

Resilience policy update

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World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



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Cover Photos: top left (women standing on a dam that harvests water for the community’s needs, including agriculture, drinking water, their cattle, and flood protection, during the rainy season in Guéra, Chad); top right (Multi-agency team of the RWEE project in the Polochic Valley, La Tinta, Alta Verapaz, in Guatemala, 19 February 2016); bottom left (Sharifamoh cultivating peppers, parsley and green onions in her greenhouse in Tajikistan); bottom right (drone shot of a green landscape rehabilitated through half-moons as part of WFP’s Resilience Land Rehabilitation Site in Niger).

I Executive Summary

This policy update renews WFP's commitment to resilience strengthening and guides the organization's efforts in that area by clarifying who, where and what will be prioritized, in a context of unprecedented levels of humanitarian need driven by multiple shocks.

WFP focuses its resilience efforts on people and communities in areas with high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition that are exposed to recurrent damaging climate and economic shocks and have limited capacity to cope. These contexts are also characterized by environmental degradation and inequality and may be recovering from or facing ongoing conflict.

WFP's resilience work is based on its comparative advantages, including a deep-rooted presence and relationships in shock-exposed communities and countries and an ability to transition between humanitarian and resilience programming, deliver at scale, operate in challenging environments and leverage global and local supply chain capacities.

The overarching vision for WFP's resilience strengthening efforts is that people can better manage shocks and stressors and improve their food security and nutrition, ultimately reducing humanitarian food assistance needs. The following three outcomes contribute to the achievement of this vision and position WFP's resilience efforts at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus and in relation to climate action:

- Empowering women, girls and marginalized people by addressing the social norms and structural barriers that hinder their ability to manage shocks and stressors;
- Improving livelihoods by enhancing natural, physical, financial, human and social capital to enable people to better manage shocks and stressors; and
- Strengthening and localizing capacities and systems to safeguard resilience gains before, during and in the aftermath of shocks.

WFP will follow five change pathways to enhance its approaches, tools and system throughout its resilience portfolio:

- a. prioritize programme integration, layering, sequencing and scale including across the nexus;
- b. adopt people-centred and participatory approaches;
- c. ensure that programming is context-specific, evidence-informed and conflict-sensitive;
- d. foster collaborative partnerships and leverage its convening role; and
- e. build upon and strengthen local and national capacity to leverage impact, sustainability and scale.

This will require WFP to leverage its convening role in the humanitarian sector and expand strong strategic and operational partnerships with a broad range of actors to achieve joint resilience outcomes; invest in enhancing its data, research and evidence generation in support of accountability, funding decisions, programme design and learning; expand, diversify and coordinate funding sources; and prioritize developing a skilled workforce to deliver high-quality and scalable resilience programmes.

Background

The 2023 evaluation of WFP's 2015 resilience policy ¹ concludes that while the policy is relevant to WFP's mandate, it no longer fulfils its role in positioning WFP effectively in the resilience landscape and should be updated to achieve greater conceptual clarity.²

The present document updates the 2015 policy, outlining WFP's renewed commitment to resilience. It serves to guide corporate resilience-strengthening efforts by clarifying who, where and what will be prioritized in resilience strengthening and the outcomes that these efforts will aim to achieve. It presents the change pathways that will underpin WFP resilience programmes and the enablers that will support their successful implementation. The update was undertaken in coordination with the update of the climate change policy, recognizing that climate action and resilience strengthening are mutually reinforcing.

Context

The need for humanitarian food assistance is escalating in the face of new and protracted conflicts, weather extremes and economic disruption. Shocks are increasingly compound and diverse, aggravated by environmental degradation and climate change.³ Conflict remains a major driver of food insecurity globally, with almost 70 percent of the 309 million people currently facing hunger living in fragile or conflict-affected countries.⁴ At the same time, climate extremes are increasing. They drove 72 million people into crisis or emergency levels of hunger in 2023.⁵ In 2022, 70 percent of refugees and asylum seekers fled from highly climate-vulnerable countries.⁶ Conflict and climate change impacts increasingly intersect, directly undermining the ability of people to cope with shocks and stressors, affecting their livelihoods and access to basic services. In parallel, food systems lack sustainability and are increasingly susceptible to disruption and risks, failing to provide sufficient nutritious food or access to healthy diets in the face of recurring shocks and stressors. They must urgently be adapted and transformed to respond to climate change, ecosystem crises and rapid urbanization.⁷

Complex and compounding crises disproportionately affect women, girls and marginalized people such as people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples. The effects of shocks are amplified by additional drivers of vulnerability such as entrenched inequality, poverty, and social norms that restrict people's decision-making power and access to information, resources, services and opportunities.⁸ This in turn undermines people's ability to build their own resilience by investing in skills, improving their livelihoods and accumulating assets.

In the countries where WFP works, many people lack the livelihoods and incomes that would allow them to maintain adequate food security and nutrition in the face of shocks and stressors. Degraded ecosystems, poor infrastructure and limited access to services and information undermine the ability of rural populations to handle shocks; meanwhile, reliance on informal work, low wages and unreliable income and a lack of services limit the ability of many urban dwellers to meet food and other essential needs or cope with unexpected shocks and stressors. Refugees and internally displaced persons are often restricted to camps or informal settlements with limited livelihood opportunities and access to services.⁹

Food insecurity and malnutrition are highest in fragile settings where people have limited or no access to government services in times of crises. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) indicates that 62 million people directly affected by disasters in the last two decades live in countries without operational early warning systems.¹⁰ According to the World Bank, more than half the global population is unprotected by national social protection systems and many countries do not have systems in place to enable timely responses to shocks.¹¹ When unable to manage shocks, people resort to detrimental coping strategies such as eating less food and less nutritious food, withdrawing children from school, selling productive assets, engaging in forced and early marriage, reducing the use of health and other services, engaging in high-risk or harmful livelihoods and undertaking actions that further degrade their natural environment.

