



WFP EVALUATION



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Evaluation of WFP's Emergency Preparedness Policy

Centralized evaluation report

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Executive summary

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation features

1. This evaluation assesses WFP's 2017 emergency preparedness policy,¹ focusing on WFP's performance, challenges and opportunities with regard to emergency preparedness. Its main goal is to guide future policy directions and uphold accountability to stakeholders.
2. The evaluation asked three key questions:
 - How good is the WFP emergency preparedness policy?
 - What results has WFP achieved in the area of emergency preparedness (within and beyond the policy framework)?
 - What has enabled or hindered the achievement of results from the emergency preparedness policy and related practices?
3. These questions reflect the evaluation criteria of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee,² integrating an equity perspective. The evaluation covers the period from the policy's introduction in November 2017 to mid-2024, focusing on its quality and implementation mechanisms, including guidance and tools developed since its inception.
4. The evaluation addresses actions at the corporate and country levels and considers preparedness for various disasters, including large and small-scale events, sudden and protracted crises, and recurring events. It encompasses initiatives such as anticipatory action plans, which, although not specified in the original policy document, play a crucial role in WFP and national preparedness. The evidence generated will inform future decisions regarding the emergency preparedness policy and WFP's contributions to international commitments in this field.

Box 1: Evaluation data collection and analysis

- Retrospective construction of a theory of change in consultation with key internal stakeholders.
- Document and literature review.
- Data collection missions in Cuba, Pakistan, Togo, Ukraine and Zambia, as well as remote data collection in the Sudan.

¹ ["Emergency preparedness policy: Strengthening WFP emergency preparedness for effective response"](#) (WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1).

² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee Network on Development Evaluation. 2019. [Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Better Use](#).

- Desk reviews covering Burundi, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Peru, the Philippines and Zimbabwe.³
- Key informant interviews with WFP employees at headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices and with representatives of host governments, donors, United Nations entities and cooperating partners.
- Review of comparable organizations: the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Children's Fund.
- In-depth analysis drawing on data collection and follow-up interviews.

Context

5. International disaster preparedness initiatives began in the 1970s, gaining momentum with the 1990 launch of the [International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction](#). WFP's 2017 emergency preparedness policy emerged alongside global frameworks such as the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), emphasizing proactive disaster risk management and local ownership.
6. Internally, WFP's strategic plans from 2004 onwards progressively integrated emergency preparedness. Its current strategic plan, covering 2022–2025,⁴ emphasizes strengthening early warning systems and partnerships for enhanced disaster resilience and response capabilities. WFP aims to improve the effectiveness of its responses by being "risk-informed", i.e., by assessing threats and risks in its planning and programming.

Subject of the evaluation

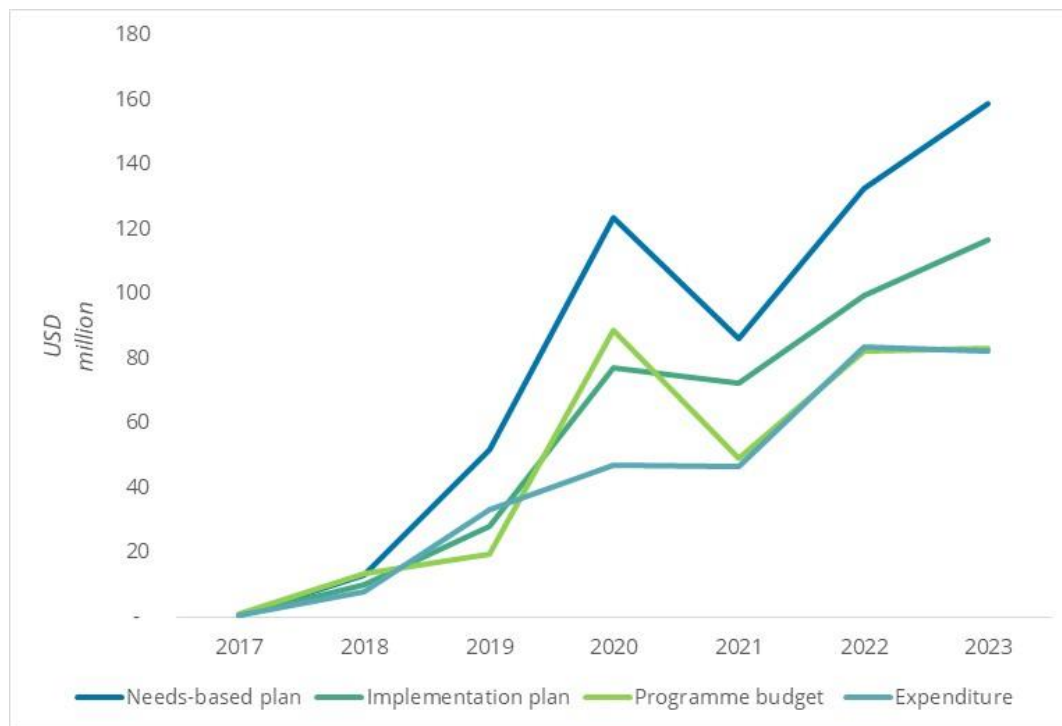
7. WFP's 2017 emergency preparedness policy was its first dedicated policy on emergency preparedness, aligning with global and United Nations' initiatives to enhance disaster preparedness. It aims to anticipate and prepare for emergencies caused by natural hazards, disease, conflicts and economic crises, ensuring timely and effective responses to those in need.
8. The policy has three primary objectives: to serve as a framework for emergency preparedness in all of WFP's work and at all levels; to inform WFP's work with national and local governments, regional bodies and local communities, at their request and driven by their priorities; and to consolidate and expand mutually beneficial partnerships, including with international and national civil society and private sector entities, in order to reduce the need for operational inputs from WFP and other actors.
9. The policy clarifies that preparedness is an integrated, ongoing approach rather than a single initiative, and it defines WFP's roles in both operational and support capacities. It emphasizes a shift towards supporting national ownership and takes into account broader frameworks related to climate change and resilience. Recent initiatives, such as the 2022 renewal of WFP's preparedness approach and the establishment of an internal "preparedness cell", reflect ongoing efforts to improve cross-divisional coordination on emergency preparedness.

