Are there obvious gaps or issues in the conduciveness of the policy environment that need addressing? 	1.2, 2.1, 4.1
<p>7. Comparing the scenario before and after the introduction of the SP, have you seen any visible improvements in regard to mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues (i.e. gender, protection, disability, AAP, environment, nutrition integration)?</p>	2.1, 5.1
<p>8. From your perspective are staffing profiles aligned with the capacities and skills needed for SP implementation (probe different levels as relevant)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there specific gaps you feel have not been addressed? • Has the organization supported staff in the mindset change that was implicit in the SP priorities? 	2.2
<p>9. From your perspective to what extent and in what ways have the funding patterns, systems and sources evolved to support the implementation of the SP?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there specific gaps or bottlenecks that you feel have not been addressed? 	2.3
<p>10. In your domain of work, does WFP have adequate systems for learning, measuring progress and reporting on results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these systems used to inform decision making and to inform external stakeholders? • Have there been key improvements in the last two years? • What are the gaps? 	4.2
<p>11. To what extent and in what areas has the shift to the SP been conducive to better/stronger programme integration?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what areas, and in what ways? • Where do you see programme integration as being most critical? 	2.1
<p>12. To what extent in your domain of work has the SP been conducive to stronger strategic positioning vis-à-vis partners externally (and towards the United Nations specifically)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there specific types of partnerships that emerged out of/were enhanced through the SP vision and priorities? Please provide examples. 	3.1, 3.3
<p>13. Have WFP's capacities and cultural attributes evolved over the past two years to encourage innovation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have specific examples of innovative practices (whether in programme delivery, funding or technology, for example) that you would like to cite? 	3.2

Interviews with WFP Headquarters		EQ ³⁸⁵
14. Overall, has the organization provided an adequate enabling environment for SP implementation ? What may be missing?		2, 5,2
15. Looking forward , do you think the SP will need (drastic) updating? For the remainder of the SP term or for the next SP? In what ways?		4.3
16. Do you have any other comments or suggestions you would like to make including on recommendations to improve SP implementation that you would like to see coming out of the SP MTE?		

Table 10: Regional bureaux interview guide

Interviews with regional bureaux	
1. To what extent and how has the SP helped in planning and prioritizing ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the SP present the right priorities? Does the SP adequately tailor to the issues in your context? Has the SP allowed for clearer prioritization? Are there obvious gaps or issues that the SP does not address/did not take into account? 	
2. In terms of performance, how confident are you that your region is on track to deliver results against the SP priorities ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the SP HLT targets achievable? Do they remain realistic? What factors enable or hinder SP results achievement? 	
3. To what extent do WFP's policies support delivery against SP objectives ? Are there obvious gaps or issues in the conduciveness of the policy environment that need addressing?	
4. Comparing the scenario before and after the introduction of the SP have you seen any visible improvements in regard to mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues (i.e. gender, protection, disability, AAP, environment, nutrition integration)?	
5. From your perspective are staffing profiles aligned with the capacities and skills needed for the implementation of SP priorities ? (Probe different levels as relevant) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What efforts have been made to align staffing profiles and capacities? How successful have these been? Are there specific gaps you feel have not been addressed? 	
6. From your perspective to what extent and in what ways have the funding patterns and resources evolved to support the implementation of the SP? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there specific gaps or bottlenecks that you feel have not been addressed? 	

Interviews with regional bureaux

7. In your domain of work, does WFP have adequate **systems for learning, measuring progress and reporting on results**?
 - Are these systems used to inform decision making and to inform external stakeholders? Can you provide examples?
 - Have there been key improvements in learning and progress management in the last two years? What are the gaps?
8. To what extent and in what areas has the shift to the **SP been conducive to better/stronger programme integration**?
 - In what areas, and in what ways? (Please provide examples)
 - Where do you see programme integration as being most critical?
9. To what extent has the SP been conducive to stronger **strategic positioning vis-à-vis partners externally** (and towards the United Nations specifically)?
 - What is WFP's comparative advantage in this region? Is WFP occupying a unique niche area?
 - Has the SP helped in terms of better projecting WFP's priorities to external stakeholders?
 - Has the SP improved strategic positioning?
 - Are there specific types of partnerships that emerged out of/were enhanced through the SP vision and priorities? Which ones? Please provide examples.
10. Have WFP's capacities and cultural attributes evolved over the past two years to **encourage innovation**?
 - Do you have specific examples of innovative practices (whether in programme delivery, funding or technology, for example) that you would like to cite?
11. Overall, has the organization provided an adequate **enabling environment for SP implementation**? What may be missing or what would you prioritize for the remaining SP period?
12. **Looking forward**, do you think the SP will need (drastic) updating? For the remainder of the SP term or for the next SP? In what ways?
13. Do you have **any other comments or suggestions you would like to make**, including on recommendations to improve SP implementation that you would like to see coming out of the SP MTE?

Table 11: United Nations Resident Coordinator interview guide

Interviews with United Nations Resident Coordinators
1. Overview of overall in country context – distinctive features, role of the United Nations?
2. Overall United Nations planning processes at country level – key efforts in the past two years, what has worked, what has gone less well?
3. How in practice are agencies determining their positioning?
4. Views on WFP engagement and positioning at the country level?
5. Views on comparative advantage in the wider external environment?
6. Views on WFP's strategic plan (if familiar with it)?
7. Views on WFP's efforts at collaboration with partners?
8. Particular views on relationship to government, international financial institutions, cooperating partners, role with private sector?
9. Any suggestions/implications for the next SP?

Table 12: Executive Board consultations guide

Executive Board consultations
1. The role, and utility in practice of this Strategic Plan whether at Headquarters, regional bureaux or Country Office level.
2. The most salient features/changes introduced through this Strategic Plan, including any important areas of particular emphasis or concern.
3. Threats and opportunities to achieving the Strategic Plan ambitions within the current context and likely evolution of the context moving forward.
4. Any other observations that Board members might wish to make (if time permits).

Table 13: External stakeholders interview guide

External stakeholders interview guide
1. Please explain your role and your relationship to WFP.
2. What have been the main areas of engagement with WFP?
3. Are there areas of collaboration with WFP that do not involve funding? (e.g. in advocacy or other spheres)
4. How do you make explicit your expectations of WFP's performance and how do you monitor

External stakeholders interview guide

this?

5. How satisfied are you overall with the results of the collaboration?

6. How satisfied are you with WFP's results reporting to your organization? What might be improved?

7. What do you see as the main strengths of WFP's work? Does WFP have specific comparative advantages (including in relation to other United Nations organizations or other partners)?

8. Are there any particular weaknesses or challenges that you have observed in WFP's delivery or in the relationship overall?

9. Are there things that WFP could do better in its collaboration with your organization, and more broadly with its external partners?

10. Are you aware of WFP's Strategic Plan 2022-2025, and do you have any particular views on the document? Do you have any suggestion of priorities for WFP as an organization under its next Strategic Plan?

11. Any other comments or suggestions to the Mid-Term Evaluation?

Guiding questions for Regional bureaux/Country Office roundtables

Programme integration

1. Considering that programme integration is meant to facilitate improved effectiveness and sustainable results, is a clearer operational definition of 'programme integration' necessary, and if so what would be its key features?
2. Could there be trade-offs between programme integration, efficiency, and effectiveness? Could there be cases in which external coherence should be prioritized over programme integration to achieve sustainable results?
3. What good practices and tools have regional bureaux and country offices developed and used to encourage and enhance effective programme integration at design and implementation stages?
4. Could an alternative strategic planning and programming framework that puts problems and demand at the centre, instead of activities (supply), facilitate more coherence and integration?

Strategic positioning

1. To what extent has Strategic Plan (SP) 2022–2025 made a difference to efforts to strategically position WFP in your operating context/country? Please reflect on examples of areas of progress or missed opportunities.
2. To what extent is the SP supporting WFP in aligning its offer with its comparative advantages, and context specific needs, capacities and partner resources?
3. To what extent have new partnerships enabled WFP to strategically position itself in your operating context?
4. In implementing this SP, has WFP adequately invested in the right systems, capacities and support to enable effective strategic positioning?

Innovation

1. SP 2022–2025 has for the first time elevated the role of Innovation by making it one of six 'enablers'. What, if any, impact has the increased emphasis on 'innovation' had at regional bureau/country office level?
2. Can you cite examples of innovative practices or products in the regional bureau/country office that have had, or have potential to have, major impact?
3. To what extent has the regional bureau/country office engaged in new types of partnerships to secure funding, for example, from international financial institutions (IFIs), World Bank, etc.?
4. Does the regional bureau/country office have the skills, cultural attributes and capacities to identify and pursue innovative solutions – programmatic, technological, financial?
5. For the outcomes of innovation to be sustainable, they need to be mainstreamed into national systems. Is this happening through collaboration with national stakeholders and partners?
6. To what extent is the country office engaged in the work of the Innovation Accelerator (directly or through one of its hubs)? Please give examples.

Organizational readiness

1. To what extent has WFP established an enabling environment to support implementation of SP 2022–2025 in terms of:
 - Policy and guidance?

- Appropriate and adequate human resources?
 - Changes in understanding and mindset?
 - Funding systems and availability?
 - Evidence generation, monitoring, analysis and learning?
 - Management decision-making processes?
2. How has the implementation of SP 2022–2025 affected operational agility?
 - In terms of flexibly and quickly adapting to changing operational contexts?
 - In terms of rapid emergency response?
 - In terms of strategic resource allocation and advance financing?
 3. How could headquarters and regional bureaux better support country offices in implementing the SP, including its:
 - Guiding principles?
 - Cross-cutting priorities?
 - Enablers?
 - Work towards the strategic outcomes?

Results

1. How plausible and realistic are the high-level targets included in the Corporate Results Framework (CRF)/SP in light of progress to date and changes in WFP funding?
2. Are certain aspects/ambitions of the SP more or less on track than others in your region?
3. What needs to change to better ensure that WFP is able to reach the goals of the SP?

Annex VI. Country offices' survey

1. This annex outlines the rationale and approach to the WFP country office staff survey, which is a key input to this evaluation.

Purpose of the survey

2. The purpose of the online survey was to complement the other methods of data collection used in the evaluation. In particular, it:

- enabled the evaluation to reach a wider number of informants and countries;
- collected information in a consistent manner, which could be aggregated and quantified where appropriate, and presented in a visually attractive manner in the evaluation report;
- gave staff an opportunity to contribute to the evaluation in a confidential manner; and
- provided insights into perceptions of specific groups of staff, geographic regions, types of countries, and types of country offices, through disaggregation of responses from the survey. This consolidated the evaluation's responsiveness to the specificities of different operating contexts.

Scope

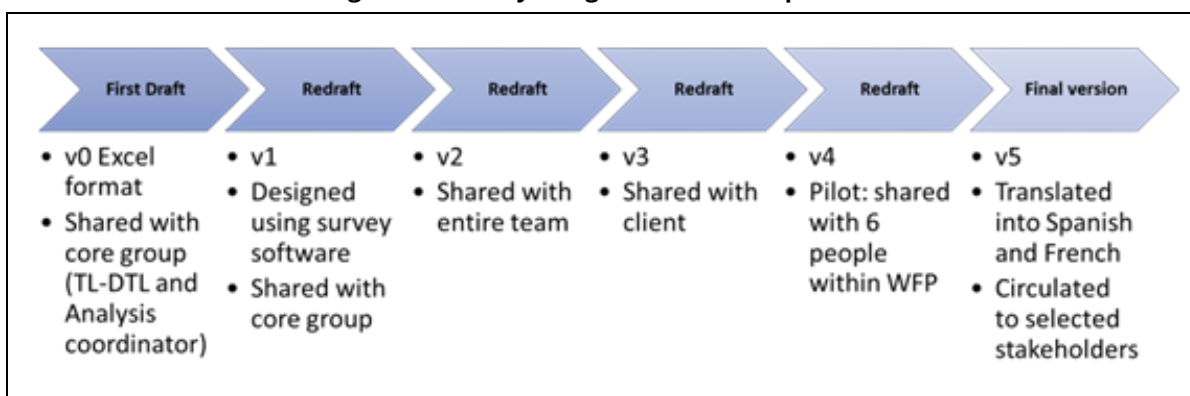
Areas of coverage for the survey were identified during the inception phase, based on priorities arising from the evaluation matrix (EM), and areas where the survey could be of particular use as a source of primary evidence and in order to triangulate other findings.