Strengthening resilience to shocks and stressors helps to reduce the need for humanitarian food assistance, protects development gains and saves lives as well as money. The Global Commission on Adaptation found that a USD 1.8 trillion investment in resilience over the next ten years globally would return USD 7.1 trillion in net benefit.¹² Data from the Government of the Niger indicate that 80 percent of communities previously participating in WFP and partner integrated resilience programmes did not require humanitarian food assistance in 2022 or 2023 during the worst drought in the Niger in a decade.¹³



Resilience strengthening programme in Rwanda.

Definition and alignment

Building on existing United Nations definitions, “resilience” is defined as the capacity of individuals, households, communities, institutions and systems to prepare, anticipate, absorb, recover, adapt and transform in the face of shocks and stressors in a timely, efficient and sustainable manner.¹⁴ Resilience is strengthened through sustained support over several years through context-specific, multi-partner programming that is integrated, layered and sequenced and puts local and national actors at the centre.

Resilience for whom?



WFP targets people and communities experiencing recurrent food insecurity and malnutrition who have limited capacity to manage shocks and stressors, especially in fragile situations and protracted crises. WFP pays particular attention to women and girls, young people and marginalized people such as people with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and forcibly displaced populations,¹⁵ recognizing their particular capacities, needs and priorities. WFP efforts to strengthen resilience also focus on local and national institutions and food system stakeholders that directly or indirectly support these populations.

Resilience where?



WFP focuses its resilience efforts on countries and geographic areas where high levels of recurring food insecurity and malnutrition intersect with repeated exposure to shocks and limited capacity to cope with them, which results in increases in humanitarian food assistance needs. This can occur in rural, peri-urban and urban areas and displacement settings.¹⁶

Resilience to what?



WFP’s resilience strengthening efforts focus on shocks and stressors that have widespread, damaging effects on people, communities and food systems and trigger food and nutrition crises. These include climate shocks such as droughts, floods and cyclones and economic shocks such as rising food prices, hyperinflation and market crises. Stressors include factors such as environmental and ecosystem degradation, seasonal hardship and inequality. While WFP recognizes that its resilience strengthening programmes cannot be implemented effectively during the acute phases of large-scale conflict or civil war, such efforts can nonetheless help to ease local tensions,¹⁷ strengthen social cohesion and foster post-conflict recovery.



Rural farmers in the field in Egypt.

Resilience sits at the core of WFP's priorities and is aligned with WFP policies and strategies on emergency preparedness, peacebuilding, climate, gender, nutrition, cash, safety nets and social protection, urban programming and the environment. WFP's resilience policy is also aligned with international policy on food security and nutrition, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals and it builds on the United Nations Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies.

WFP bases its resilience work on its comparative advantages, which include its long-term presence and relationships in communities and countries in need of recurring humanitarian food assistance and a deep understanding of the circumstances and challenges they face. WFP's operational agility allows it to transition between humanitarian and resilience programming as situations dictate. WFP has a unique ability to deliver at scale, operate in challenging environments and leverage its global and local supply chain capacity, including efficient logistics, procurement and project management systems and market-based and retail engagement initiatives.

WFP will take a humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach to sequence, layer and integrate activities, from emergency response to longer-term support that addresses and reduces needs over time. While doing so, WFP will apply conflict sensitivity, commit to doing no harm and adhere to and promote humanitarian principles.¹⁸ WFP embeds local dialogue, community and youth participation, gender equality and women's empowerment in its programmes to ensure that they are designed with and for the people that WFP works with. WFP engages communities to overcome resource challenges and local tensions, providing opportunities to strengthen social cohesion¹⁹ and contributing to peace.²⁰

While resilience strengthening can soften the effects of conflict, complex emergencies can present challenges and pose risks for resilience programming. Politicization, manipulation of aid and security risks can make resilience programming unrealistic. WFP will base decisions on when and how to deliver resilience programming on context analysis, including analysis of conflict sensitivity and protection risks, and its commitment to the humanitarian principles.

Recognizing that achieving resilience to a range of shocks and stressors requires partnerships across multiple sectors, WFP will work with partners with complementary expertise. This means that at times WFP will play a leading role on aspects of joint programming, while at other times, it will adopt a supporting role, based on country presence and context, and in accordance with partnership collaboration frameworks.²¹ WFP will continue to connect its resilience contributions to broader coalitions and leverage its convening role in the humanitarian space to mobilize investments from partners and support improved coordination across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus and for climate action. It will also continue to expand partnerships aimed at promoting resilience, including with technical agencies, universities and research organizations – both local and international.



Livelihoods restoration in conflict affected Cabo Delgado province, Mozambique.