³ WFP's Burundi and Philippines country offices also hosted inception missions at the start of the evaluation.

⁴ "[WFP strategic plan \(2022–2025\)](#)". (WFP/EB.2/2021/4-A/1/Rev.2).

10. Between 2017 and 2023 WFP’s needs-based plans and expenditures for activities related to preparedness increased significantly, indicating financial readiness to undertake rapid responses, although specific investments in preparedness are not tracked systematically.

Figure 1: WFP financial resources for activities related to emergency preparedness, 2017–2023⁵



Source: Office of Evaluation analysis, based on internal reporting (EV_CPB Overview report and the country office tool for managing effectively [COMET]).

Evaluation conclusions and supporting findings

11. The following section presents the eight key conclusions of the evaluation, accompanied by the findings that support them.

Conclusion 1: Policy quality

The emergency preparedness policy is of moderately good quality and has framed and guided the development of WFP’s various emergency preparedness workstreams. It is evidence-based, was widely consulted upon and is coherent with WFP’s strategy and commitments as well as key international agreements. Its results, however, have been hampered by the absence of a resourced strategy for implementation and learning.

12. The emergency preparedness policy provides a valuable vision for WFP and its objectives and scope have provided a broad framework enabling various parts of the organization to

⁵ The analysis reflects financial resources for activities recorded in COMET with the following activity tag: “Emergency Preparedness activities”, “Emergency Preparedness activities_Climate adaptation and risk management activities” and “Emergency Preparedness activities_Institutional capacity strengthening activities”. The data are approximate because the identification and tracking of budgeting and spending on emergency preparedness activities has been inconsistent at times.

develop and continue preparedness-related initiatives. It was built on a robust, multi-stakeholder consultation process and analysis of changes in the external environment, including increasingly frequent and complex emergencies and the impact of climate change on food insecurity, which highlighted the need for increased investment in emergency preparedness.

13. The policy is coherent with WFP's strategic plans as well as with commitments to national and local leadership and ownership of risk management, proactive data-driven planning, early warning and early action, and gender equity and inclusion under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework and from the World Humanitarian Summit.
14. However, the limited conceptual clarity of the policy has hindered alignment with other WFP work in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience. More broadly, the policy also lacks focus on bridging humanitarian and development efforts and integrating recovery strategies. It does not include provisions for updates related to innovations like anticipatory action or other disaster risk financing mechanisms such as macro insurance for early response.
15. Moreover, major gaps in provisions for implementing the policy, including the lack of a clear implementation strategy, have curtailed operational progress. In particular, the policy does not include commitments to substantially increasing resources for preparedness or determining how they should be utilized. It also does not articulate how internal and external coordination of efforts should take place. Clear commitments to generating evidence about the effectiveness of emergency preparedness are also missing, and WFP's ability to monitor progress is curtailed by the absence of indicators that can be adapted to different operating environments.

Conclusion 2: Responsibilities and leadership

Responsibilities for emergency preparedness stipulated in the policy have been duly met across WFP, reflecting the cross-functional nature of emergency preparedness. However, progress has been limited by insufficient senior management leadership and accountability for emergency preparedness investments and results, and a lack of coordination and guidance has led to fragmentation.

16. Emergency preparedness has consistently featured among the strategic priorities established by senior management at headquarters, but oversight and accountability for results have been weak. The work of a dedicated team on emergency preparedness at headquarters has helped to catalyse progress, although a gap in the leadership and management of the Emergency Preparedness Unit during a reorganization process between 2021 and 2023 probably constrained progress in the implementation of the policy.
17. Responsibility for emergency preparedness has been appropriately spread across WFP, at various levels and within various divisions and teams, as outlined by the policy. However, policy implementation was hampered by a lack of guidance on coordination across the organization, leading to fragmentation. The recently established preparedness cell – composed of members from various headquarters divisions and chaired by the Emergency Preparedness and Response Service – has shown promise in bringing together disparate parts of the organization in support of a limited number of country offices while improving coordination.
18. For much of the period covered by this evaluation, WFP lacked key tools for guiding and improving country-level preparedness for early action and timely responses. In particular, the emergency preparedness response package, the main corporate tool for strengthening

country office preparedness, has been under revision since 2020, leaving an important gap. WFP also has tools for cash-based transfer preparedness, developing anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection, among other things, but their application depends on country office priorities and access to resources, including technical support. As observed in other organizations of similar complexity and with a mandate for emergency preparedness and response,⁶ coherent and practical guidance for stakeholders who implement preparedness policies and strategies is crucial.