The survey designed for the Country Strategic Plan Policy Evaluation (CSP PE) in 2023 was also examined to see if there were questions that were relevant to the current evaluation, and which could be repeated, allowing the Evaluation Team to gain an insight into how the experience of and attitudes towards the Strategic Plan (SP) have changed since 2023.

Survey design

The questions for the survey were designed and refined through an iterative process, involving all the team, the Office of Evaluation, and a pilot group. Figure 23 shows a simplified overview of the process, but in reality, the number of iterations was greater.

Figure 23: Survey design – an iterative process



The Office of Evaluation supplied comments and assisted the Evaluation Team further by engaging regional evaluation focal points in reviewing the questions for clarity and focus, and then collated their responses. This process of multiple drafts was extremely helpful in fine-tuning the survey, identifying, and solving technical issues, and improving the relevance of the questions.

Survey structure

In order to encourage a high response rate and increase the quality of responses to individual questions, the survey was short at 12 questions, and designed so that it could be completed in 15 minutes. Questions were targeted to certain groups using skip logic, to help ensure relevant responses, as well as to minimize the time spent. However, open-ended questions provided respondents with the option of spending more time on the survey and providing in-



depth responses if they wished.

All closed questions, such as multiple choice questions, were mandatory, while all open text-based questions were optional. This combination of a short survey with the opportunity for people to elaborate has proved successful in achieving a high response rate and in gaining thoughtful qualitative responses on a limited number of questions. In previous surveys by this team, and where there is a high level of interest in the topic, this has been found to generate valuable additional qualitative insights which can be analysed for predominant themes, and in line with specific areas of inquiry (for example, responses from different types of WFP contexts). This enabled the survey to bring additional insights over and above the information that was collected through key informant interviews (KIIs) and other methods.

Respondents

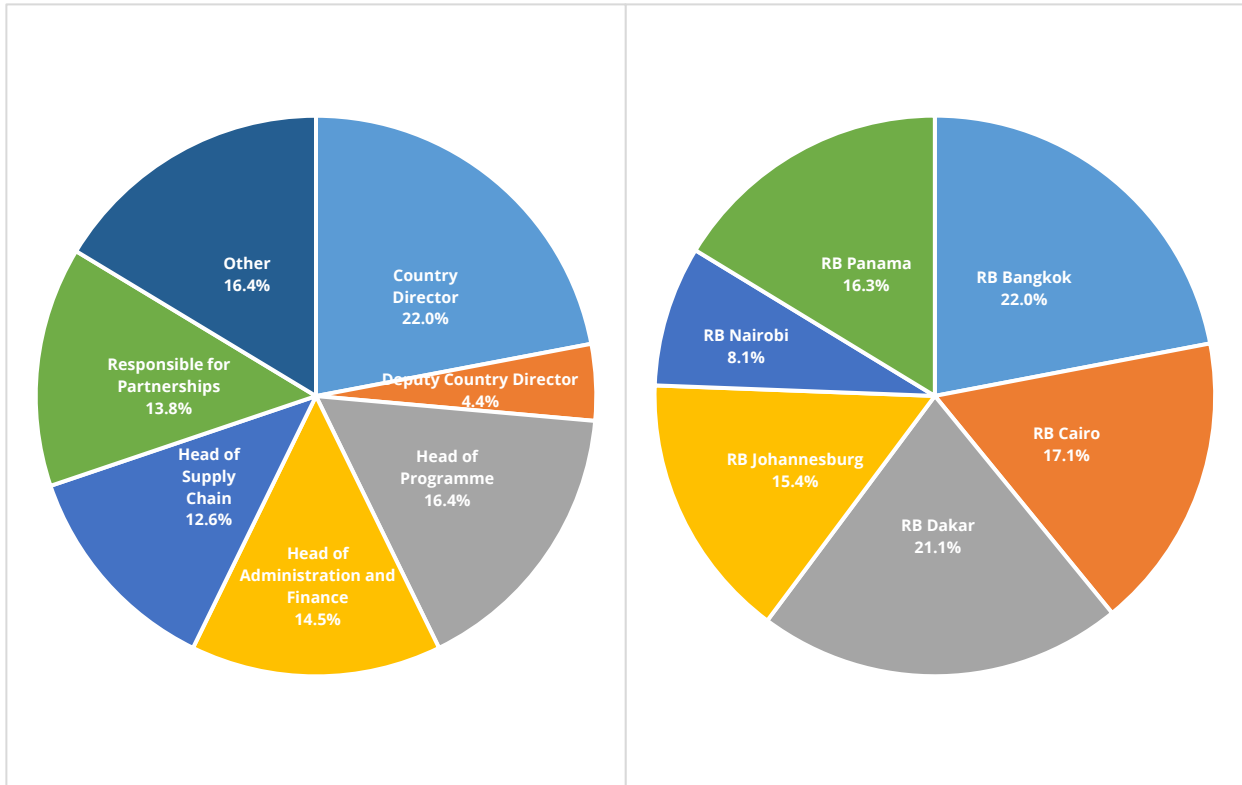
The online survey was targeted at individual relevant WFP staff at the country level. As stated above, the survey is to be answered on an individual level, with confidentiality assured, rather than representing an official view of each Country Office. The focus on the country level is deliberate and partially compensates for the absence of country visits.

To save time and reduce survey fatigue, the survey questions did not go into detail on the background of individual respondents, beyond what is useful to fact-check and to draw respondents into the survey. Details on the list of respondents, including their job title and country, were provided by the client before the survey was launched and fed into our survey software, which allowed for disaggregated analysis where appropriate.

The selection of the sample proceeded as a collaborative effort between the Evaluation Team and the Office of Evaluation. The sample targeted senior staff members in each country office, including all director-level staff, heads of programme, heads of administration and finance, heads of supply chain, and the persons responsible for partnerships. This resulted in a list of 443 contacts agreed between the Office of Evaluation and the Evaluation Team.

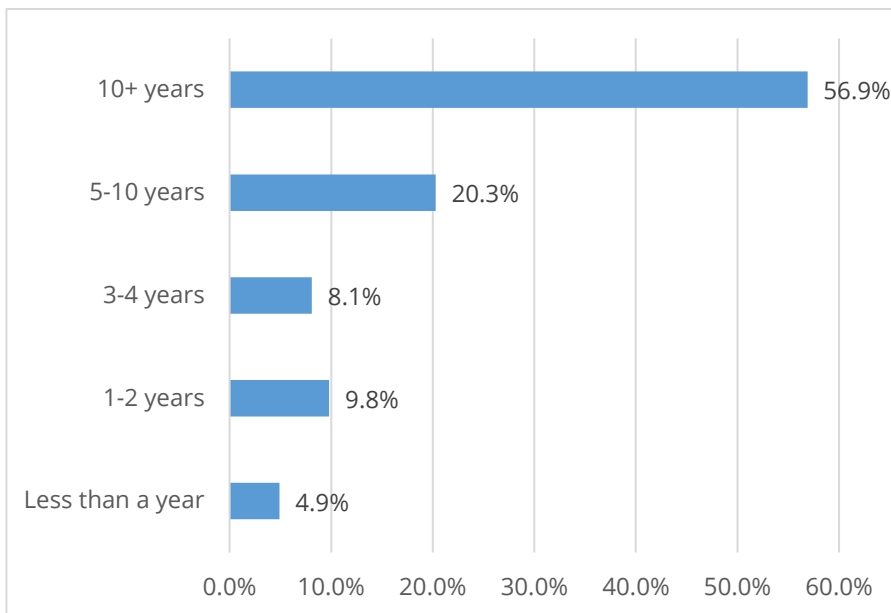
The survey functioned well on a technical level, with no 'bounced' emails. Of the 443 contacts targeted, there were 123 complete responses and eight partial responses, a 29 percent response rate, which is good for a general, strategic survey.

Figure 24: Characteristics of survey respondents



Respondents were based in all six regional bureaux. While more than 30 percent of respondents were director-level staff, there was an even spread of respondents across other staffing categories. Furthermore, more than half of respondents were experienced working for WFP, and almost 80 percent had three years or more experience.

Figure 25: Years spent working for WFP

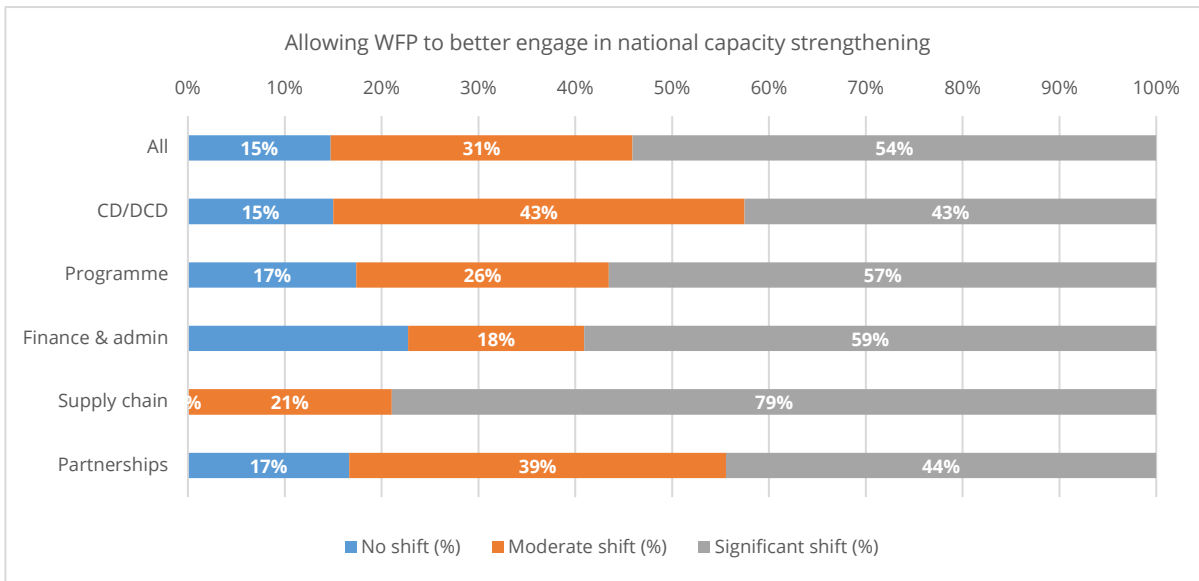


Survey results

Results are given here broadly ordered by Evaluation Question (EQ), though it should be noted that several questions have relevance across EQs. Given limitations on annex size, commentary is only given on select results where further explanation is required.