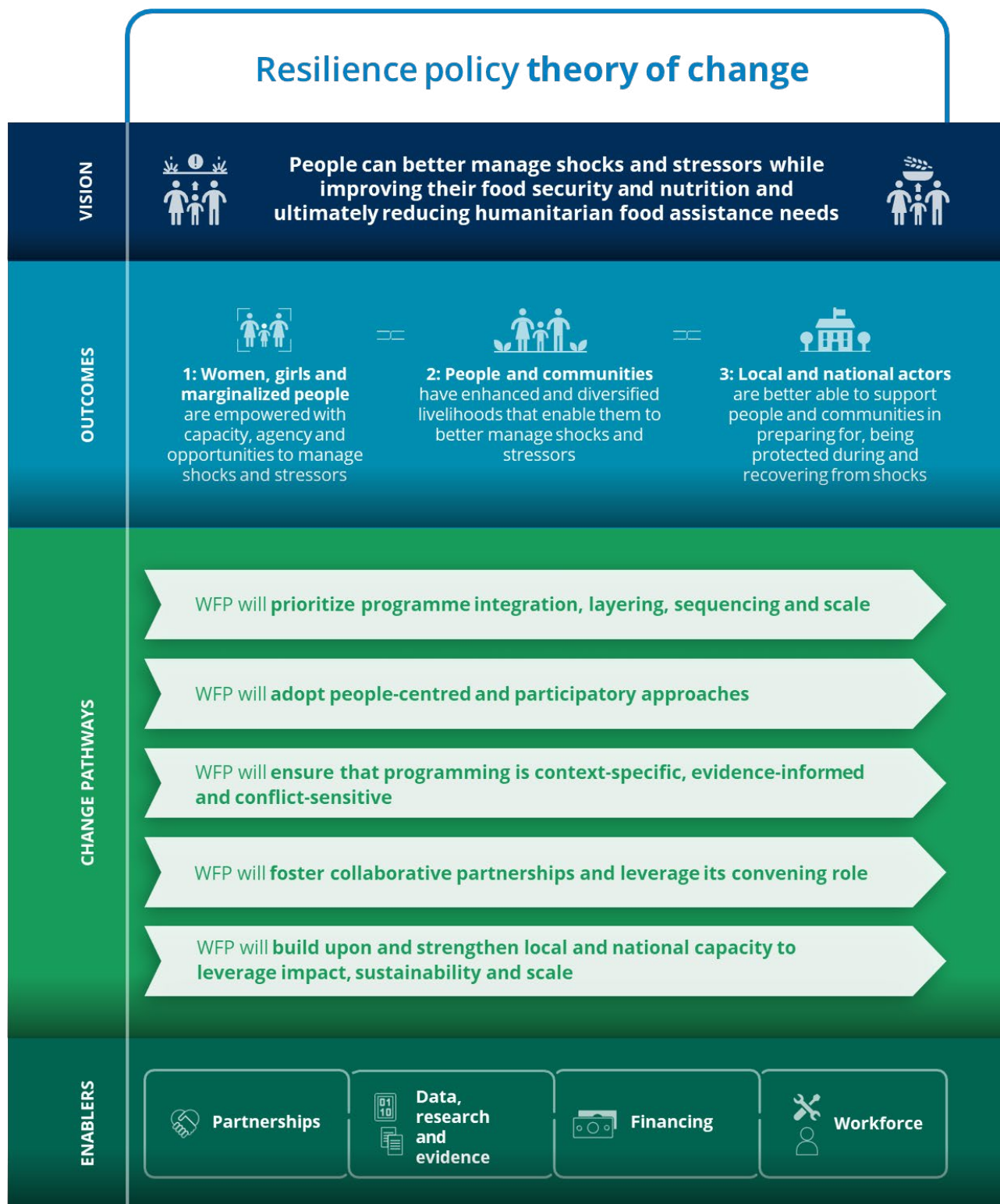
Aerial view of a dyke in a community supported by WFP and partners during the rainy season in Chad.

Theory of Change

WFP's overarching vision is for its resilience-strengthening efforts to enable people to better manage²² shocks and stressors while improving their food security and nutrition, thereby ultimately contributing to reducing humanitarian food assistance needs. As shown in the theory of change below, this vision will be achieved through three complementary and interlinked outcome areas, with outcomes 2 and 3 bridging humanitarian assistance and longer-term support using a nexus approach. While outcome 1 is cross-cutting, outcomes 2 and 3 can occur concomitantly and in a complementary manner or follow a more linear transition:

- Empowering women, girls and marginalized people by addressing the social norms and structural barriers that hinder their ability to manage shocks and stressors (*outcome 1*).
- Improving livelihoods by enhancing natural, physical, financial, human and social capital to enable people to better manage shocks and stressors (*outcome 2*).
- Strengthening and localizing capacities and systems to safeguard resilience gains before, during and in the aftermath of shocks (*outcome 3*).

Figure 1: Theory of change of WFP's updated resilience policy



Five “change pathways” set out the approaches, tools and systems needed to achieve the three outcomes. These pathways are based on principles of integrated, layered and sequenced programming at scale; people-centred approaches; context-specific, evidence-informed and conflict-sensitive programming; collaborative partnerships; and the localization of capacities and decision making. The change pathways are underpinned by four key enablers that form the necessary foundations for WFP to deliver on its resilience agenda.

Policy outcomes

Outcome 1

Women, girls and marginalized people are empowered with capacity, agency and opportunities to manage shocks and stressors



Shocks and stressors affect everyone, but not equally. Aligned with WFP's gender policy,²³ this policy envisions a world in which everyone has equal opportunities, access to resources and equal voice, enabling them to proactively develop the strategies necessary to manage shocks. The empowerment of women, girls and marginalized people – including people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples – is central to resilience strengthening. To achieve this, working with individual women, girls and marginalized people is not enough. Transformative change is required at all levels from individuals, households, communities and institutions to entire systems. Outcome 1 is foundational for resilience strengthening and cuts across outcomes 2 and 3.

To drive transformative change at the individual level, programme activities will be designed and tailored to reflect the specific and diverse needs, capacities and preferences of women and marginalized people. To enhance their strategies for managing shocks, resilience programmes will actively support them in gaining access to new knowledge, enhancing their skills and techniques and having control over and managing improved assets. WFP will also invest in actions to ensure that the food security, nutrition and well-being of women, girls and marginalized people are protected during shocks, for instance, by linking women and marginalized people with safety nets to enhance their protection during crises. WFP will invest in improving women's and girls' access to nutrition services and their consumption of healthier diets, including during shocks. Efforts to create assets that reduce work burden and time pressures during shocks – such as from water and fuel collection – will be prioritized.

At the household level, access to and control over resources can determine a woman's ability to manage shocks and stressors. WFP's resilience programmes will work with people – including men and boys as essential partners – to promote equitable control over resources. For example, where food or cash assistance is provided, WFP will promote its equitable intra-household use, including by ensuring that cash reaches accounts held by women and marginalized people.²⁴ This



Participatory community planning during the Ecosystem Restoration and CBPP bootcamp in Kenya.

can catalyse their integration into formal and digital economies, facilitating access to financial services during crises.