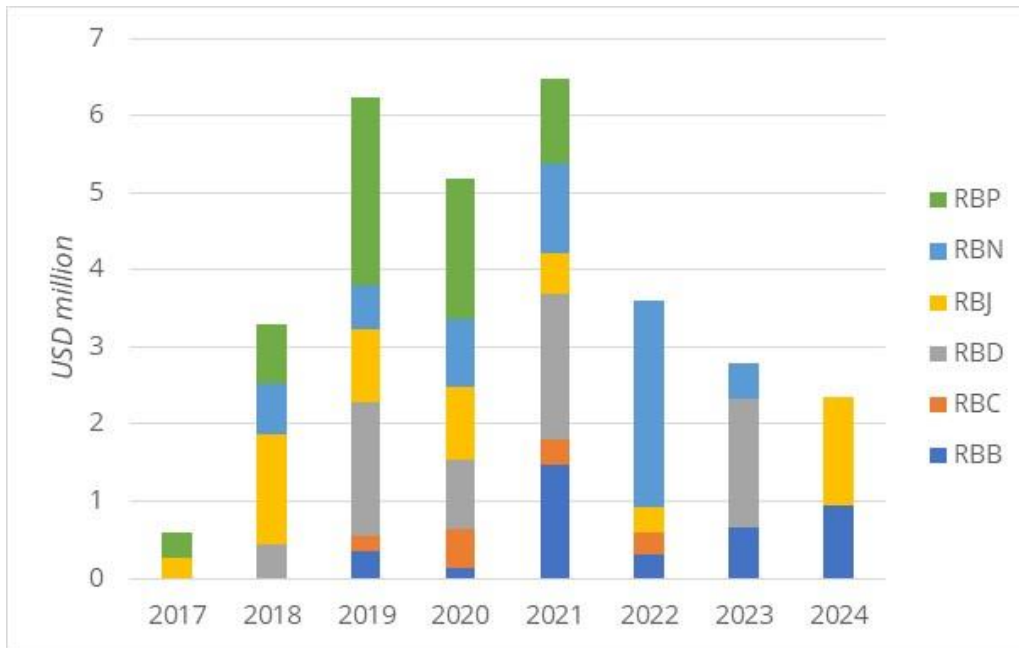
Conclusion 3: Resources

Inadequate funding and staffing have hindered implementation of the emergency preparedness policy. Access to adequate resources for preparedness activities was identified as a challenge within the policy itself. Seven years on, despite progress, overstretched and fragmented financial and human resources have continued to limit the ability of the organization to implement the policy. Diverse mechanisms for accessing additional funding, stocks and surge personnel for emergency preparedness have enabled WFP to act quickly and flexibly but have also resulted in a lack of coherence and oversight. Insufficient evidence base for why WFP and its partners should invest in emergency preparedness perpetuates the resourcing challenge, in the context of the growing gap between resources and needs.

19. WFP has spent considerably more on preparedness since the policy was approved than it did previously. Examples include the increased strategic pre-positioning of food stocks, mainly through the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF), and greater use of advance financing mechanisms. The Immediate Response Account (IRA), internal project lending and the GCMF are strong assets for WFP, and the evaluation shows that they have improved the timeliness and efficiency of emergency responses.
20. WFP's corporate alert system has enabled it to prioritize resource allocations and prompted country offices to start urgent preparedness actions. Funding from the IRA and internal project lending have increased since 2017, and this has enabled country offices to initiate emergency responses before contributions are received from donors, thus averting or minimizing pipeline breaks. However, advance financing specifically dedicated to emergency preparedness (through the IRA for Preparedness facility, or IR-PREP) has decreased since 2021 (see figure 2), and constraints on the volume and accessibility of such resources have disincentivized country offices from investing in preparedness initiatives at scale and hampered their ability to do so. The evaluation also found that country offices had difficulty in understanding and meeting the eligibility criteria for IRA funding.

⁶ The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Children's Fund.

Figure 2: IR-PREP allocations (2017–June 2024)

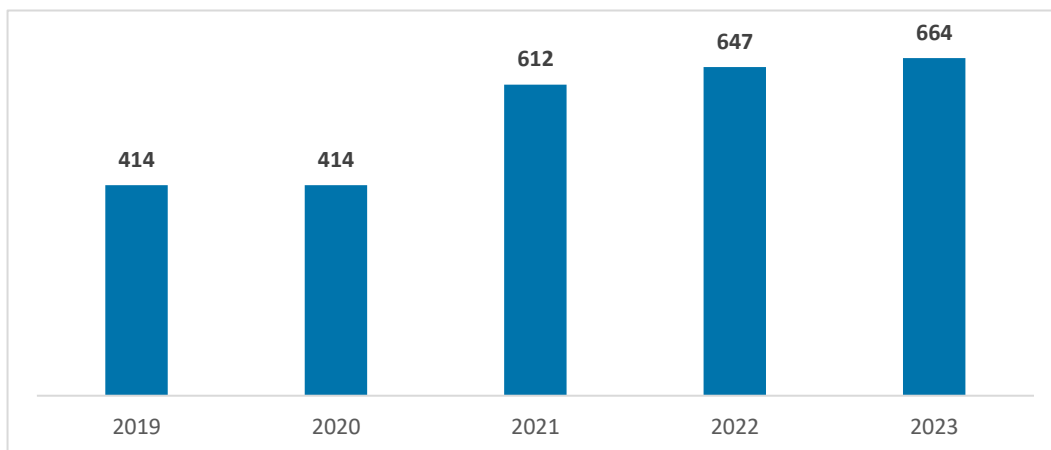


Abbreviations: RBB = Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific; RBC = Regional Bureau for the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe; RBD = Regional Bureau for Western Africa; RBJ = Regional Bureau for Southern Africa; RBN = Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa; RBP = Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Source: WFP internal reporting (APPBP Planning and Prioritization, CPB_Advance_Finance_Report_Internal).

21. While WFP's emergency preparedness has also been enhanced through increased pre-positioning of food stocks using the GCMF, with potential for more strategic pre-positioning in the future (see figure 3), local pre-positioning of non-GCMF food stocks is decreasing, replaced to some extent by pre-emergency agreements with local food suppliers and financial service providers. This supports the organization's commitment to strengthening the existing supply chain capacity of national actors and local markets.

Figure 3: Global Commodity Management Fund average annual inventory (thousands of metric tons)



Source: WFP. Former Strategic Financing Unit, now Supply Chain Planning and Optimization Branch.