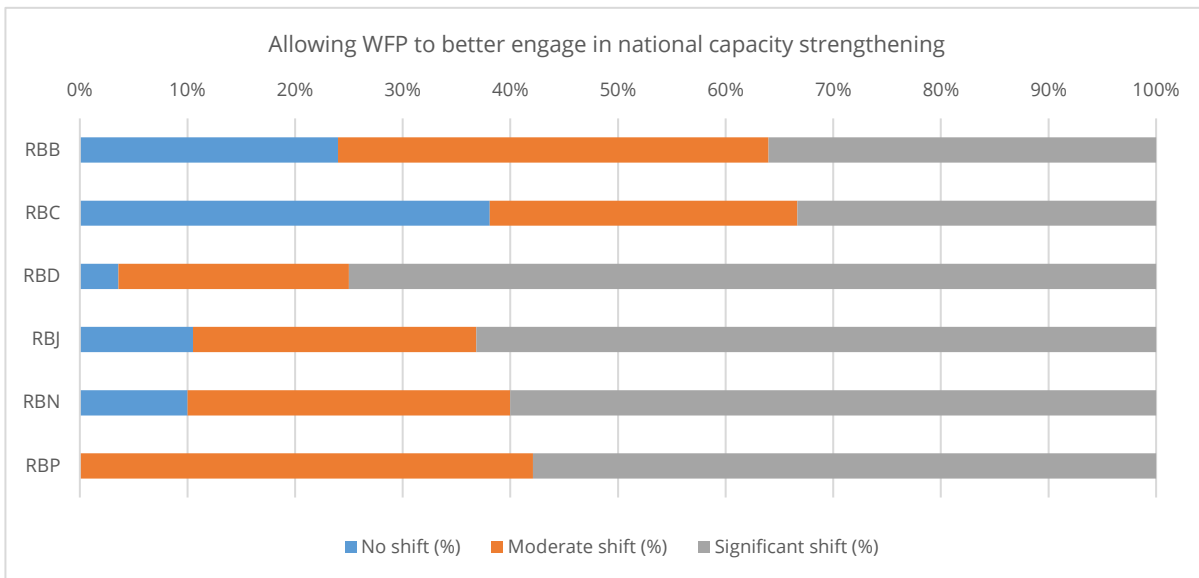
EQ1: Strength and relevance of the design

Figure 26: Better engagement in national capacity strengthening, by role



Source: Survey question: “We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?”; results for option: “Allowing WFP to better engage in national capacity strengthening”; results disaggregated by role

Figure 27: Better engagement in national capacity strengthening, by regional bureau

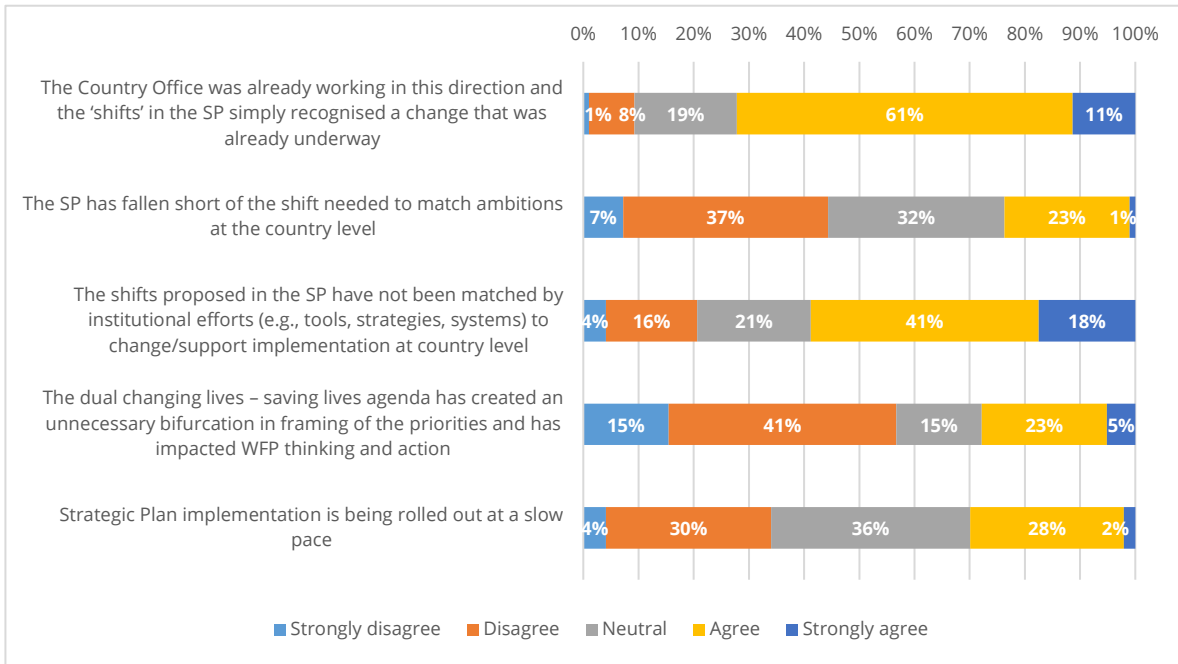


Source: Survey question: “We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?”; results for option: “Allowing WFP to better engage in national capacity strengthening”; results disaggregated by regional bureau

Looking deeper at the changes in practice resulting from the SP implementation, there were notable differences in opinion between roles, regarding WFP’s ability to better engage in national capacity strengthening: Supply Chain staff were the most positive about WFP better engaging in national capacity strengthening, while Finance and Administration staff were least positive.

Looking across the regional bureaux, there are clear differences in opinion regarding WFP’s ability to better engage in national capacity strengthening: RBP and RBD were most positive about a shift, while RBB and RBC were least positive.

Figure 28: Lack of a meaningful shift compared to the previous Strategic Plan

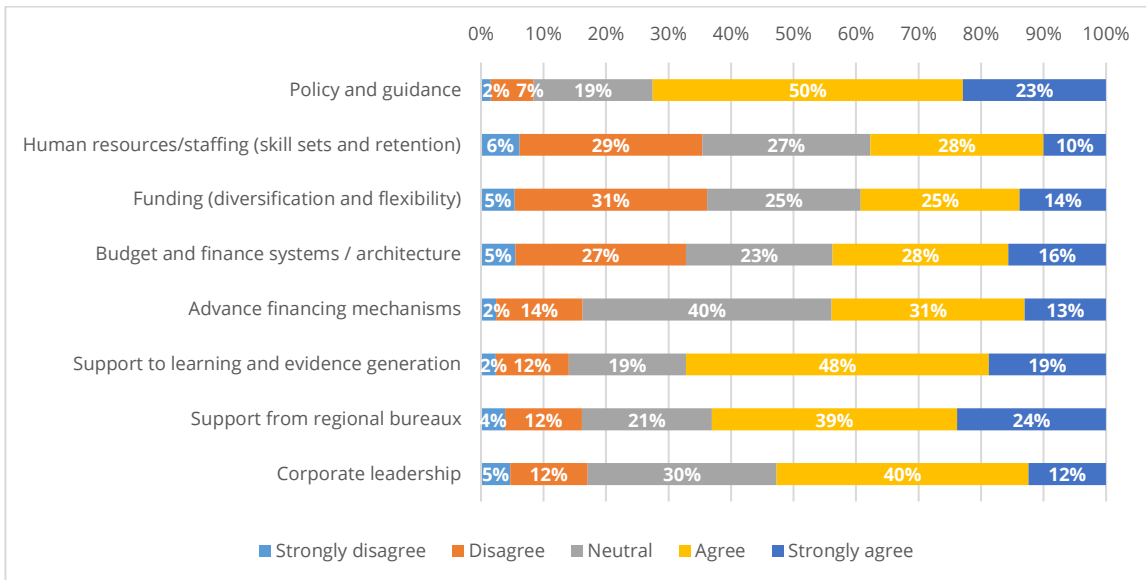


Source: Survey question: “We would like to understand why you do not feel the SP has brought about a meaningful shift compared to the previous one (question 2).”

This question allowed respondents who selected “no shift” in the previous question to express their views as to why this has been the case. As Figure 28 shows, “The country office was already working in this direction and the ‘shifts’ in the SP simply recognized a change that was already under way”, and “The shifts proposed in the SP have not been matched by institutional efforts (e.g. tools, strategies, systems) to change/support implementation at country level”, were seen as the main reasons for a lack of a meaningful shift compared to the previous SP.

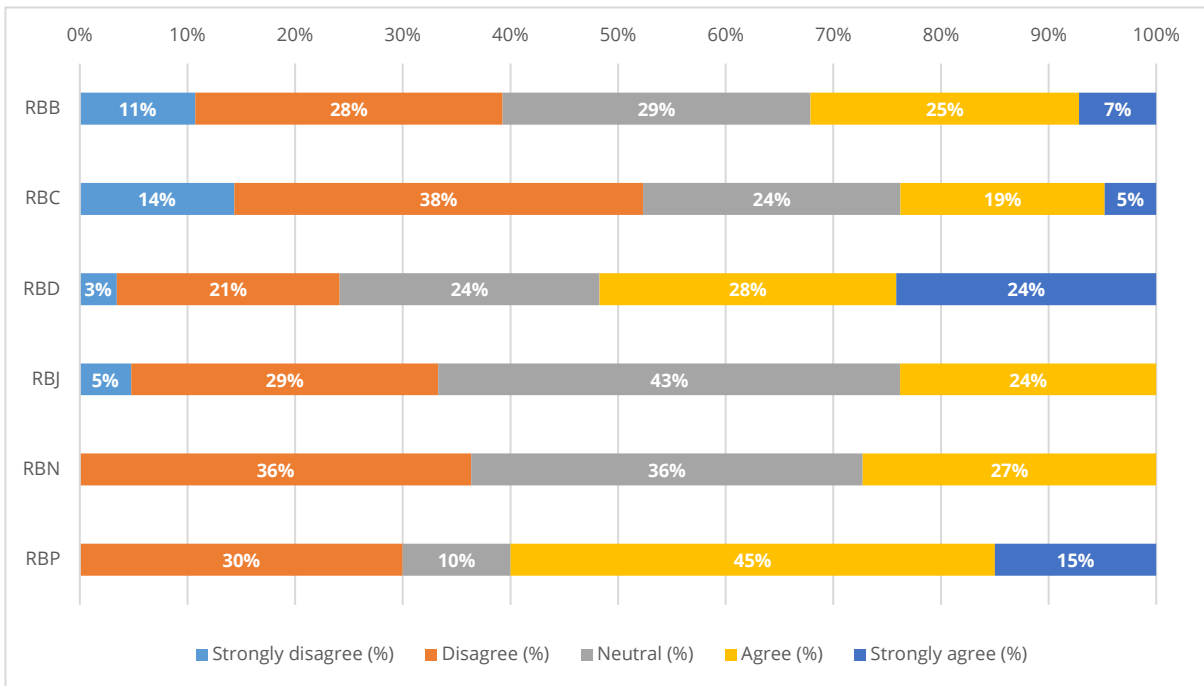
EQ2: Organizational readiness

Figure 29: Enabling environment



Source: Survey question: “For each of the following areas, to what extent has WFP provided an enabling environment that effectively supports implementation of the Strategic Plan since 2022?”

Figure 30: Human resources/staffing

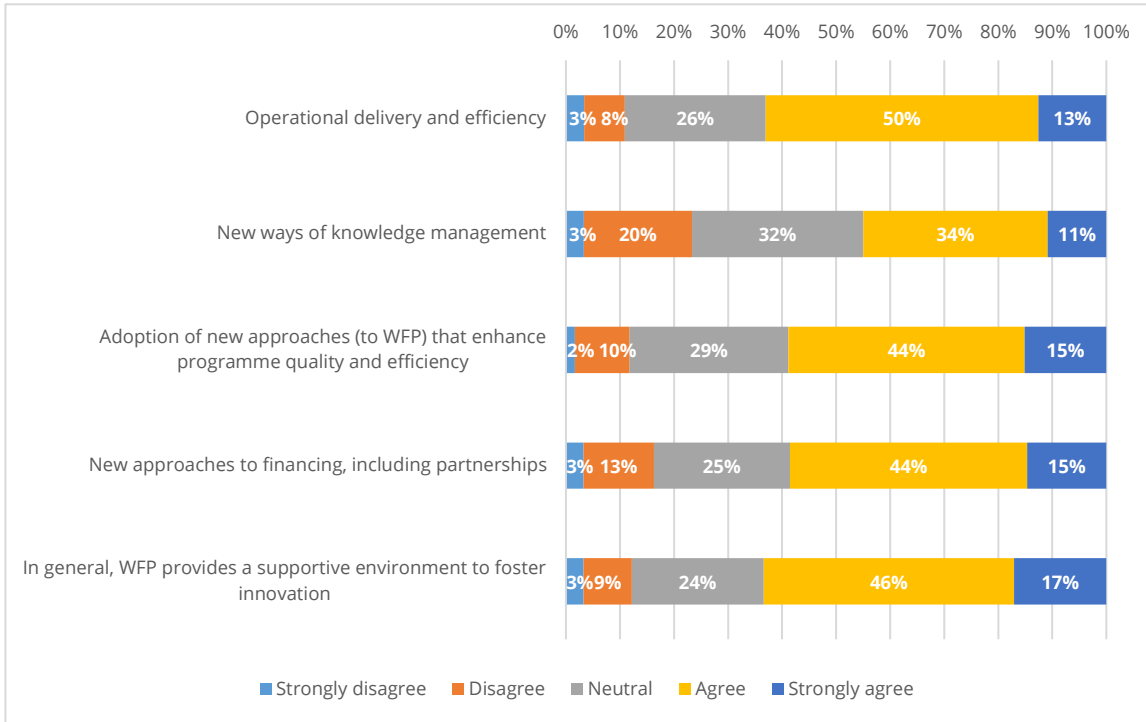


Source: Survey question: “For each of the following areas, to what extent has WFP provided an enabling environment that effectively supports implementation of the Strategic Plan since 2022?”; results for option: “Human resources/staffing (skill sets and retention)”; results disaggregated by RB

Figure 29 shows respondents’ views on the extent to which WFP has provided an enabling environment that effectively supports implementation of the SP. Human resources/staffing, funding, and budget and finance systems/architecture, were the areas that respondents were least positive about.