At the community level, WFP will seek to influence social norms to encourage positive change. This may include engaging community members and leaders in efforts to transform perceptions of women's work and gendered roles or promoting the leadership of women and marginalized people in disaster management committees and other forums. Community dialogue in turn supports social capital and social cohesion, which are important sources of resilience. To ensure that women and marginalized people benefit from services supporting their resilience, WFP will work with partners such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to facilitate access to health services, water supply and sanitation, or with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and non-governmental organizations to promote micro credit and community savings, enhancing financial and social capital.

To promote institutional change and help ensure that policies and systems meaningfully benefit women, girls and marginalized people, WFP will partner with actors such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for analyses of the barriers faced by women, for women's economic empowerment and to drive policy and advocacy efforts; and the United Nations Population Fund on sexual and reproductive health.

Outcome 2

People and communities have enhanced and diversified livelihoods that enable them to better manage shocks and stressors



Whether they live in rural, urban or displacement settings, people – particularly women and marginalized people – need reliable and flexible livelihood options that enable them to meet the challenges created by accelerating and compounding shocks and stressors. Through integrated packages of assistance and in partnerships, WFP supports people and communities seeking to enhance their livelihood capital – natural, physical, financial, human and social – so that they can manage shocks more effectively, in turn reducing humanitarian food assistance needs.²⁵

WFP will work with partners to promote community-led land and ecosystem restoration, regenerative practices and agroecology to repair and maintain the physical and natural capital that people and communities depend on for their livelihoods. When implemented at scale, these activities support a diversified and sustainable natural resource base that helps to buffer the impact of shocks and stressors for vulnerable farmers. Community-based resilience also helps to nurture trust and social cohesion within communities and can reduce tensions, foster more equitable use of natural resources and enhanced collaboration and reduce hardship,²⁶ in particular for women and girls. In addition, access to and control over natural resources and equitable livelihood opportunities help to strengthen resilience by advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

As part of these integrated packages implemented in food-insecure areas, and to promote local livelihoods and support human and financial capital, WFP will equip targeted smallholder farmers and local value chain actors, especially women and young people, with the knowledge and tools to access



Smallholder farmers with their hermetic silo in Mozambique.



Promotion of nutrition-sensitive local food value chains in Malawi.

climate information services, manage risks, improve post-harvest practices, reduce food losses and increase food availability and income. Skills development activities will strengthen human, social and financial capital, enhancing the ability of people – especially women and young people – to cope with shocks and crises.

Shocks can lead to dramatic increases in malnutrition and undermine human capital development. Nutrition programmes are core to resilience: they can build human capital before shocks and prevent nutrition from deteriorating during shocks. They also protect growth, development and education outcomes, which in turn improve livelihood opportunities and the use of services, information and networks for managing future shocks. To prevent malnutrition, programmes will support local food production including the promotion of nutrient-dense Indigenous crops to foster more sustainable farming practices and healthy diets and include social behaviour change initiatives and nutrition-oriented cash assistance. WFP will work closely with UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other partners to manage wasting, including through the implementation of the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting.

To ensure that local food systems continue to support livelihoods and access to diverse and nutritious food during shocks, WFP will promote with partners the production of vegetables, fruit

and other nutritious food crops and will support community-led activities, such as building or repairing community roads and storage facilities. This includes supporting activities that address challenges in food aggregation,²⁷ processing and transformation and facilitate access to markets and market information, risk financing and financial inclusion. To enhance local solutions and sustainability, WFP will leverage local procurement to link smallholders with rural and urban buyers and to support government or WFP programmes. It will also engage with value chain actors to promote the market diversity and connectivity that are necessary for systemic resilience. WFP will work with farmer groups, processors, suppliers, retailers and traders to generate inclusive solutions so that value chains can withstand seasonal stressors and shocks such as price volatility. WFP's main partners for agri-food system activities include FAO, IFAD and the German Agency for International Cooperation, which lead, for instance, on land tenure rights, support to farmer cooperatives and microfinance for farmers.

Overall, partners will be approached to provide technical expertise and complementary action based on their comparative advantages and aligned with collaboration frameworks. WFP will also collaborate with partners including local and national actors to develop, sustain, replicate and scale action aimed at improving and diversifying livelihoods, paving the way for people to transition out of WFP support.



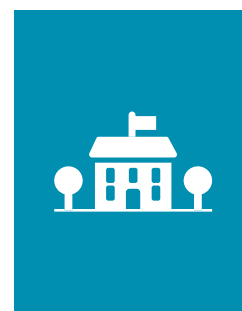
By engaging in WFP-supported savings group, Therese has secured loans to grow her business and provide financial stability for her family during shocks and stressors.



Through WFP's Livelihoods Programme, Rahima has learned how to build Mora's (chairs), made of bamboo and other materials, which are then sold through a partner in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Outcome 3

Local and national actors are better able to support people and communities in preparing for, being protected during and recovering from shocks



When communities and people can prepare for, be protected during and recover from shocks, their food security, nutrition and livelihoods can be proactively safeguarded, which in turn reduces the toll of humanitarian crisis.²⁸ Local and national actors are best placed to provide people and communities with this support, and localizing the mechanisms and systems for preparation, protection and recovery lays the ground for sustained resilience gains.