22. Overall, the lack of adequate financial resources for emergency preparedness remains one of the most significant factors hindering implementation of the policy, particularly at the country level, and more could be done to build strategic stocks for sudden onset emergencies and in case of major surges in demand or disruption of supply.
23. Despite promising practices in some areas, such as disaster risk financing and fundraising for anticipatory action, the organization has struggled to mobilize enough flexible and multi-year funding to enable it to invest in strengthening capacity for emergency preparedness over time, either for itself or for its partners.
24. The organization will need to make better use of its existing funding for emergency preparedness and step up its efforts to generate new resources and improve access to various funding instruments, including non-humanitarian resource streams. This means finding compelling ways to make the case for preparedness.
25. In terms of human resources WFP has increased the capacity of its personnel for emergency preparedness, early action and response, although gaps still exist. The effectiveness of surge capacity mechanisms is mixed, and their diversity and flexibility need to be balanced against calls for stronger coordination and oversight of deployments. Short-term deployments have enabled WFP to scale up quickly when needed, but it would be preferable to build a stable workforce with emergency expertise at the country level.
26. Many staff training resources include emergency preparedness content, but they are disjointed. Preparedness is not visible as a strong organizational priority in WFP's training resources, and an overall strategic approach to developing staff capacity in this area is lacking, including incentives for personnel to prioritize their own learning in this area. Other than improved attention to staff wellness in emergency contexts, staffing policies and practices overall have not paid sufficient attention to emergency preparedness.

Conclusion 4: Country capacity strengthening

WFP has made substantial efforts to strengthen governments' and communities' capacity for emergency preparedness. Where long-term commitments are made by both parties, WFP has enabled governments to improve their emergency preparedness skills and capacity considerably, including in early warning, pre-positioning, supply chains, anticipatory action, macro risk insurance, shock-responsive social protection and other areas. Limited use of the Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index, one of the key tools for measuring and supporting capacity strengthening in emergency preparedness designed by WFP, and a lack of consolidated information about the use of other tools with similar purposes, prevents a more complete assessment of WFP's efforts. Successes in emergency preparedness capacity strengthening at the community level exist but are often components of resilience building efforts and are not usually described in terms of preparedness. Emergency preparedness capacity at the government and community levels faces sustainability challenges.

27. In line with the emphasis in the emergency preparedness policy on national ownership and leadership of preparedness, WFP has made substantial efforts to strengthen government and community capacity for emergency preparedness in some countries. It does not always, however, present those efforts as something pertaining to preparedness. More successful investments have combined upstream policy support with downstream government-led initiatives such as shock-responsive social protection.
28. WFP has contributed to the enhancement of governments' emergency preparedness through a diverse range of activities, including support for policy development and national

social protection systems; technical assistance on early warning, meteorological and food security information systems; use of risk transfer and risk financing tools; efforts to bolster governments' logistics and supply chain capacity; and simulations and training of personnel. The results achieved through many of WFP's activities are not yet visible at the outcome level. In middle-income countries with increasing capacity for disaster risk management, WFP has adapted its role to provide specific technical inputs as needed and to ensure back-up for large emergencies; these efforts have faced various challenges and achieved mixed results.

29. The country strategic plan framework has allowed WFP to shift from short- to medium- and long-term planning, and WFP recognizes that some of its tools and processes require sustained commitments to strengthening country capacity over time. However, the level and timing of resourcing – both internal and external – have hindered predictable long-term engagement, which is a prerequisite for the sustainability of emergency preparedness. In addition, preparedness partnerships are still being developed. The success of WFP efforts to strengthen country capacity in emergency preparedness is also heavily reliant on governments prioritizing this area of work and committing both time and resources to it. Governments have sometimes faced challenges in sustaining their commitment or capacity to resource emergency preparedness, rendering WFP efforts unsustainable. Instability and conflict also take their toll, with initially successful efforts to strengthen governments' emergency preparedness capacity undermined by increasing fragility and violence.
30. There are relatively few examples where WFP's capacity strengthening activities have been tested in emergencies.⁷ Moreover, inconsistent use of the Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index by country office,⁸ as the corporate tool for measuring progress on capacity strengthening of government emergency preparedness, has prevented an overall assessment of WFP contributions in this area.
31. WFP's efforts to enhance community emergency preparedness are mostly small-scale across the twelve countries studied. There is some evidence of successful community-level emergency preparedness in the form of early warning and aspects of resilience programmes, often implemented by cooperating partners. Community-focused anticipatory actions, such as the provision of timely information for disasters, have proven effective in enabling better preparedness.

Conclusion 5: WFP's comparative advantage

WFP's demonstrated achievements in emergency preparedness are the result of deep knowledge and experience of the infrastructure, distribution systems and technology required for responding to emergencies; understanding of contextual risks and potential emergency scenarios; trusting and trusted partners; solution-driven staff focused on enhancing the capacity of others; and dedicated flexible funding.⁹ To scale up emergency preparedness, WFP needs to expand all these components, with more dedicated flexible funding and stronger internal prioritization of emergency preparedness across the organization at all levels.

⁷ For example, during the Typhoon Rai response in the Philippines, mobile communications platforms previously developed by WFP in collaboration with the Government were successfully deployed.

⁸ In 2023, 12 WFP country offices reported on the Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index in their annual country reports, including baseline, follow-up and target values in accordance with the methodology, out of 24 countries that at some point have made use of the index.

⁹ See conclusions 3 and 4.