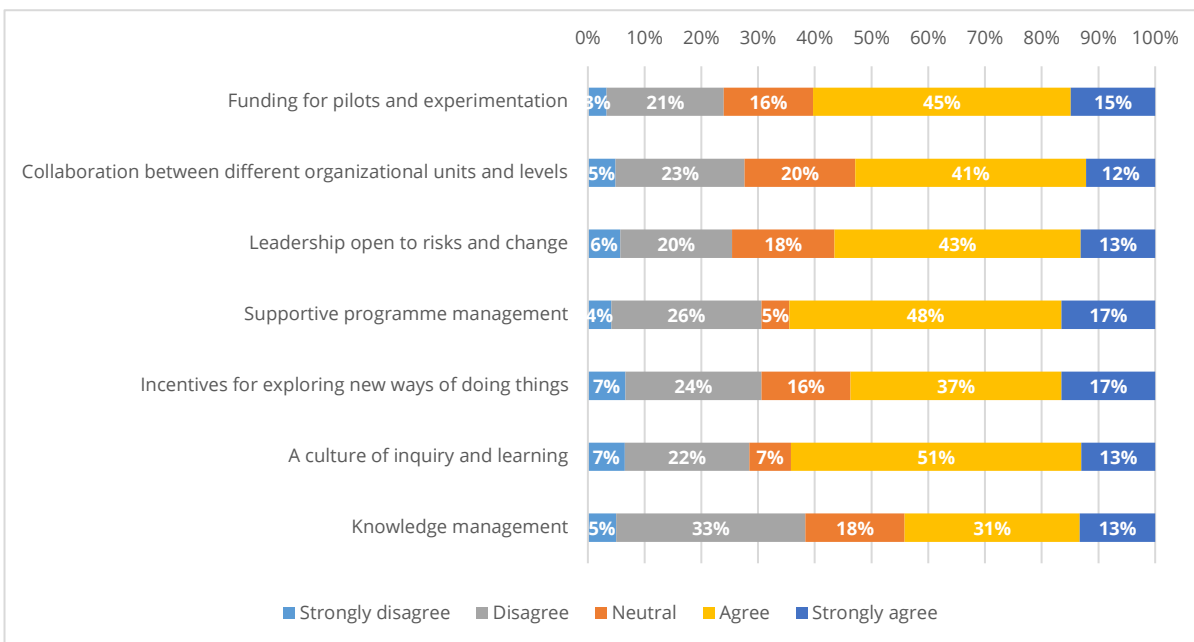
Looking deeper into human resources/staffing, there were notable differences in responses between regional bureaux (Figure 30): Respondents from RBD and RBP were much more positive than respondents from the other regional bureaux.

Figure 31: Capability and culture for operational innovations



Source: Survey question: “To what extent has WFP developed its capability and culture for operational innovations during the Strategic Plan period in the following areas?”

Figure 32: Elements of innovation



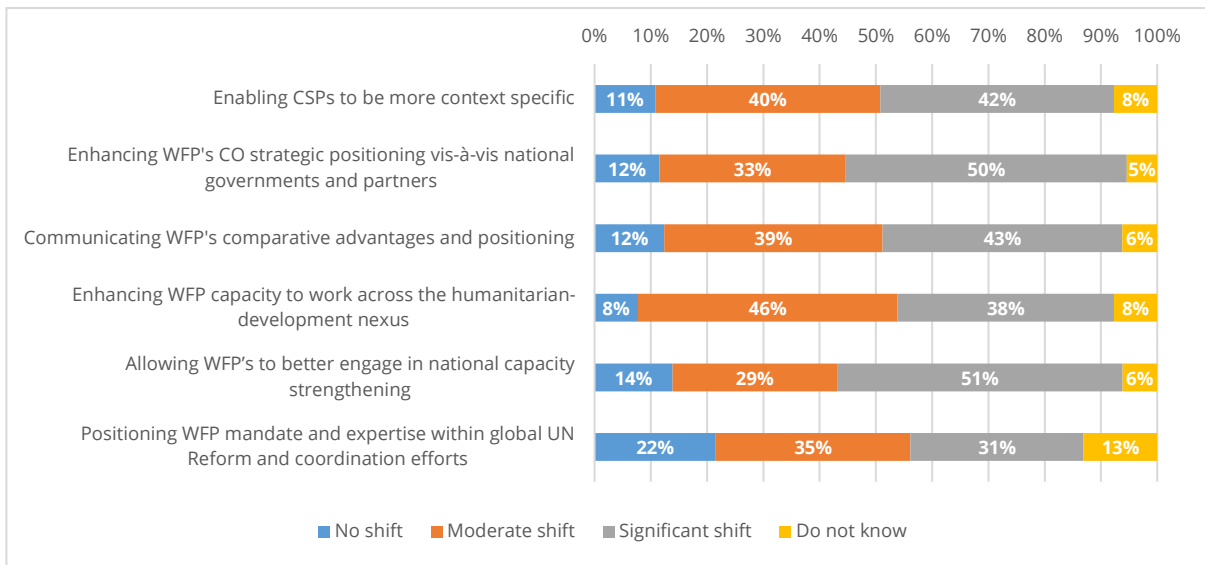
Source:

Survey question: “Innovation requires a range of building blocks. On a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, which of the following elements do you consider are currently in place in WFP?”

When considering innovation (Figure 31 and Figure 32), respondents are positive about WFP’s capability and culture for innovation, as well as the organization having the required building blocks in place. However, one area which respondents were less positive about was WFP’s knowledge management.

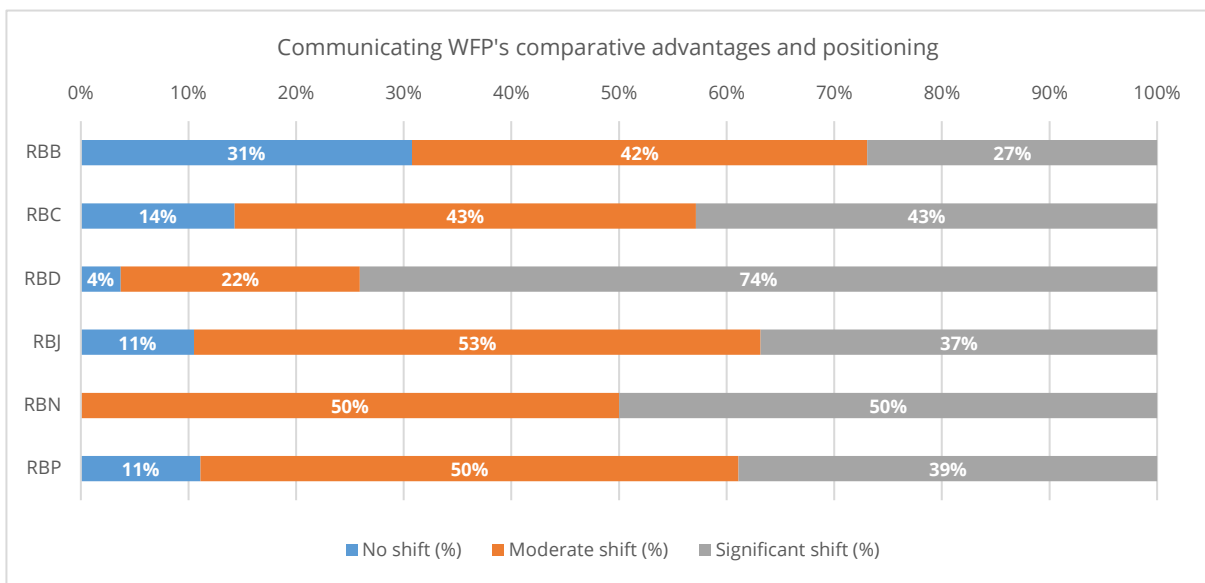
EQ3: Coherence and complementarity

Figure 33: Changes in practice resulting from the Strategic Plan



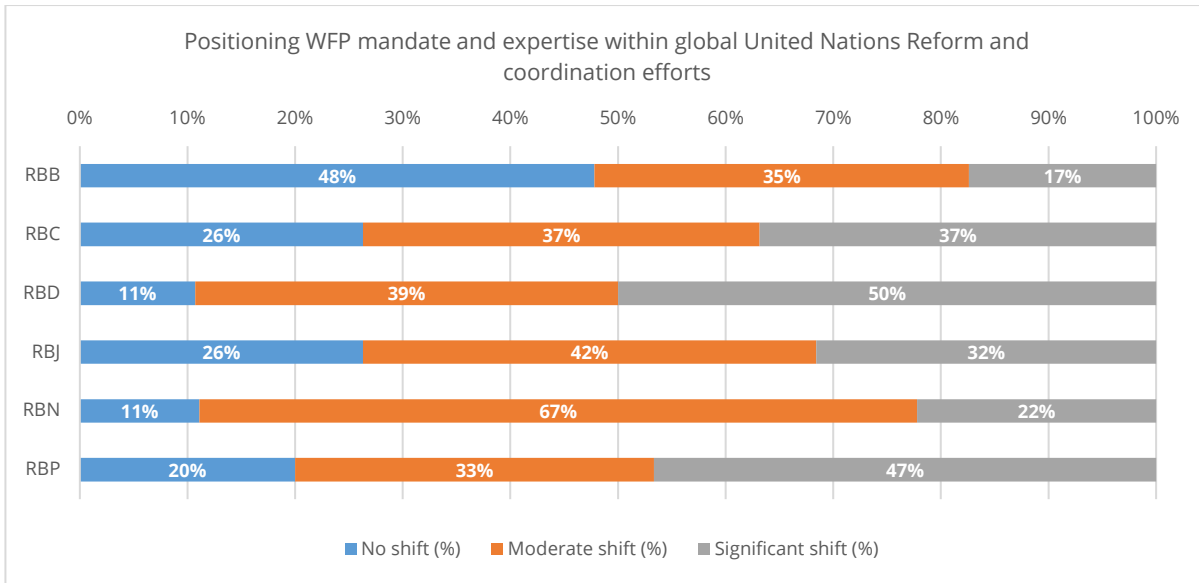
Source: Survey question: "We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?"