WFP will build upon and strengthen the capacity of local and national actors to prepare for shocks. In line with its social protection strategy,²⁹ WFP will work with governments on social registries to improve targeting and registration processes that allow for faster response when crises hit. Disaster risk reduction is a key component of resilience, minimizing the potential damage from shocks. WFP will support the development of national emergency preparedness and contingency planning protocols and will work with governments and partners through its early warning and assessment services to warn communities of imminent climate shocks and trigger local preparedness actions. Anticipatory action will deliver inclusive assistance to people before shocks hit to protect and minimize the loss of lives, assets and livelihoods. WFP will continue to support the scale-up of anticipatory action programmes and, when possible, will connect them to established safety nets and embed them in national social protection systems. UNDRR is a key partner on government capacity strengthening for disaster risk reduction.

WFP will promote early and more efficient humanitarian response to reduce the impact of shocks, for instance by channelling humanitarian assistance through national shock-responsive safety nets where possible, working with partners such as UNICEF on strengthening local social protection capacity. WFP will help governments obtain risk financing to support effective early action and protective assistance during crises. In addition, WFP will support countries in the development of monitoring systems that trigger funding and appropriate response measures when thresholds have been reached.

WFP's crisis response should be designed to lay the foundations for integrated long-term resilience programming. For instance, mobile cash transfers in emergencies might be prioritized because they can foster women's financial inclusion, stimulate local economies and incentivize the private sector to bring connectivity and services to rural areas. Through local procurement and cash-based transfer programmes, WFP can also stimulate local markets and last-mile supply chain actors such as retailers, bakeries and food kitchen operators.

In the aftermath of a crisis – and in line with the objectives of outcome 2 of this policy – WFP will accelerate recovery efforts by continuing to invest in the restoration of livelihood assets and critical market and rural infrastructure such as food storage facilities and feeder roads to improve access to markets and services. WFP will also contribute to community-led disaster mitigation and risk reduction, such as by building or rehabilitating retaining walls or using ecosystem-based solutions. Building back better enhances the robustness of infrastructure and livelihoods against future shocks.

Change pathways

WFP will **prioritize programme integration, layering, sequencing and scale**

The resilience of people, communities and systems cannot be strengthened through any single intervention, institution or sector. Multisectoral, integrated and sustained actions – across outcomes 1, 2 and 3 of this policy and with partners – are required to address complex and multi-faceted shocks, risks and vulnerability. Furthermore, since crises have become prolonged and increasingly complex, flexible and iterative approaches are required to bridge humanitarian response and long-term support following a humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach and integrating climate action. In this regard, WFP will:

- Establish sustained financial and institutional partnerships and collaboration, including with local, national and international actors, to enable effective integrated nexus programming at scale.
- Apply coordinated and collaborative targeting and design tools, such as the three-pronged approach³⁰ to identify priority geographic areas and communities in which to concentrate multisectoral resilience-strengthening efforts and determine the nature and sequencing of activities required to achieve resilience outcomes, including activities required from partners. The same people, communities and geographic areas will be targeted over multiple years with integrated programming on a scale sufficient to address the challenges.³¹
- In line with the nexus recommendation of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, WFP will layer and sequence its interventions to connect crisis response, resilience-strengthening efforts, and the transition and handover of activities to longer-term development stakeholders.
- Adopt flexible and adaptive programming to account for volatile operating environments and risks. WFP programmes will incorporate contingency measures and response mechanisms so that programming can be adjusted to address large-scale shocks that may occur during implementation.



Community presenting their participatory mapping in Niger.

WFP will **adopt people-centred and participatory approaches**

WFP adopts people-centred approaches and promotes local dialogue to ensure that programmes are designed with and for the people that WFP works with. In this regard, WFP will:

- Strengthen the interpretation and use of people-centred analysis to inform programme design, implementation, monitoring and institutional support. This includes using gender analysis to better understand the underlying causes of women's and girls' heightened exposure to shocks and promoting data disaggregation and qualitative methodologies to assess the varied effects of shocks on various groups of people.
- Expand the use of community-based participatory planning approaches that empower key stakeholders to identify their own priorities, challenges and solutions in order to better manage shocks and stressors. The meaningful participation of all people – especially women, girls, marginalized people and young people – ensures that programmes are designed to enhance equitable access to resources, means and opportunities.
- Use new or existing committees – comprising women, young people, older people and marginalized people – to monitor and provide oversight of programme implementation.
- Partner with and strengthen national and local actor capacity to embed people-centred approaches and support policies, frameworks and service delivery that challenge gender-based discrimination, harmful social norms and structural barriers and champion equality and inclusion.

WFP will **ensure that programming is context-specific, evidence-informed and conflict-sensitive**

WFP has access to a wealth of internal and external data that can be used to tailor resilience programmes to local, subnational and national circumstances, including in rural, peri-urban, urban and displacement areas. WFP seeks to ensure that programme design and implementation are informed by context and risk analysis. In this regard, WFP will:

- Leverage its own and its partners' analytical and assessment capacity to generate information in support of programme design and adaptive programme management. This will encompass analysing the drivers of vulnerability and how shocks and stressors affect various people's food security and nutrition, for instance by using analytical tools such as the three-pronged approach or climate risk projections. This includes understanding capacity gaps in addressing these impacts and assess its own comparative advantages and those of its partners in addressing these challenges.
- Apply conflict sensitivity to programming and operations, ensuring that – at a minimum – assistance does not inadvertently exacerbate conflict and that opportunities to support social cohesion and peace are identified and built upon.
- Strongly advocate complementary and joint analysis by bringing together relevant actors to build a shared understanding of context and needs. Where joint analysis is not feasible WFP will commit to building upon existing analysis.

- Leverage its existing evidence base and draw upon national and international available evidence and learning to align programme design with what is known about effective resilience programming. WFP will manage programmes adaptively using continuous risk monitoring, early warning and routine monitoring.³² Decision makers can use this information to manage risk iteratively, decide when to exit or switch between humanitarian and resilience programming, and ensure that programmes remain agile and relevant to changing circumstances and the needs of the people, communities and systems it serves.
- Complement strengthened monitoring with studies and evaluations to measure change over time, supporting both accountability and learning. Where feasible, WFP will conduct these exercises jointly with partners.
- Share results, learning and best practices with relevant local and national actors to capitalize on their expertise and reach consensus on how the data can be used to inform programming.