32. The diversity of WFP interventions in emergency preparedness is both an advantage and a burden. It allows WFP to tailor emergency preparedness interventions to needs based on context but it does not allow the organization to focus where it excels. At the level of support services, WFP has a clear comparative advantage in two areas of emergency preparedness that are appreciated by governments and partners alike: supply chain management and the provision of common services.
33. In particular, the significant growth in WFP's supply chain infrastructure and distribution systems has contributed indirectly and directly to emergency preparedness, complementing corporate investments in field-based logistics preparedness through the logistics cluster that benefit emergency response operations.
34. Moreover, WFP's investments in digital transformation and technology have also been gradually enhancing preparedness by enabling more agile, efficient, effective and accountable emergency responses. Challenges remain as new tools are implemented, but recent efforts to improve preparedness support related to information technology are promising.
35. WFP has also made significant progress in supporting risk analysis and early warning systems that inform preparedness and early action, internally and for governments, clusters and other partners. Advances are largely related to climate-related hazards, while analysis and early warning systems for conflict have been less effective so far. Recent efforts by WFP to integrate conflict, climate and economic analyses through an early warning working group are making conflict early warning more visible and systematic and promoting a multi-hazard approach to preparing for increasingly connected and cascading disasters.
36. Looking ahead, WFP efforts at the intersection between government and community preparedness such as shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action, where it has demonstrated success, may provide an opportunity to focus, reach scale, garner greater donor support and build a more strategic approach to emergency preparedness based on WFP's recognized advantage in early warning, vulnerability analysis and operational capacity. In addition, such an approach would more clearly demonstrate WFP's contribution to the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

Conclusion 6: Efficiency and effectiveness

Preparedness has contributed to more efficient responses and early action by WFP, but disjointed efforts, funding gaps and delays and a weak evidence base have prevented the organization from achieving more.

37. The evaluation found that WFP's investments in emergency preparedness at the corporate, regional, national and subnational levels enabled more timely responses, both in its own operations and by governments. Use of the GCMF reduced lead times, on average, from 129 to 92 days between 2019 and 2023. Furthermore, WFP investments in anticipatory action have saved time where conditions have triggered payouts, preventing further deterioration of affected people's food security, health and livelihoods. Strategic advance contracts and agreements – such as resource-sharing agreements with governments, standby and long-term agreements with suppliers, food supply agreements and rapid field-level agreements – also helped to enhance WFP emergency preparedness.
38. Nevertheless, there is ample room for improvement, as most emergency responses involve delays caused by critical gaps in preparedness. Time saved by preparedness at the corporate level was often counteracted by gaps in preparedness at the national or subnational levels. Similarly, preparedness at the national and subnational levels was

sometimes squandered by the absence or tardiness of donor resources and corporate-level advance financing. Failure to secure funds for anticipatory action calls into question the value of investing in early warning systems if these are not adequately heeded. Early warning systems for conflict in particular have been less effective than those for natural hazards, with limited preparedness observed in Ukraine and the Sudan prior to the breakout of conflict.

39. Trade-offs between time and cost efficiency and other effects have been made but, with the exception of anticipatory action, are not sufficiently well analysed or shared for WFP to make informed decisions about them. Preparedness for local procurement, for example, has reduced lead times through supplier agreements and avoided delays related to customs clearance, thus helping local economies and contributing to early recovery; decisions on local procurement also, however, require consideration of other criteria such as food quantity and quality. Decisions related to the use of non-GCMF pre-positioning (at the national and subnational levels) has also saved time but must take into account storage conditions, expiration dates and security. Among various hindering factors, country strategic plan revision processes have caused bottlenecks in some cases, affecting the ability of country offices to respond quickly to changing needs.
40. The limited evidence available suggests that WFP's preparedness measures in responses to diverse types of emergencies have been effective, and recent studies¹⁰ of WFP's support for anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection have found them to be effective preparedness interventions. Overall, however, in WFP's narratives about preparedness, the link between preparedness, efficiency and effectiveness is assumed rather than analysed or explicitly validated. Internal and external reporting rarely highlights the contribution of preparedness to protecting food security or nutrition. More robust evidence would strengthen the case for greater internal and external investments in emergency preparedness and early action, which could in turn support resource mobilization for emergency preparedness.

Box 2 – Evidence on anticipatory action

1. In 2023, of the 36 countries with anticipatory action investments, nine activated anticipatory measures, enabling 638,960 people to receive cash assistance to reduce the effects of forecasted disasters before they fully unfold and the magnitude of humanitarian needs.
2. In Pakistan, prior to Cyclone Biparjoy in 2023, WFP had prepared lists of vulnerable people from over 200,000 households, together with their bank account numbers, and shared this data with a financial services provider as part of preparedness measures. When the cyclone approached, WFP transferred cash to vulnerable households enabling them to take early action to prepare for the storm.

41. Finally, WFP has achieved mixed results in terms of institutionalization and community ownership of emergency preparedness efforts. More successful efforts have combined upstream policy and strategy support with interventions in government-led initiatives. However, at times efforts have been hampered by circumstance, including a lack of

¹⁰ WFP. 2023. [Regional Evaluation of WFP's Contribution to Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean \(2015–2022\)](#); WFP, 2025 (forthcoming). *Impact Evaluation of Anticipatory Action in Nepal*.

dedicated government financing and recurrent turnover in government personnel in many countries.

Conclusion 7: Inclusiveness

While the evaluation identified some good practices in relation to the integration of gender and disability inclusion into emergency preparedness, there is limited evidence of systematic and coordinated efforts and results in those areas.

42. Despite commitments in the emergency preparedness policy, WFP has made limited efforts to systematically integrate gender and disability inclusion into its emergency preparedness activities. There are several key challenges in this regard. In many territories prone to conflict or disasters, women and girls as well as persons with disabilities are rendered less visible by barriers that prevent their participation in emergency preparedness processes. National emergency preparedness policies and programmes are rarely gender sensitive and government counterparts often lack gender expertise in this area. Operational guidance and tools for integrating gender and disability inclusion into regional and country-level preparedness strategies have been limited. Emergency preparedness and response teams are not always gender-balanced and do not always have the skills and expertise needed to integrate gender and disability inclusion in their work.
43. Nevertheless, good practices and operational guides have been supported and documented by headquarters and regional bureaux and show that the engagement of women and women's organizations in preparedness activities is catalytic and contributes to the design of inclusive response strategies; they also show that disability-inclusive early warning increases the likelihood that persons with disabilities can take preventive action, evacuate and make risk-informed decisions.
44. For WFP to fully integrate a gender-sensitive approach and disability inclusion in preparedness work, a better understanding of the underlying inequalities that make certain groups more vulnerable to disaster and conflict-related emergencies is required as well as stronger partnerships with women's organizations.