Figure 34: WFP comparative advantage and positioning



Source: Survey question: "We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?"; results for option "Communicating WFP's comparative advantages and positioning"; results disaggregated by RB

Figure 35: WFP positioning within global United Nations reform

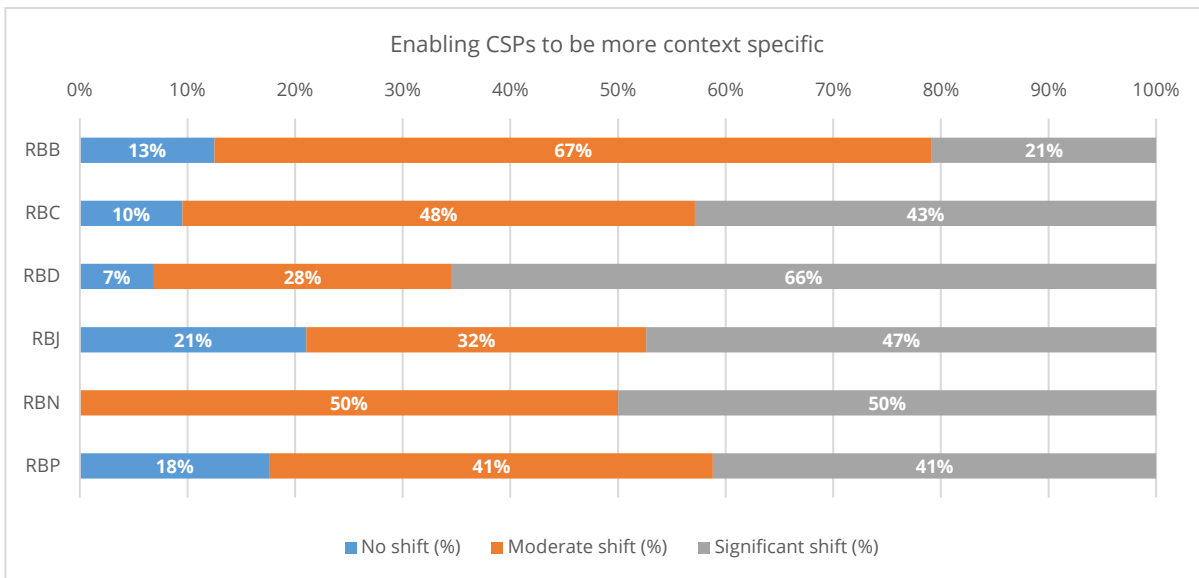


Source: Survey question: “We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?”; results for option: “Positioning WFP mandate and expertise within global United Nations Reform and coordination efforts”; results disaggregated by RB

As demonstrated in Figure 33, the majority of respondents recognized a shift in WFP’s practices as a result of the SP. When considering strategic positioning more deeply, there were notable differences in opinion between regional bureaux: in terms of “Communicating WFP’s comparative advantage and positioning” and “Positioning WFP mandate and expertise within global United Nations Reform and coordination efforts”, many more respondents in RBB felt that there had not been a shift, while in RBN, respondents were overwhelmingly positive about a shift.

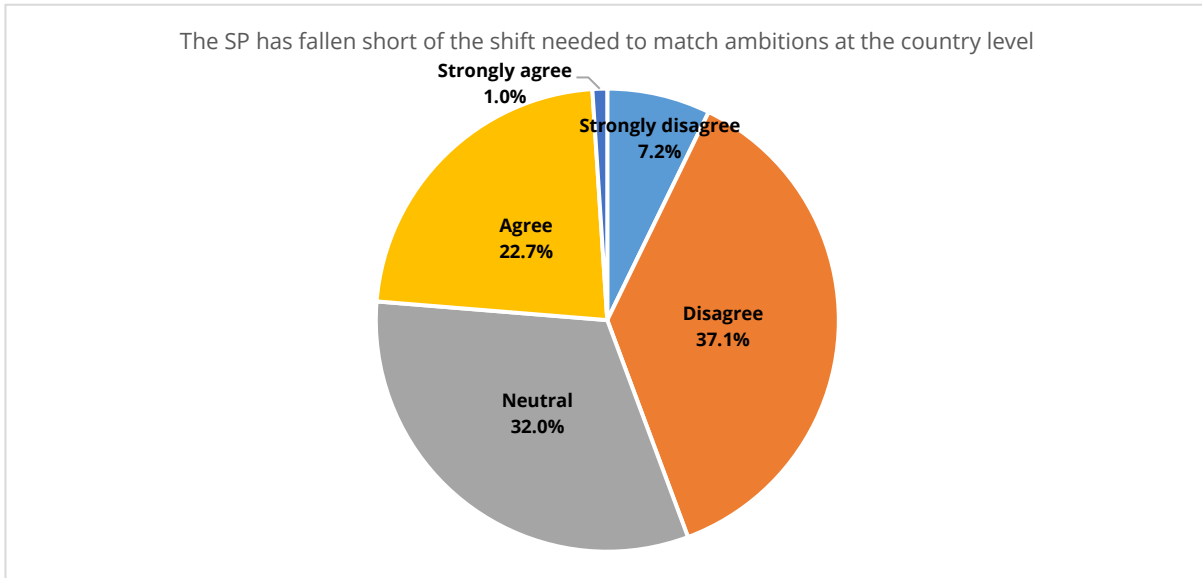
EQ4: Country implementation and delivery

Figure 36: Enabling Country Strategic Plans to be more context specific



Source: Survey question: “We would like to explore the effects of the SP in greater depth. In which of the following areas, from your perspective, did the SP implementation bring changes in practice?”; results for option: “Enabling CSPs to be more context specific”; results disaggregated by RB

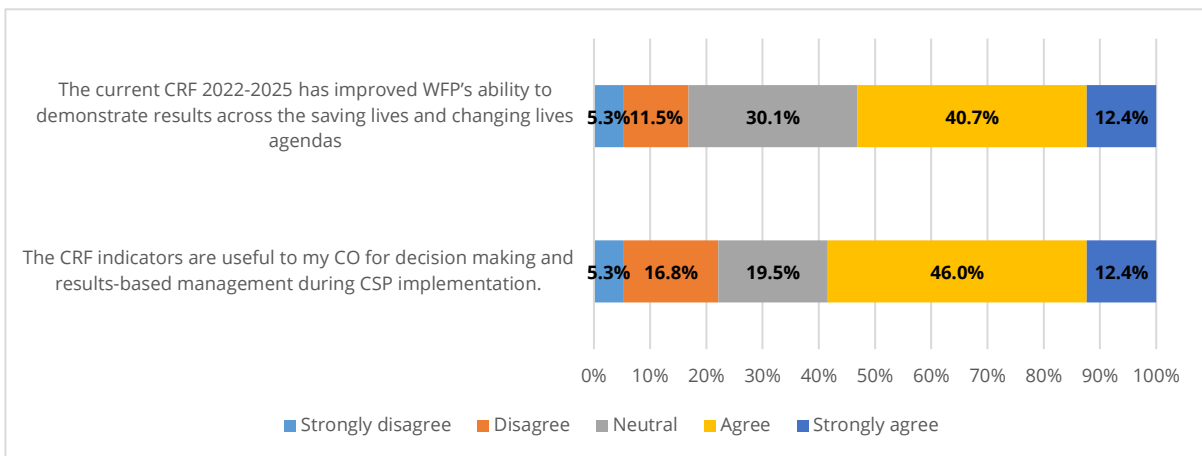
Figure 37: Shifts needed to match ambitions at the country level



Source: Survey question: “We would like to understand why you do not feel the SP has brought about a meaningful shift compared to the previous one (question 2)”; results for option: “The SP has fallen short of the shift needed to match ambitions at the country level”.

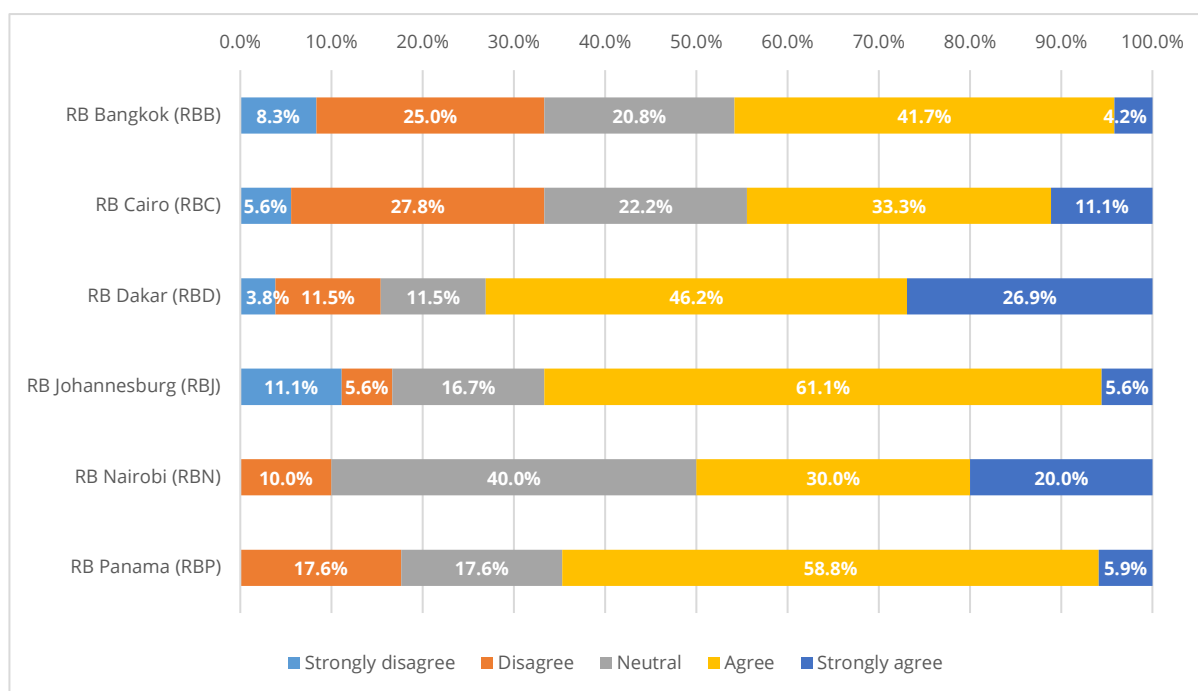
There is recognition from respondents across all regional bureaux that the SP has enabled Country Strategic Plans (CSPs) to be more context specific (Figure 36). Furthermore, the SP is viewed by almost half of respondents as having provided the shift needed to match the ambitions of country offices (Figure 37).

Figure 38: Corporate Results Framework utility to country offices



Source: Survey question: “Please rank on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree the following statements related to your perceptions of the CRF”; results for option “The CRF indicators are useful to my CO for decision making and results-based management during CSP implementation”

Figure 39: Corporate Results Framework utility to country offices, by regional bureau



Source: Survey question: “Please rank on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree the following statements related to your perceptions of the CRF”; results for option “The CRF indicators are useful to my CO for decision making and results-based management during CSP implementation”; results disaggregated by RB

When considering the CRF, almost 50 percent of respondents either disagreed or were neutral on the CRF’s capabilities on changing lives, and more than 40 percent on its overall utility (Figure 38). However, when looking more deeply, there are notable differences in responses between regional bureaux: respondents from RBD, RBJ, and RBP were more positive about the utility of the CRF to country offices, while RBB and RBC were less positive (Figure 39).

Analysis of qualitative answers

Table 14: Building on question 2, what do you think is the area where the SP has brought about the most significant shift and what are the reasons that explain it?

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
EQ1: Strength and relevance of the design	39	<p>“The Strategic Plan makes national system-strengthening support by WFP a strategic pillar of our work, linked to impact at scale on the world’s hunger problem. Much remains to be done to reflect this positioning in WFP’s corporate communications messaging and thinking (the organization defaults constantly to ‘saving lives’ and to what WFP implements directly, paying only lip service on most occasions to our ‘enabling’ or system-strengthening role, in ‘saving lives’ or ‘changing lives’ contexts).”</p> <p>“In terms of Strategic Plan – the previous strategic plan was a truly big shift for WFP – this SP is an improvement in certain aspects, but follows the same path. This is not a negative element as WFP does require some stability. The fact that, since the last SP, this SP is also anchored in the 2030 agenda it makes a lot of sense that there will not be major changes – the focus should be on improving the CRF and other accompanying documents and systems.”</p> <p>“Contextualizing WFP’s work at the global and country level by recognizing that zero hunger can only be achieved through multi-sectoral approaches and capacity strengthening.”</p>