WFP will **foster collaborative partnerships and leverage its convening role**

Strengthening resilience requires strong coordination and collaborative partnerships to identify synergies between actors across locations, sectors and interconnected systems, including food systems.³³ WFP has a strong convening role in the humanitarian space – including in co-leading the global food security cluster with FAO – that it can better leverage to support localization and connections between humanitarian, development and peace stakeholders and climate action. In this regard, WFP will:

- Guarantee the alignment and coherence of its resilience efforts with national and local priorities, programmes and frameworks and in the context of the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework in each country.
- Actively engage in coordination mechanisms including inter-agency, country-led and community-led efforts. These mechanisms help overcome institutional siloes and facilitate complementary and joint programming through the formation of strategic, operational and representative coalitions. Joint assessment, planning, implementation, learning and knowledge exchange will be promoted through these coalitions.
- Proactively identify and mobilize suitable stakeholders and partnerships, building on available collaboration frameworks³⁴ where it lacks the required expertise to lead or support specific programme activities and when required activities fall outside its comparative advantages, which can vary based on operational and institutional circumstances.
- At the programme design stage, or as soon as possible afterwards, plan for the transition and handover of activities to government and long-term development partners, which should occur as soon as the situation and their capacities allow. This ensures alignment with long-term development objectives and enhances the sustainability of outcomes beyond WFP's exit. Where possible, WFP will use its convening role to encourage stakeholders to undertake joint development activities in the most fragile, remote areas.

WFP will **build upon and strengthen local and national capacity to leverage impact, sustainability and scale.**

Interventions to assist people and communities to strengthen their resilience must be developed through nationally and locally led efforts. Partnering with and strengthening the capacity of national, subnational and local authorities, food system actors, the private sector, community-based organizations and representative groups increases local ownership of programming and its relevance to local priorities and needs. The involvement of local actors at all levels from the start of programming also facilitates a smooth transition and handover when WFP exits. In this regard, WFP will do the following:

- Assess and build on local and national capacity to develop tailored and context-specific approaches. Embed a clear strategy early on, for the transition and handover of resilience programmes to local and national management as WFP phases out its own participation.
- Use local knowledge and expertise from communities to inform solutions, including local innovations that address food-related challenges specific to their environment. The application of local and traditional knowledge can strengthen resilience to climate and environmental shocks and foster efficient resource use by promoting sustainable agricultural practices adapted to local environments that favour biodiversity and contribute to resilient food systems. It also promotes the preservation of diverse local crop varieties that contribute to balanced and nutritious diets and self-reliance.
- Leverage and expand its network of research and academic institutions to support, complement and augment its own capacity and the capacity of government institutions and non-governmental organizations. This includes working with and supporting national universities, for instance through the Livelihoods, Assets and Resilience Academy initiative, which brings together a network of African universities to strengthen existing and build future local capacities in resilience programming, promoting the localization of resilience expertise.



Land restoration at Wamba Village, Samburu County in Kenya.

Essential enablers



Partnerships



No single actor can comprehensively strengthen resilience within and across systems – that requires a broad range of partnerships.³⁵ WFP renews its commitment to forging and expanding strong strategic and operational partnerships with governments, communities, local and national actors, other United Nations entities, universities, regional bodies, international financial institutions, donors and the private sector to achieve joint resilience outcomes.

Government leadership in resilience-strengthening efforts fosters a holistic approach in support of national goals, convening partners across sectors, including as part of the United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. WFP recognizes governments as the central actors in strengthening resilience and will continue to engage with national, subnational and local governments, aligning with their priorities and tailoring its assistance to support government action aimed at achieving more inclusive, equitable and sustainable outcomes. It will partner with international financial institutions to support national priorities. WFP recognizes that engagement with governments can be challenging in protracted crises, particularly amid conflict or in politically sensitive environments. WFP will use context analysis to inform its decisions on how to deliver resilience programming.

Community-based and other local actors are the first responders, closer to people in need, and they know the local circumstances better than WFP. WFP works with a wide range of grassroots organizations of women and young people, civil society organizations and an expanding range of private sector actors and will invest in empowering and optimizing their capacity to ensure that resilience programmes are more effective, locally led and sustainable.

WFP will continue to build and reinforce partnerships and seek complementarities with other United Nations entities, especially FAO and IFAD on agriculture, value chain development, natural resource management, early warning, risk management, anticipatory action, financial services and resilient food systems; UNICEF on nutrition, education, social protection, and water and sanitation; the United Nations Environment Programme on water management and environmental restoration; the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to promote resilience in urban settings; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration with regard to displacement; UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund on gender-transformative programming; UNDRR on disaster risk reduction, as well as with other technical agencies such as the German Agency for International Cooperation on agriculture, climate adaptation, conflict resolution and social cohesion.

Regional partnerships are essential to facilitating capacity strengthening through South-South and triangular cooperation, providing platforms for sharing learning across countries, forging operational coalitions and developing national policies. Partnerships with the African Union Development Agen-



FAO, UNICEF and WFP staff visiting resilience project sites in DRC.

cy–New Partnership for Africa’s Development, the Pan African Agency for the Great Green Wall, or the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and other regional bodies are important for WFP in resilience strengthening, including in the areas of early warning, preparedness, risk management and climate adaptation.

Universities, research centres and knowledge organizations are also essential partners in generating evidence, strengthening the capacity of local actors and sharing knowledge and experience. WFP will work with national and international universities and strengthen its engagement in global platforms that generate and share knowledge.