Conclusion 8: Partnerships

Partnerships are central to WFP's approach to emergency preparedness, and the organization has made considerable contributions to collective preparedness efforts, particularly through partnerships with national governments and through the work of global clusters. However, partnerships have often been disparate and opportunistic, with partnerships aimed at strengthening preparedness with private sector entities, cooperating partners and development actors lacking any clear direction or rationale.

45. Partnership is one of the overarching principles of the emergency preparedness policy, demonstrating WFP's commitment to combining forces with others and building on its strengths alongside other key partners to build preparedness capacity. National governments are primarily responsible for preparing for and responding to emergencies, and WFP has demonstrated its willingness to support governments in their lead role with a flexible approach depending on the level of existing government capacity, even if in some cases, there is a lack of clarity over the ownership and sustainability of preparedness capacity. Local partnerships to strengthen community-level preparedness, including within WFP's extensive network of local cooperating partners, have received less strategic attention at the corporate level. Key opportunities include increased support for community-focused elements of anticipatory action, in collaboration with governments and partners.

46. WFP-led global inter-agency humanitarian clusters have contributed to emergency preparedness, and WFP's leadership has been instrumental in catalysing collective preparedness in some instances, particularly within the global logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters. These clusters have dedicated significant resources to preparedness, designed adaptable preparedness tools, developed partnerships with private sector entities for additional ad-hoc capacity in emergencies and delivered strong outputs, including in the areas of logistics capacity assessments, information communications and technology training, contingency planning and natural hazard risk analysis.
47. The work of the WFP-led global clusters is, however, hampered by overstretched resources and inconsistent prioritization of preparedness, both at the global and country levels. The deactivation of clusters at the country level in periods between emergencies has also been a constraining factor in some cases. WFP has engaged in Inter-Agency Standing Committee working groups on early warning and emergency preparedness, but there are few demonstrable results as yet.
48. WFP's common and on-demand services are highly appreciated both internally and externally and are seen as a valuable contribution to system-wide emergency preparedness – globally and at the country level. External stakeholders at the country level provided strong positive feedback in appreciation of system-wide services provided by WFP to support preparedness, including logistical support to partners for health-related emergency preparedness and response; shared warehousing, mobile storage units and storage facilities; infrastructure repair and upgrading; and provision and maintenance of equipment to support common security telecommunications, transport, storage and connectivity.
49. Overall, where WFP has engaged in building stronger collective capacity on early warning and emergency preparedness – through the clusters and other inter-agency coordination mechanisms and in partnership with other organizations and initiatives – it has made contributions that are valuable in their own right and complement the work of others. However, partnerships have often been disparate, country-driven and opportunistic, and there has been no clear underlying corporate strategy or rationale for prioritizing some partnership initiatives over others, making it difficult to draw conclusions on their effectiveness. This same lack of clarity may have hindered WFP's proactivity in seeking out new partnerships aimed at jointly strengthening preparedness capacity, including with development donors and organizations.
50. In conclusion, quality partnerships clearly emerged as an enabling external factor for the achievement of results in the area of emergency preparedness. The evaluation stresses the importance of strong support from other United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and private sector actors, both within and beyond the clusters, in the co-design and co-financing of emergency preparedness initiatives.

Recommendations

51. The table below presents the recommendations stemming from the evaluation of WFP's emergency preparedness policy, along with the proposed WFP entities responsible for implementing the recommendations, the priority of each recommendation and a target date by which each recommendation should be addressed.

Recommendations

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>Recommendation 1: Policy revision and implementation Conduct a participatory policy revision process, with the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, to update the policy and produce a strategy for implementing it, including with partners. Include a theory of change, develop a comprehensive toolkit and a plan to establish an evidence base and assign clear organization-wide responsibilities for emergency preparedness.</p>	<p>Strategic Short-term</p>	<p>Programme Policy and Guidance Division (PPG)</p>	<p>Analysis, Planning and Performance Division (APP), Supply Chain and Delivery Division (SCD), Programme Operations Department (PO), Emergency Coordination Service (COOE), Human Resources Division (HRM), regional bureaux</p>		
<p>1.1 Update the WFP emergency preparedness policy on the basis of a thorough consultative process with external and internal stakeholders to reflect recent contextual changes and evolutions in thinking, practice and evidence in the area of emergency preparedness, including financing and partnerships approaches. As an integral part of the process, refine the definition of emergency preparedness, develop an emergency preparedness theory of change that incorporates conflict-sensitivity and links to resilience strengthening, gender-sensitive and inclusive approaches and other cross-cutting issues.</p>		<p>PPG</p>	<p>APP, SCD, COOE, HRM, regional bureaux</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>2026</p>

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>1.2 Consolidate a coherent package of tools for emergency preparedness encompassing key approaches such as the preparedness of WFP, sustainable capacity strengthening of governments and other partners, early warning, anticipatory action, shock-responsive social protection and insurance. Include guidance on conceptual and operational connections and differences between preparedness and other areas of work (e.g. resilience, climate change, disaster risk reduction, business continuity management, shock-responsive social protection, insurance) and how to integrate them. Incorporate practical operational guidance and share good practices on integrating conflict-sensitivity, gender and disability inclusion across the wide range of emergency preparedness work.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD	High	2026
<p>1.3 Among the priorities of the updated emergency preparedness policy, include the development of a compelling evidence base for all elements of WFP's emergency preparedness portfolio to inform advocacy for donor, government and other stakeholder investment in emergency preparedness.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD	High	2026
<p>1.4 Ensure that the updated policy is supported by an implementation strategy, with mechanisms for monitoring and reporting, that establishes clear responsibilities and accountability for emergency preparedness, especially at the senior management level but also at other levels and across functions. A mechanism for ensuring interdepartmental coordination led by senior management (at the Deputy Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director level) should be explored.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD, PO, COOE, regional bureaux	High	2026