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
		<p>“[The] SP recognizes WFP's dual agenda and clarifies WFP's possible role in Changing Lives. In the previous SP, perception was that Saving Lives was much more dominant and Changing Lives was rather an ‘optional/if possible’ avenue for CO operations. Now it is much ... easier to articulate with government and other partners, United Nations system, WFP's aspirations towards Changing Lives. In addition, the new SP states clearly WFP's positioning with cross-cutting priorities to understand what WFP can realistically commit [to]. This helps significantly everyday communication with externals (funding proposals, donor briefs, strategic discussions with government etc.)”</p> <p>“Link between resources and results: The 2G CSP and Country Portfolio Budget are strategically designed to allow the CO [to] use the available resources to best support [the] most vulnerable population and [in] achieving high results. Previously, it was difficult to fundraise across the different projects Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO), Development Operations (DEV), etc.), thus with the CSP there is more coherence with the inter-linked humanitarian/development interventions. Enhanced advocacy with uniform messaging: supports the CO vision for more integrated programming, and thus less ear-marked/short-term funding.”</p>
EQ2: Organizational readiness	4	<p>“While the SP has a vision, the CSP follows it but there needs to be better ambition on changing lives and technical support or some of the technical issues to have a transformative agenda.”</p> <p>“The SP has brought a significant shift that is not yet recognized by donors, and this makes its implementation difficult due to also the general shortage of funding and the impossibility of planning longer-term activities.”</p>
EQ3: Coherence and complementarity	16	<p>“The Strategic Plan makes national system-strengthening support by WFP a strategic pillar of our work, linked to impact at scale on the world's hunger problem. Much remains to be done to reflect this positioning in WFP's corporate communications messaging and thinking (the organization defaults constantly to 'saving lives' and to what WFP implements directly, paying only lip service on most occasions to our 'enabling' or system-strengthening role, in 'saving lives' or 'changing lives' contexts).”</p> <p>“... the new SP states clearly WFP's positioning with cross-cutting priorities to understand what WFP can realistically commit [to]. This helps significantly everyday communication with externals (funding proposals, donor briefs, strategic discussions with government etc.)”</p> <p>“Repositioning WFP on the part of its mandate that goes beyond our trademark ‘saving lives’, (which is sometimes wrongly reduced to our ability to move food from a point A to a point B) to more complex and elaborate lives-changing programmes.”</p>

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
		"The SP has enabled strategic alignment to the new UNSDCF and enhanced WFP work in the domain of partnerships, including with the private sectors, IFIs and better coordination."
EQ4: Country implementation and delivery	23	<p>"SP has not brought shift. CO still not enabled to effectively report on impact and SDG support to government commitments."</p> <p>"Bringing coherence, synergy and integration around CO strategy, putting critical cross-cutting issues front and centre."</p> <p>"SP has helped COs to think more holistically and strategically on WFP's goals in the country, instead of being project-based and often disconnected efforts, improving also integration of activities and fostering a more collaborative approach to increase impact of operations."</p>

Table 15: In your experience, in what ways, has SP 2022–2025 facilitated the design and implementation of sequenced, layered and integrated humanitarian and development programming?

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
EQ1: Strength and relevance of the design	40	<p>"By providing a framework for conceiving of, and planning, a role in contributing to national system-strengthening. I would say the SP has facilitated this change and some of the other changes in the questions above, rather than 'enabled'. In some cases, the vision laid out in the SP document itself (esp. system-strengthening) later found limitations when expressed in the context of the CRF."</p> <p>"The SP 2022–2025 has significantly facilitated the design and implementation of sequenced, layered, and integrated humanitarian and development programming in several ways. One key aspect is the emphasis on strategic planning, which allows for a systematic and phased approach to addressing complex challenges. The clear sequencing of activities ensures that interventions build upon each other, leading to a more coherent and impactful overall strategy."</p> <p>"I believe the SP 2022–2025 has pointed out the synergies between different strategic outcomes, specially making it more clear on how the CO can engage regular development programming and add an emergency/[Emergency Preparedness and Response] EPR lens to it and how to better leverage our capacity strengthening programming towards governments and systems with humanitarian efforts. It has also made it clear that all WFP activities (disregarding the strategic outcome) should link to nutrition and food security. Other areas that have been better [linked] but still have some areas of improving is in bridging nutrition programming with climate/resilience and food systems."</p>
EQ2: Organizational readiness	2	"While the SP in and of itself opens the doors to more thoughtful design and implementation of our programme to ensure greater integration across the CSP activities and objectives, the reality is that the related systems (CRF, LoS, etc.) coupled with the current structure of headquarters actually works against the SP to ensure more integrated programming."

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
		<p>"The SP provides a good framework for integrated programming however, the silos that exist in headquarters, and to a lesser extent at RB, prevented the effective implementation of the intended approach. The CRF and the LoS clearly have relevance at the macro/headquarters level, but is less useful for CO planning and programming. If we are truly committed to integrated programming, it is essential that we drop the use of the focus areas as this serves to confuse our messaging – especially at country level."</p>
EQ3: Coherence and complementarity	2	<p>"WFP can use its special global position to speak up for those who are in the most need, both worldwide and in specific places. By focusing on protecting people and being accountable to those affected, WFP helps people share their opinions and choices. This leads to safe and respectful access to things like food, nutrition, and other important needs."</p> <p>"Identification of key donors, institutional strengthening of partners, work with NGOs have helped in the design and implementation of programmes with these characteristics."</p>
EQ4: Country implementation and delivery	8	<p>"The strategic objectives and activities facilitate the design at CO of a programme portfolio that harnesses layer and integrated programming."</p> <p>"Allows WFP COs to have a clear vision on what the ultimate goal is, how to achieve that, and the ways in which all different programme areas need to work together to make it happen."</p> <p>"Emphasis on upfront engagement with all stakeholders prior to CSP finalization has resulted in a well-informed CSP with government buy-in."</p>

Table 16: Please briefly describe any new ideas, approaches or technologies that have or are likely to drive innovation and that you think this evaluation could usefully look into.

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
EQ2: Organizational readiness	36	<p>"Some of the financial mechanisms WFP is using are innovative (debt relief, advance financing)."</p> <p>"Undertake thematic studies or decentralized evaluation to assess, show success, share best practices and to consolidate experiences. This approach allows WFP to ensure that its interventions/projects are effective and efficient."</p> <p>"Stronger knowledge management would help to identify good practices and approaches that deserve scaling beyond small pilot projects. This would also require flexible funding from headquarters at a larger scale, such as an institutionalized version of the Changing Lives Transformation Fund to allow especially smaller country offices to operate effectively and maximize impact and opportunities in line with WFP's global Strategic Plan and ambitious but chronically underfunded CSPs."</p>

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
		"Development of pilots designed with public institutions with funding from the private sector, donors and the government itself for scaling up with public resources."
EQ3: Coherence and complementarity	3	<p>"WFP started making some links with research institutions and universities to make use of the wealth of data that WFP have. This is a good step but also encouraging WFP staff (the ones with research background) and equipping them with the required tools and availing time to them to make some research on things they are already working on, will be useful, engaging and will foster learning and innovation."</p> <p>"More flexibility and autonomy for COs to engage with the private sector under non-conventional WFP terms and conditions of partnership. The private sector is open to partnership, however, put off by the lengthy and stringent contracting and terms of engagement WFP has."</p>
EQ4: Country implementation and delivery	9	<p>"In the CO, non-parametric microinsurance was implemented as an innovation with Smallholder farmers SHF in the Smallholder Agriculture Market Support framework and support for micro-insurance with the government."</p> <p>"CO's Initiatives like the Public Systems Lab in collaboration with India's premier technical institute (Indian Institute of Technology Delhi) and the proposed Knowledge Hub with the Government of Odisha, are good examples for driving innovation."</p>

Table 17: What have been the biggest challenges in implementing the CSP since the SP came into effect?

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
EQ1: Strength and relevance of the design	7	<p>"Obsession with boxes. Every unit in Rome wants to have its own box in WINGS, so the CSP is cut in many boxes (activities), which has one objective, but in reality activities can have multiple objectives. Reality is not equivalent to a theoretical LoS for a CSP."</p> <p>"The number of CRF indicators has been overwhelming, and CRF changes [are] very resource intensive for country offices to implement. The wider spectrum of WFP activities makes the design of a coherent LoS with clear responsibilities somewhat challenging. WFP systems remain focused on donor funding lines of humanitarian and development specific activities."</p>
EQ2: Organizational readiness	34	<p>"Funding: limited multi-year funding could not allow the implementation of more sustainable projects... Limited visibility of interventions."</p> <p>"Limited funding, lack of workforce development, lack of corporate tools and guidance to support engagement with host government."</p> <p>"Most existing systems and corporate indicators remain tailored to standard 'saving lives' operations. On the 'changing lives' part of our Strategic Plan, there is a worrisome gap between theory, training, guidance, and actual knowledge of concepts and methodologies in the field as well as a limited regional bureau capacity to fill that gap."</p> <p>"Navigating the numerous bureaucratic hurdles the organization has created for the preparation, development, review and clearance of CSPs. The process is too cumbersome internally, and rather than strengthen, it serves to weaken the document as well as to undermine commitment and buy[-in] from partners."</p>

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
EQ3: Coherence and complementarity	3	"National capacity strengthening framing and alignment with the SDGs (2 vs 17) is sometimes a bit abstract."
EQ4: Country implementation and delivery	44	<p>"The realignment of the indicators from the previous CSP to the current one with a CSP formulated five years ago."</p> <p>"One of the major challenges has been the difficulty in securing the necessary financial resources to fully implement the CSP. Despite positive reception and support from donors, the actual mobilization of funds may not have matched the envisioned scale. This shortfall can hinder the execution of planned programmes and initiatives outlined in the CSP."</p> <p>"Strategic adaptation: Adapting the CSP to the specific context and strategic positioning of the Country Office has been most challenging... small countries' offices lack much-needed personnel, and the diversity of skill sets integrating regional experience tended to lose the local relevance of advice and ultimate[ly] this includes understanding the unique challenges and opportunities within the country and aligning the CSP accordingly."</p>

Table 18: What has been most helpful in implementing the CSP since the SP came into effect?

Evaluation Question	No. of responses	Selected quotes
EQ4: Country implementation and delivery	72	<p>"Integration of cross-cutting issues. Visibility on national capacity strengthening and service provision."</p> <p>"The strong articulation of saving lives and changing lives and that they are not mutually exclusive."</p> <p>"The SP has clearly provided guidance on the following areas: making sure its staff is well-supported, working closely with others, resource mobilization from different sources, using evidence to guide decisions, using technology, and encouraging innovations. It provides direction on how to make this happen, and keep track of how well the country-specific CSPs are doing through a framework that helps to see if the corporate goals are met globally. This framework connects the corporate plan to the results framework in each country."</p> <p>"Communication of Comparative Advantages: Effectively communicating the World Food Programme's comparative advantages has helped in enhancing its strategic positioning with national governments and partners. Humanitarian-Development Nexus: Working across the humanitarian-development nexus has facilitated a more integrated approach to programming, which is essential for addressing both immediate needs and long-term development goals. National Capacity Strengthening: Engaging in national capacity strengthening has been vital for the sustainability of the CSP's outcomes."</p> <p>"Reliable and consistent support from the regional bureaux has been key. They provide the ability to best ensure contextualized quality control, support and guidance."</p> <p>"More room for innovation has been a game changer, and piloting new programming approaches has been very helpful."</p>