Data, research and evidence

Sound data, research and evidence generation is critical to sound programme design, policymaking, funding decisions and action. When designing resilience programmes, WFP will use evidence of what works, including lessons learned from previous projects. It will also use inputs such as climate forecasts to enable early warning, anticipatory action and early responses. Satellite and aerial imaging facilitate the assessment of natural resource conditions. Seasonal monitoring and analysis help in assessing the effects of economic, climate and conflict-related shocks to food security.

WFP will promote an organization-wide approach to generating resilience evidence that draws on multiple data sources to assess whether people, institutions and systems are better able to manage shocks and stressors as a result of its programming. The emphasis will be on leveraging routine monitoring using WFP’s corporate results framework indicators. Other sources of data from qualitative approaches, specialized studies, reviews and evaluations will facilitate better understanding of programme co-benefits, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, sustainability and areas for improvement. With key research partners WFP will invest in a methodology for gauging its contributions to reducing humanitarian food assistance needs during and following crises.

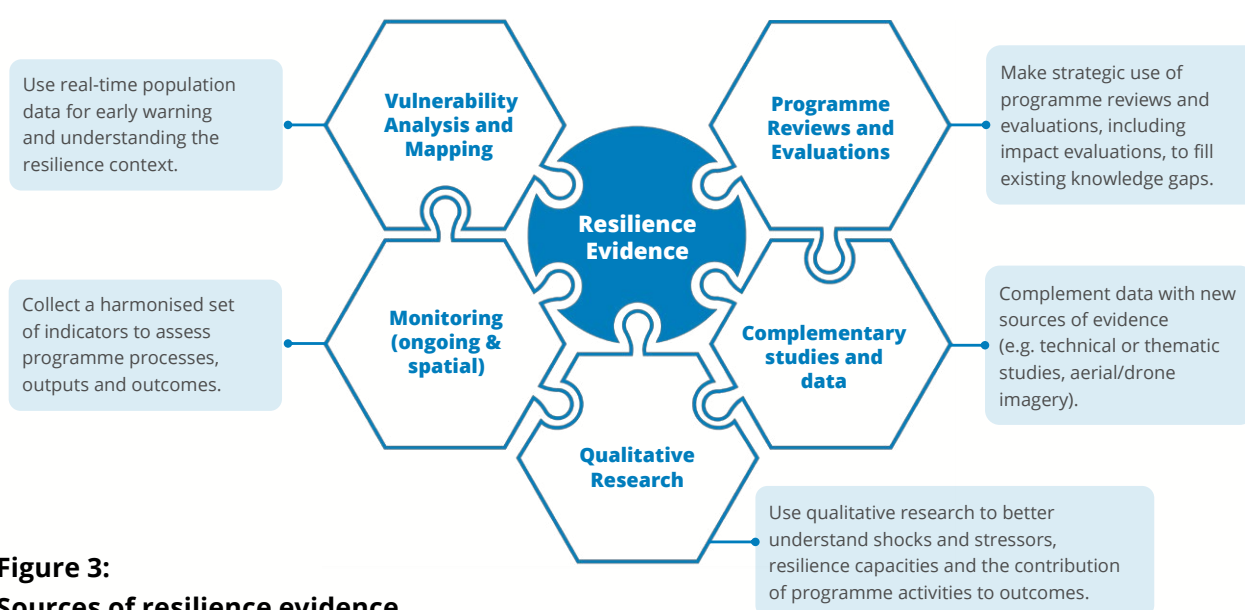


Figure 3:
Sources of resilience evidence

WFP will encourage timely and purpose-driven evidence generation by ensuring that evidence generation is aligned with the accountability, programming and learning priorities of key programme stakeholders.

These efforts will be consistent with, and integrated into, regular country-level evidence generation processes such as routine monitoring and evaluations to maximize the use of available data and resources and avoid duplication. WFP will collaborate in national, United Nations and joint programming initiatives designed to track progress and show results at various levels, thereby contributing to global knowledge and practices in the area of resilience.

WFP will improve access to and the sharing and use of evidence. Evidence syntheses will provide insight into which approaches work, for whom and in which contexts. Evidence related to resilience will be accessible through a web-based repository and a culture of evidence sharing will be fostered through communities of practice with the goal of enhancing the uptake and use of evidence for strategic decision making and improved resilience programming.



Financing

Resilience strengthening requires multi-year and flexible funding sources that provide sustained support. WFP will combine and sequence financing from various sources – humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and climate finance – to contribute to the multi-year, flexible, predictable and cross-sectoral financing that is paramount for the success of resilience strengthening programmes. WFP's value proposition, high-quality programming and ability to demonstrate results in highly complex operational settings will continue to play a crucial role in securing funding for resilience.

WFP will work to expand, diversify and coordinate funding sources for resilience together with donors and partners including those committed to the Rio conventions on climate, biodiversity and desertification, given their critical impact in building resilience for food security and nutrition. This includes national and donor governments and agencies, philanthropic organizations, private sector entities and international financial institutions, as well as multilateral climate funds and innovative financing instruments. Streamlined efforts will be made to ensure collaboration on financial mobilization with headquarters, regional bureau and country office teams to maximize scope, reach and results of WFP programmes through pooled funding.

WFP is increasingly partnering with international financial institutions to support national resilience priorities and has successfully mobilized financing through both national government projects funded by international financial institutions, and direct contributions to WFP (as needed in some fragile and conflict affected settings). WFP aims to continue to strengthen partnerships with multilateral and bilateral development banks as key financiers for developing countries, with resources coming from their own funds and initiatives, trust funds administered on behalf of donors and through blended finance and co-financing opportunities capitalizing on the banks' ability to leverage both public and private sector funding. WFP will continue to identify new options for scaling public and private climate finance for resilience and climate change adaptation.

Climate finance is an important source of funding for resilience-related efforts, given its links to climate change adaptation and the increasing global funds being allocated to this area by governments, other partners and donors. In line with its climate change policy WFP will continue to engage with international financial institutions – key climate financiers for developing countries – as well as with major multilateral climate funds such as the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund, with which WFP has accredited entity status. WFP will also improve its strategies, internal processes and systems to facilitate the mobilization of climate finance.