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 2: Financial resources Maximize available financial resources in order to increase overall access to funding and supplies for emergency preparedness.	Strategic Short-term	PPG	APP, SCD, COOE		
2.1 Develop a multi-year strategy that prioritizes access to multi-year, flexible, unearmarked funding as well as strategic stocks, striking a balance between proactive and coordinated resourcing for preparedness and acceptable levels of financial risk for the organization. This should be supported by a communication campaign aimed at improving country office understanding of available financial opportunities and related obligations and accompanied by better tracking of preparedness investments, including through existing trust funds, to ensure full visibility of WFP's funding for preparedness.		PPG	APP, SCD, COOE	High	2026
2.2 Review IR-PREP and revisit criteria for accessing IR-PREP funding to make it more accessible to country offices that require advance financing.		APP	PPG, SCD, COOE	High	2026
Recommendation 3: Staffing Optimize emergency staffing by enhancing existing surge mechanisms and addressing the need for sustainable capacity development for staff in relation to emergency preparedness.¹¹	Operational Medium-term	COOE	Staffing Coordination and Capacity Service, HRM, PPG, APP, SCD, regional bureaux, other concerned headquarters divisions		

¹¹ An internal WFP audit on staffing in emergencies included high priority agreed actions to address emergency preparedness staffing gaps. This recommendation aligns with those actions.

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>3.1 Review emergency preparedness and response training models, systems and resources to ensure that emergency preparedness is a clear priority and that all staff (international and national) have incentives to pursue it; that the scope of emergency preparedness training reflects the scope of the updated emergency preparedness policy; that training reflects WFP commitments to people-centred and high quality programming; , and that in-person and virtual training opportunities are available. Develop additional emergency preparedness training resources and opportunities as necessary. Consider involving inter-agency and external partners in simulation exercises and training.</p>		Staffing Coordination and Capacity Service	HRM, PPG, APP, SCD, regional bureaux, other concerned headquarters divisions	Medium	2027
<p>3.2 Take steps to improve the gender balance of emergency surge deployments at the global level, underpinned by an analysis of the factors behind women’s lower applications for and deployments from emergency rosters.</p>		COOE	PPG, HRM, regional bureaux	High	2027
<p>3.3 Review, strengthen and clarify the process, responsibilities, tools and mechanisms related to emergency surge deployments. Once clarified, develop and maintain a tracking system for all surge requests and deployments, consolidating various mechanisms (formal and informal) to improve the understanding, oversight and management of WFP’s emergency preparedness staffing needs while retaining the flexibility of informal surge channels.</p>		COOE	PPG, HRM, regional bureaux	High	2026
<p>Recommendation 4: Country capacity strengthening and support Support regional bureaux and country offices in strengthening government and national stakeholder capacity for emergency preparedness through effective engagement with key entities, increasing the potential for sustainability by leveraging</p>	Operational Long-term	PPG	Regional bureaux, PO		

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
partnerships and combining downstream and upstream interventions and appropriate transition strategies.					
4.1 Support regional bureaux and the country offices they prioritize in efforts to develop, implement, test and improve models of engagement that support and promote coordination between government entities across all relevant thematic areas (including those responsible for climate information, analysis and early warning, emergency preparedness and response, food security, social protection, gender equality and disability inclusion, and finance) and with other partners.		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	High	2027
4.2 Support regional bureaux and the country offices they prioritize in efforts to pilot advocacy strategies to obtain the commitment of governments to long-term capacity strengthening through the allocation of their resources (monetary and in kind) to joint efforts, leveraging partnerships and supporting the institutionalization of funding resources for governments wherever possible.		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	Medium	2028
4.3 Support regional bureaux and the country offices they prioritize in efforts to expand emergency preparedness country capacity-strengthening work at the intersection between government and community interventions, specifically shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action, building on the use of relevant emergency preparedness country capacity-strengthening tools and leveraging relationships with cooperating partners.		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	High	2028
4.4 Support regional bureaux and country offices in middle income countries with high risk of emergencies prioritized by regional bureaux in efforts to develop models of engagement and transition that focus on strategic partnership with governments on emergency		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	Medium	2028

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
preparedness, while maintaining the rapid response capacity of WFP for specific emergency scenarios.					
Recommendation 5: Increase effectiveness through learning Continue to apply WFP’s strengths and comparative advantages to emergency preparedness, seeking out and maximizing opportunities for learning, identifying and addressing gaps in the evidence base, generating new evidence and increasing effectiveness.	Operational Medium-term	PPG	APP, SCD, CFO, Office of Evaluation (OEV), regional bureaux		
5.1 Revise emergency preparedness monitoring indicators to align them with the theory of change and ensure that they can be tailored to context, enabling WFP to track key metrics for emergency preparedness and its contribution to achieving WFP’s objectives.		PPG	APP	High	2027
5.2 Promote the use of simulations, after-action reviews, lessons learned exercises, evaluations and return on investment studies to increase understanding of how emergency preparedness affects the effectiveness and efficiency of responses, including in partnership with other organizations and Inter-Agency Standing Committee groups. Explore missed opportunities for early action, including the benefits that it would have yielded and what would have made early action possible.		PPG	APP, SCD, Chief Financial Officer Division, OEV, regional bureaux	High	2027
5.3 Ensure that the results of and learning on emergency preparedness are systematized and disseminated internally and externally, including through Inter-Agency Standing Committee working groups, with a focus on strengthening joint preparedness. Create and manage a repository of evidence and learning on emergency preparedness.		PPG	APP, OEV, regional bureaux	High	2027

Introduction

1. This document presents the evaluation report for the World Food Programme (WFP) Emergency Preparedness Policy – Strengthening WFP Emergency Preparedness for Effective Response¹² (hereinafter referred to as the Emergency Preparedness Policy), which was approved by the Executive Board in 2017. The summarized Terms of Reference for this evaluation are attached in Annex I. The evaluation began with the inception phase in November 2023, which was followed by the data collection phase from April to June 2024. A detailed timeline of the evaluation is provided in Annex II.