Annex VII. Regional bureau consultations agenda

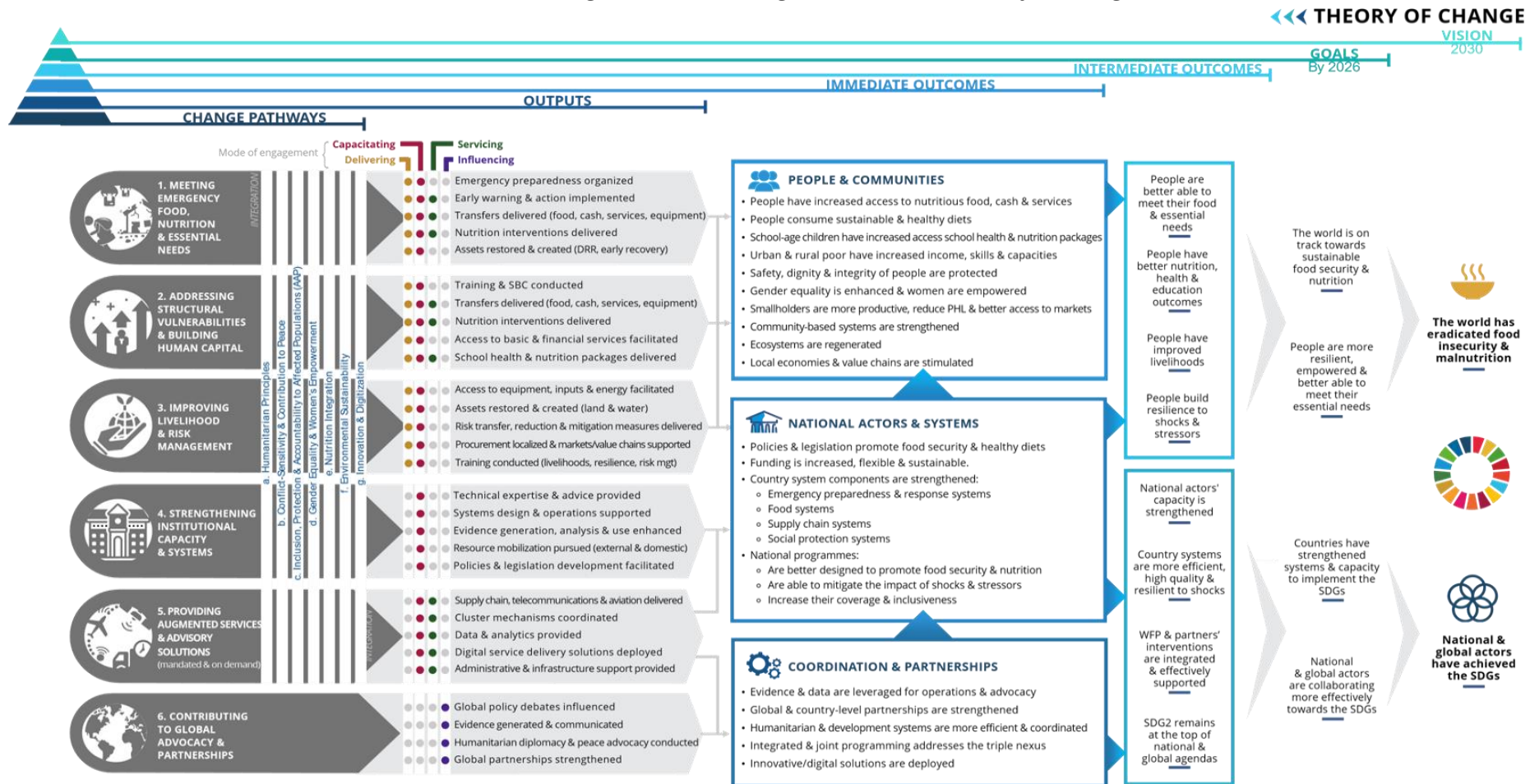
Table 19: Regional bureau consultations agenda

Regional bureau	In-person or remote	Dates
Regional Bureau Bangkok	In-person	11–15 March 2024
Regional Bureau Cairo	Remote	26 February–07 March 2024
Regional Bureau Dakar	Remote	18–29 March 2024
Regional Bureau Johannesburg	Remote	18–29 March 2024
Regional Bureau Nairobi	In-person	04–08 March 2024
Regional Bureau Panama	In-person	26 February–01 March 2024

Annex VIII. Strategic Plan 2022–2025 Theory of Change

Figure 40 illustrates the WFP Strategic Plan (SP) 2022 –2025 Theory of Change (ToC). The ToC is supported by a detailed explanatory note prepared alongside the SP.³⁸⁶

Figure 40: WFP Strategic Plan 2022–2025 Theory of Change



³⁸⁶ WFP, 2021e

Annex IX. Mapping of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings
<p>Recommendation 1 The next Strategic Plan (SP) should clearly set out WFP's strategic vision for the future. It should reaffirm the centrality of humanitarian assistance, building resilience and addressing root causes of food insecurity at the heart of WFP's mission and mandate, and clearly define its operating principles and comparative advantages.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 1.1 In the next SP, provide a clear statement of WFP's intended achievements over the coming strategic period, with the emphasis on its intended contributions to global goals on food security and nutrition and a clear statement of "what WFP stands for" in a volatile world.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 1.2 Future-proof the next SP as far as feasible by framing it within a longer- term horizon, with the SP itself focussed on a 5-year plan that gets refined only as needed. Ensure the next SP reflects regional specificities and priorities, using predictive analysis to define these.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 1.3 Clearly define WFP's core and context-specific comparative advantages across different operating environments and modalities of engagement.</p> <p>Concepts papers and related guidance should be developed urgently to support implementation during the remaining period of the current plan and to inform the design of the next.</p>	<p>Conclusion 1</p> <p>Conclusion 2</p> <p>Conclusion 3</p> <p>Conclusion 4</p> <p>Conclusion 6</p> <p>Conclusion 7</p>	<p>Finding 1</p> <p>Finding 2</p> <p>Finding 3</p> <p>Finding 4</p> <p>Finding 5</p> <p>Finding 15</p>

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings
<p>Recommendation 2 Ensure that WFP organizational structure, systems, and incentives for management and staff provide the agility and responsiveness required to be an effective player in an increasingly complex and dynamic context.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 2.1 Resolve the current ambiguity in organizational structures between headquarters and regional bureaux, to better recognize the value of more contextualized and accessible support regional bureaux can provide to country offices.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 2.2 Adopt an ethos of “form follows function”, ensuring that CSP design, approval and revision systems and processes are strategic rather than process-driven, appropriately streamlined to avoid unnecessary duplications of efforts and reduce overall transaction costs for country offices. This may also entail higher levels of delegated authority, and corresponding accountability, at the regional level.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 2.3 Provide incentives for managers and staff to stimulate innovation, including innovative approaches to partnerships, in an environment that is risk-tolerant and willing to learn from mistakes as well as good practices.</p> <p>Sub recommendation 2.4 Strengthen evidence-generation and knowledge management systems to support evidence-based decision making, enhance internal cross-fertilization and inform scaling up, as well as feeding into national policy debates where relevant, leveraging WFP experience and results on the ground.</p>	<p>Conclusion 1</p> <p>Conclusion 2</p> <p>Conclusion 3</p> <p>Conclusion 5</p> <p>Conclusion 6</p> <p>Conclusion 8</p>	<p>Finding 4</p> <p>Finding 5</p> <p>Finding 6</p> <p>Finding 7</p> <p>Finding 8</p> <p>Finding 10</p> <p>Finding 11</p> <p>Finding 15</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 To operationalize the strategic vision, provide a more sharply defined programme framework, while leaving flexibility for contextual adaptation on the ground.</p>	<p>Conclusion 2</p> <p>Conclusion 3</p> <p>Conclusion 4</p>	<p>Finding 2</p> <p>Finding 4</p> <p>Finding 5</p>

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings
<p>Sub-recommendation 3.1 As part of the operationalization of the strategic vision, maintain SO1, SO2 and SO3 while framing of SO4 and SO5 as modalities of intervention in support of any of the three strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 3.2 Relax strict alignment rules, focusing on global aggregation of basic food and nutrition outcome indicators, while leaving country offices full discretion to use additional context-specific outcome, output and process indicators.</p> <p>Sub-recommendation 3.3 State clearly in the Strategic Plan narrative that cross-cutting priorities are minimum standards for programme quality, and ensure they are appropriately invested in and budgeted for.</p>	<p>Conclusion 5 Conclusion 6</p>	<p>Finding 6 Finding 8 Finding 20</p>

Annex X. Comparison of results frameworks across selected UN system actors

Table 20 provides a summary of a comparison of results frameworks across selected United Nations system actors.

Table 20: Comparison of results frameworks across selected United Nations system actors

Agency	Results structure	Targets/baselines	Role
WFP: Corporate Results Framework (CRF), including Higher-level Targets (HLTs)	<p>5 outcomes with 40 outcome indicators.³⁸⁷</p> <p>12 outputs with 98 indicators</p> <p>4 cross-cutting areas with 19 cross-cutting indicators</p> <p>7 management results with 60 indicators</p>	<p>No for impact, 18 for outcome (inc. HLTs)</p> <p>Defined for 17 indicators (inc. HLTs)</p> <p>Defined for 2 of the indicators</p> <p>Defined for 16 indicators</p>	<p>The CRF for 2022–2025 is the operational tool for the implementation of the new Strategic Plan, defining what WFP will deliver (programmatic outcomes and outputs) and how this will be achieved through management results, based on organizational enablers. The CRF, supplemented by the policy on Country Strategic Plans (CSPs), provides a performance and accountability framework that enables WFP to measure and demonstrate its response to humanitarian needs and to strengthen national governments in their progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</p>
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)³⁸⁸	<p>6 impact indicators</p> <p>3 outcomes with 25 indicators</p>	<p>Impact and outcome level targets are defined in wording, targets and milestones for all the others</p>	<p>UNDP SP, 2022–2025, describes the future direction of UNDP, continuing from the SP for 2018–2021. The</p>

³⁸⁷ Based on analysis of outcome indicators conducted by APP

³⁸⁸ UNDP, 2023

Agency	Results structure	Targets/baselines	Role
	<p>6 “signature solutions” and 3 “enablers”, 241 output indicators</p> <p>6 organizational effectiveness and efficiency areas with 53 indicators</p>		<p>accompanying Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) summarizes the development and organizational results to be achieved by UNDP with its partners.</p>
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) ³⁸⁹	<p>31 impact indicators</p> <p>5 goal areas with 54 outcome indicators and 86 output indicators</p> <p>9 “change strategies” with 54 indicators</p> <p>5 “enablers” with 29 indicators</p>	Baseline and targets not defined in the document	<p>The results framework of the SP incorporates the impact, outcome and output indicators required to monitor progress. They have been identified on the basis of the UNICEF mandate and comparative advantage in the achievement of 2030 Agenda in relation to United Nations organizations.</p>
International Organization for Migration (IOM) ³⁹⁰	<p>3 objectives with 10 long-term outcome indicators, 39 short-term outcome indicators and 113 output indicators</p> <p>4 cross-cutting priorities with 28 indicators</p> <p>7 organizational effectiveness and efficiency areas with 37 indicators</p>	Not defined	<p>The SP results architecture sets out how we will achieve our vision and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).³⁹¹</p>

³⁸⁹ UNICEF, 2021

³⁹⁰ IOM, n.d.

³⁹¹ IOM, 2023 ,p.10

Agency	Results structure	Targets/baselines	Role
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) ³⁹²	<p>4 impact areas with 15 indicators</p> <p>16 outcome areas with 37 outcome indicators and 23 output indicators</p> <p>5 enabling areas with no indicators</p> <p>The strategic Indicators also refer to 11 of the core indicators</p>	<p>No baselines or targets defined</p>	<p>The Global Results Framework reflects the UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022–2026. It comprises four impact areas, sixteen outcome areas and five enabling areas, representing UNHCR's mandate and areas of work.³⁹³</p> <p>The Global Results Framework includes a set of core impact, outcome and output indicators that measure UNHCR's contribution to the changes in the lives of forcibly displaced and stateless persons across countries, allowing for the global presentation of results.³⁹⁴</p>
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) ³⁹⁵	<p>1 goal with 7 impact indicators</p> <p>3 outcome areas with 21 indicators</p> <p>6 outputs with 59 indicators</p> <p>3 organizational effectiveness and efficiency areas with 63 indicators</p> <p>5 programmatic risk indicators</p>	<p>Baseline and targets defined for all indicators</p>	<p>The integrated results and resources framework articulates the strategic plan results that UNFPA expects to achieve during 2022–2025. It also defines the metrics – the indicators, baselines and targets – for measuring progress towards those results and assessing the strategic plan's effectiveness and impact. Thus, the integrated results and resources framework supports the accountability of UNFPA to its stakeholders, informs learning and improves decision</p>

³⁹² UNHCR, 2021

³⁹³ Ibid, p. 15

³⁹⁴ UNHCR, 2024 ,p.50

³⁹⁵ UNFPA, 2022

Agency	Results structure	Targets/baselines	Role
			making in implementing the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022–2025.
World Health Organization (WHO) ³⁹⁶	Three goal areas with 6 strategic outcomes and 15 joint outcomes measured through 98 outcome indicators	Defined and adjusted through complex process with multiples scenarios	<p>The Fourteenth General Programme of Work (GPW 14) results framework, established with best-practice methodologies, extensive and transparent consultation, and accountable indicators, provides a comprehensive evaluation of progress. Through this framework, WHO aims to assess and demonstrate its tangible impact improving the health of individuals worldwide. The GPW 14 results framework consists of two parts: (a) the overall results chain (i.e. inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact); and (b) results measurement.³⁹⁷</p> <p>It will apply existing tools such as country stocktakes and a unified process for planning (including prioritization) at the country level.³⁹⁸</p>