High-quality and scalable resilience programmes require the development, deepening and retention of a skilled workforce. Crucially, a culture of shared ownership, collaboration and coordination must be fostered across functional areas of WFP, and together with partners, to enable better programme integration. Since advances in gender equality are foundational to achieving resilience, WFP's workforce must possess stronger skills and competencies tied to people-centred results, including in the areas of gender equality, protection and social inclusion.

WFP will prioritize building staff capacity and a shared understanding of resilience among employees across functional areas at the global, regional, country office, field and operational partner level.³⁶ Capacity strengthening will be prioritized at the local level through the development and roll-out of practical guidance on integrated resilience programming and resilience evidence generation. Sustained technical support will be provided through theoretical and practical training; global, regional and country-level webinars and workshops; personnel exchanges and joint field missions. Wherever possible WFP will partner with national universities with the aim of creating a critical mass of local, national and regional experts able to support, complement and augment the capacity of WFP, government institutions and non-governmental organizations in the design and implementation of integrated and evidence-based resilience programmes.



Farmer interacting with WFP staff in Zimbabwe.

Implementation

To support its implementation, the policy is accompanied by a costed implementation plan which indicates the activities that will be prioritized under each enabler by the accountable units. An independent evaluation of the policy's effectiveness will be commissioned within four to six years of its approval. The evaluation results will inform further implementation of – or potential updates to – the resilience policy.

References

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- 3 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. 2023. [GAR Special Report 2023: Mapping Resilience for the Sustainable Development Goals](#).
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- 6 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 2024. [Focus Area Strategic Plan for Climate Action 2024–2030](#).
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- 8 International Food Policy Research Institute. 2022. [State Of Knowledge On Gender And Resilience](#).
- 9 WFP. 2023. [WFP Urban Strategy – Achieving zero hunger in an urbanising world](#).
- 10 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. 2023. [GAR Special Report 2023: Mapping Resilience for the Sustainable Development Goals](#).
- 11 World Bank Group. 2024. [Social Protection, Labor and Employment: Overview](#).
- 12 Global Commission on Adaptation. 2019. [Adapt now: A global call for leadership on climate resilience](#).
- 13 Among the 2,000 villages WFP supported through the integrated resilience approach, 848 were located in areas classified as extremely vulnerable by the Government; 80 percent of these villages were not however classified as extremely vulnerable and did not require emergency food assistance during the year’s lean season. WFP. 2023. [Preliminary Resilience Evidence from Niger](#).
- 14 This definition aligns with definitions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2013), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (2016) and the [UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies](#) (2021), among others.
- 15 This accords with WFP’s [commitments and offer to the Global Refugee Forum](#) and its memorandum of understanding with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- 16 This is particularly relevant in the context of increased rural-to-urban migration patterns and shock-induced displacement globally. See WFP. 2023. [WFP Urban Strategy – Achieving zero hunger in an urbanising world](#).
- 17 However, this should not be interpreted as an acceptance of the inevitability or “normality” of these shocks; see for instance: D. Maxwell and others. 2017. [Conflict and Resilience: A Synthesis of Feinstein International Center Work on Building Resilience and Protecting Livelihoods in Conflict-Related Crises](#).
- 18 In accordance with international humanitarian law WFP will protect the space for principled humanitarian action by promoting all four humanitarian principles (humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence) while integrating conflict sensitivity.
- 19 International Food Policy Research Institute. 2023. [Sahel Social Cohesion Research in Burkina Faso and Niger](#).
- 20 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Various years. The World Food Programme’s Prospects for Improving the Prospects for Peace (series of case studies from 2018 to 2020).
- 21 Such as the memorandums of understanding with United Nations partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Children’s Fund, and with technical partners, such as the German Agency for International Cooperation, which map out roles and responsibilities in resilience programming.
- 22 Better managing shocks and stressors refers to better preparing, anticipating, absorbing, recovering, adapting and transforming in the face of shocks and stressors.
- 23 WFP. 2022. [WFP gender policy 2022](#).
- 24 This accords with WFP’s [2022 gender policy](#) and [2023 cash policy](#).
- 25 See footnote 11.
- 26 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. [The World Food Programme’s Contribution to Improving the Prospects for Peace](#) (series of case studies from 2018 to 2020); International Food Policy Research Institute. 2023. [Sahel Social Cohesion Research in Burkina Faso and Niger](#).

- 27 “Food aggregation” describes the process of collecting, consolidating and organizing food products from small-scale farmers and producers for distribution and sale.
- 28 See for example [GAR Special Report 2023: Mapping Resilience for the Sustainable Development Goals](#).
- 29 WFP. 2021. [World Food Programme Strategy for Support to Social Protection](#).
- 30 The three-pronged approach aims to strengthen the design, planning and implementation of resilience programmes. It comprises three distinct yet interrelated processes: **integrated context analysis** – national-level analyses combining historical trends in food security and nutrition, shocks and stressors with assessment of exposure to risks; **seasonal livelihood programming** – a sub-national-level participatory tool that fosters coordination and partnership under the leadership of local government; and **community-based participatory planning** – a community-level participatory exercise that identifies needs and adapts responses to local contexts through prioritization and community ownership of programmes.
- 31 While integrated resilience programmes may initially be designed on a relatively small scale (for example, to test the approach and leverage additional partnerships, buy-in and funding), it is important to design them with the objective of reaching scale.
- 32 This will include conflict risk, economic and market monitoring.
- 33 United Nations. 2021. [UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies](#) (p. 6).
- 34 See footnote 19.
- 35 United Nations. 2021. [UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies](#).
- 36 Including personnel working in the areas of programming, monitoring and evaluation, supply chains, partnerships, finance and budgeting.

Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

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