³⁹⁶ WHO, 2024

³⁹⁷ Ibid

³⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 31

Annex XI. Critical Corporate Initiative investments to support Strategic Plan implementation

Table 21: Critical Corporate Initiative investments to support Strategic Plan implementation

Critical Corporate Initiative	Budget	Actuals			Total	Unspent balance
	approved Budget, all years	2019 – 2021	2021– 2022	2023		
Workforce 2020	11.1	8.5	2.4	-	10.9	0.2
WFP 2030 Fund	15	10.3	4.7	-	15	0
Systems integration and information technology enabled efficiencies	16	14.5	1.3	-	15.8	0.2
United Nations Reform	16.3	14.7	1.4	-	16.1	0.2
Programme/ partnership support	2.6	1.3	1	-	2.3	0.3
Private sector strategy	52.3	34.5	16.8	-	51.3	1
Workplace culture/ethics	5	2.9	1.9	-	4.8	0.2
Termination indemnity fund	10	0.1	1.04	0.25	1.39	8.61
Investing in WFP People	52.3	-	19.7	28.05	47.75	4.55
Strategic Plan and Corporate Results Framework implementation	28.96	-	1.75	10.54	12.29	16.67
Country Office Support Model Optimization and Simplification (COSMOS)	3.25	-	1.04	2.05	3.09	0.16
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Efficiency Roadmap	6.6	-	-	5.6	5.6	1
TOTAL	219.41	86.8	53.03	46.49	186.32	33.09

Annex XII. Mapping of changes from Strategic Plan 2017–2021 to Strategic Plan 2022–2025

1. The tables below map out Strategic Outcomes (SOs) and activities across Strategic Plan (SP) 2017–2021 and SP 2022–2025, highlighting any changes to the activity categories from the previous SP to the present one. The changes are as follows:

- In the current SP, the activity category “Asset Creation and Livelihood Support” has been split into two: “Community and household asset creation” and “Household and individual skill and livelihood creation”.
- The terminology has been adjusted in the current SP for the following activity categories: “Actions to protect against climate shocks”, “School-based programmes”, and “Malnutrition treatment”.
- The two activity categories for capacity strengthening have been removed in the present SP.
- In the current SP, the “Common services and platforms” activity category has been split into four: “Logistics cluster”, “Emergency telecommunications cluster”, “United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)”, and “On-demand services”.
- “Early action” has been added to the “Emergency preparedness” activity category in the current SP.
- “Analysis, monitoring and joint needs assessment” has been removed from the activity categories in SP 2022–2025
- “Social protection sector support” has been added as an activity category in the present SP.

Table 22: Mapping of strategic outcomes and activity categories in SP 2017–2021

2017–2021 Strategic Plan (SP) description of Strategic Outcomes (SOs) and Strategic Results (SRs) (right) Activity categories linked to SOs (below)	SO1 (SR1)	SO2 (SR2)	SO3 (SR3, SR4)	SO4 (SR5, SR6)	SO5 (SR7, SR8)
	End hunger by protecting access to food	Improve nutrition	Achieve food security	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Partner for SDG results
Unconditional resource transfer					
Asset creation and livelihood support					
Climate adaptation and risk management					
School meals					
Nutrition treatment					
Malnutrition prevention					
Smallholder agricultural market support					
Individual capacity strengthening					
Institutional capacity strengthening					
Common services and platforms					
Emergency preparedness					
Analysis, monitoring and joint needs assessment					

Table 23: Mapping of strategic outcomes and activity categories in SP 2022–2025

Change compared to Strategic Plan (SP) 2017–2021	2022–2025 SP description of Strategic Outcomes (SOs) (right) Activity categories linked to SOs (below)	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
		People are better able to meet urgent food and nutrition needs	People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes	People have improved and sustainable livelihoods	National programmes and systems are strengthened	Humanitarian and development actors are more efficient and effective (on-demand and mandated service provision)
No change	Unconditional resource transfer					
Activity Category Split into two	Community and household asset creation					
Activity Category Split into two	Household and individual skill and livelihood creation					
Terms have changed	Actions to protect against climate shocks					
Terms have changed	School-based programmes					
Terms have changed	Malnutrition treatment					
No change	Malnutrition prevention					
No change	Smallholder agricultural market support					
Activity category removed	Individual capacity strengthening					

Change compared to Strategic Plan (SP) 2017–2021	2022–2025 SP description of Strategic Outcomes (SOs) (right) Activity categories linked to SOs (below)	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
		People are better able to meet urgent food and nutrition needs	People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes	People have improved and sustainable livelihoods	National programmes and systems are strengthened	Humanitarian and development actors are more efficient and effective (on-demand and mandated service provision)
Activity category removed	Institutional capacity strengthening					
Activity category split into four	Logistics cluster					
Activity category split into four	Emergency telecommunications cluster					
Activity category split into four	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)					
Activity category split into four	On-demand services					
Added early action	Emergency preparedness and early action					
Activity category removed	Analysis, monitoring and joint needs assessment					
New activity category	Social protection sector support					

Table 24: Mapping of Corporate Results Framework 2017–2021 and Strategic Plan 2022–2025 high-level targets

High-level target (HLT) lead and supporting indicators – data availability	Planned data source	Included in Corporate Results Framework (CRF) 2017–21?	Notes on comparison with CRF 2017–21 and newly planned methodology
1. Number of countries with population experiencing famine	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and Cadre Harmonise (CH)		Count of countries with population in IPC Phase 5
1.1 Percentage of acutely food insecure people receiving emergency assistance by WFP	COMET, GORP		Number of people supported by WFP emergency assistance (SO1 or Crisis Response tag) divided by number of acutely food insecure people in WFP operational countries
1.2 Percentage of women and children in need who benefit from WFP services to prevent and treat wasting	COMET		All indicators in 2017–21 CRF seem to cover some combination of wasting, Social and Behavior Change Communication stunting.
1.3 Percentage of WFP in-kind transfers that are nutritionally adequate	COMET, Optimus, NutVal		Combination of three nutritious foods provided output indicators (fortified, special nutritious foods).
1.4 Number of countries with cash operations responsive to people's essential needs	Cashboard, RAM, Dataviz, COMET		Countries with cash operations can be isolated, whether or not they are responsive to people's essential needs (there is an outcome indicator on economic capacity to meet essential needs so, in theory, one could look at countries with cash-based transfers (CBTs) and see if the economic capacity indicator is improving to test responsiveness, but externalities might affect changes as much as the programme).
1.5 Median time for first WFP transfer to reach people after sudden onset emergency			

High-level target (HLT) lead and supporting indicators – data availability	Planned data source	Included in Corporate Results Framework (CRF) 2017-21?	Notes on comparison with CRF 2017-21 and newly planned methodology
2. Number of children with access to improved health, nutrition, and education services with WFP assistance	COMET	✓	Could isolate and combine the number of children assisted by Nutrition (NUT), School-based Programming (SBP)
2.1 Number of women and children that benefit from WFP services designed to prevent and treat malnutrition including the first 1,000 days of life	COMET	✓	Count of women and children receiving transfers under nutrition treatment and malnutrition prevention activities
2.2 Number of children that receive nutritious meals in schools as a contribution to the next 7,000 days – from WFP – from governments and partners	School Meals Coalition (SMC) survey	✓	Number receiving transfers under SBP from WFP can be isolated. Global survey done in 2022 Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF), School Meals Coalition survey in 2024 and 2026
2.3 Percentage of national school feeding programmes delivering a comprehensive package of school health and nutrition services thanks to WFP and partners' support	SMC survey		2022 GCNF survey, School Meals Coalition survey in 2024 and 2026
3. Number of people having more resilient livelihoods, in the face of risks and shocks through WFP assistance	COMET/ACR		Sum of people counted under the following three supporting indicators:
3.1 Number of people that benefit from resilience building initiatives, which strengthen the livelihood asset base, including ecosystems	COMET/ACR	✓	Sum of all food assistance for assets and food assistance for training direct beneficiaries. Old Indicators: "Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting benefits from an enhanced livelihood asset base" and "Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting environmental benefits" – because these are reported as a percentage, it would be difficult to globally isolate just the number of people.

High-level target (HLT) lead and supporting indicators – data availability	Planned data source	Included in Corporate Results Framework (CRF) 2017-21?	Notes on comparison with CRF 2017-21 and newly planned methodology
3.2 Number of smallholders benefiting from WFP support that improved value chains and strengthened market services	COMET		Sum of all farmers' organization members. Old Indicators : "Number of smallholder farmers supported or trained", "Percentage of targeted smallholders selling through WFP supported aggregation systems"
3.3 Number of people with financial protection from climate hazards	COMET/ACR	✓	Old Indicator "Number of people insured through risk management interventions"
4. Number of countries that have strengthened programmes and systems with WFP support	COMET	✓	Number of countries that have achieved 100 percent of their target on outcome indicator "Number of policies, programmes and system components contributing to zero hunger enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening"
4.1 Number of countries better prepared for and able to respond to emergencies through national systems	COMET	✓	Count of the number of countries with an increased value of the Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index (EPCI)
4.2 Number of countries whose national social protection systems better contribute to people's food security, healthy diets, and ability to meet essential needs and/or manage risks	COMET, ACRs, CSPs, Cashboard		Old indicator: "Number of people assisted by WFP integrated into national social protection systems as a result of WFP capacity strengthening"
4.3 Number of countries where WFP contributes to making food systems more sustainable and resilient	WFP database		Could isolate by counting the number of CSPs reporting against Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable
4.4 Number of countries which have committed and/or increased their commitments to school feeding programmes in their national policies' budgets	SMC survey		
5. Number of countries benefiting from WFP "mandated" and/or "on-demand" services and solutions			"Mandated" can be counted; unclear if "on-demand" can be, but analysis may have been done at headquarters

High-level target (HLT) lead and supporting indicators – data availability	Planned data source	Included in Corporate Results Framework (CRF) 2017-21?	Notes on comparison with CRF 2017-21 and newly planned methodology
5.1 Share of countries in which governments or partners avail themselves of WFP “mandated” services out of all countries where the United Nations Country Team requests “mandated services”	Cluster IMs, UNHAS		Available from clusters
5.2 Number of countries in which governments or partners request and benefit from WFP “on-demand” solutions and services	WINGS, Global Marketplace, RAM Dataviz, CASHboard		Old indicator: "number of shared services provided, by type", but description in indicator compendium seems to suggest that this covers mandated services
5.3 Percentage of users satisfied with the services provided	WFP survey	✓	Indicator "user satisfaction rate"

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Acronyms and abbreviations

2G	Second generation
AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ACR	Annual Country Report
AI	artificial intelligence
AP	Analytical Paper
APR	Annual Performance Report
BOOST	Business Operation and Organization Strategic Transformation
CBT	cash-based transfers
CCI	Critical Corporate Initiative
CCS	country capacity strengthening
CLTF	Changing Lives Transformation Fund
CO	Country Office
COSMOS	Country Office Support Model Optimization and Simplification
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CSPE	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCD	Deputy Country Director
DGFAO	Director General FAO
EB	Executive Board
EM	evaluation matrix
EPCI	Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index
EQ	evaluation question
ET	Evaluation Team
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	focus group discussion
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEEW	gender equality and empowerment of women
GPW 14	Fourteenth General Programme of Work
HCM	human capital management
HDP	Humanitarian-Development-Peace

HLT	high-level target
HoP	Head of Programme
HQ	Headquarters
HR	human resources
IFI	international financial institution
IN	Inception Note
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IRG	Internal Reference Group
IRRF	Integrated Results and Resources Framework
IRM	Integrated Road Map
KII	key informant interview
KPI	key performance indicator
LoS	line of sight
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
mt	metric tons
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
PRP	Programme Review and Approval Process
PSA	project support and administrative
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RAM	Research Assessment and Monitoring
RB	Regional Bureau
RBA	Rome-based Agencies
RBB	Regional Bureau Bangkok
RBC	Regional Bureau Cairo
RBD	Regional Bureau Dakar
RBJ	Regional Bureau Johannesburg
RBN	Regional Bureau Nairobi
RBP	Regional Bureau Panama
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SO	strategic outcome

SP	Strategic Plan
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN-SWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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