1.1 EVALUATION FEATURES

2. Figure 4 provides an overview of the evaluation objectives, scope, users and framework. The subsections elaborate on the respective points.

Figure 4: Evaluation objectives, scope, users and framework

Evaluation objectives	Evaluation Scope		Users of the Evaluation
<p>Accountability: - Assess policy quality, together with its associated guidance, implemented activities and results.</p> <p>Learning: - Identify why expected changes happened or not, draw lessons and derive good practices and learning around further implementation. - Formulate recommendations for future Emergency Preparedness policy and practice.</p>	Spatial	Global – 12 Country deep dives	<p>Internal WFP stakeholders: - WFP’s Executive Board and Senior Management - WFP divisions at HQ, including the Emergency Preparedness Unit - Regional Bureaus - Country Offices</p>
	Temporal	Nov 2017 – Mid-2024	
	Thematic	WFP Preparedness activities for all types of hazards directly implemented by WFP and related capacity strengthening for partners	<p>External stakeholders: - strategic partners of WFP, including WFP main donors and implementing partners - other stakeholders committed to Emergency Preparedness implementation</p>
Evaluation Framework			
<p>OECD/DAC Criteria: relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency and sustainability + equity</p>	<p>A set of 3 Evaluation Questions with 17 sub questions covering a range of evaluation criteria</p>		<p>Cross-cutting: AAP, GEWE, inclusion, environment, humanitarian principles</p>

Source: ADE/evaluation team. Based on Terms of Reference.

1.1.1 Rationale and purpose

3. In line with the coverage norms defined by its Evaluation Policy, WFP aims to evaluate all policies approved by the Executive Board four to six years after their approval. This evaluation provides an independent assessment of WFP’s performance, opportunities and challenges in implementing its Emergency Preparedness Policy and related work since 2017. The evaluation’s goals are to inform strategic decisions on future policy orientations and ensure accountability to WFP stakeholders. The evaluation also examines the policy from a gender equality and women’s empowerment and inclusion perspective, drawing lessons and best practices for future WFP policies and their implementation. The evidence generated aims to inform WFP’s decisions on the future of the Emergency Preparedness Policy and identify ways to further contribute to relevant international commitments.

1.1.2 Evaluation questions

4. The evaluation addressed three evaluation questions (EQs) common to all WFP policy evaluations:

¹² WFP, 2017. “WFP Emergency Preparedness Policy” (WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1*).

- EQ1 – How good is the Emergency Preparedness Policy (criteria: relevance, coherence, equity)?
 - EQ2 – What results has WFP achieved in the area of emergency preparedness (within and beyond the policy framework) (criteria: effectiveness, equity, sustainability)?
 - EQ3 – What has enabled or hindered the achievement of results from the Emergency Preparedness Policy and related practices (criteria: relevance, coherence, efficiency)?
5. The EQs address the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, incorporating an equity lens for each criterion.

1.1.3 Scope

6. The evaluation covers the period from when the policy was issued in November 2017 to mid-2024, when data collection ended. Its primary focus is on the quality of the policy and its implementation mechanisms, including guidance, tools, technical capacity, resourcing, and the results and contexts in which they occurred. Some guidance and operational tools related to emergency preparedness, such as anticipatory action plans, have been developed since 2017 and are not explicitly mentioned in the policy document. Those are included within the scope of the evaluation.
7. The evaluation is global in scope, encompassing actions at corporate level and in all regions and countries where WFP operates. It considers preparedness for all types of hazards as stated in the policy. This includes preparedness for both large- and small-scale events, as well as scale-ups in protracted crises and new or recurrent hazard events.

1.2 CONTEXT

1.2.1 External context

8. International disaster preparedness efforts began in the 1970s with the establishment of the United Nations Disaster Relief Office in 1970. Progress was limited until the 1990 launch of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,¹³ aimed at reducing disaster-related losses. WFP's 2017 Emergency Preparedness Policy emerged amid global advancements, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,¹⁴ which emphasized systematic disaster risk management and preparedness. The 2015 Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Goals¹⁵ and Paris Agreement on Climate Change further stressed preparedness. In 2016, the World Humanitarian Summit highlighted the need for improved humanitarian action and local ownership, focusing on data, early warning and risk management. These initiatives underscored the role of governments and local actors in emergency preparedness in development and humanitarian work, emphasizing the reinforcement of national systems. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Humanitarian System-wide Scale-up Protocols were adapted in 2018 and during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to ensure they were appropriate for different types of crises.
9. WFP's Emergency Preparedness Policy reflects the global shift from reactive crisis management to proactive emergency preparedness (for both natural and man-made hazards). By 2023, acute food insecurity affected 238 million people, up from 124 million in 2017.¹⁶ Disaster losses have risen, with natural hazards causing USD 210 billion in losses in 2020.¹⁷ The COVID-19 pandemic pushed 97 million

¹³ United Nations General Assembly (42nd Session), 1987. *International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction* <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/152704?ln=en&v=pdf>.

¹⁴ United Nations, 2015. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030* <https://www.undrr.org/media/16176/download?startDownload=20241031>.

¹⁵ United Nations, 2015. *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf>.

¹⁶ WFP. 2023. *Global Report on Food Crises*.

¹⁷ Münchener Rückversicherungs-Gesellschaft (Munich Re), 2021. Record Hurricane Season and Major Wildfires – The Natural Hazard Figures for 2020.

people into poverty in 2020,¹⁸ exacerbating global hunger and poverty caused by climatic events and conflict, with 308.5 million people needing humanitarian assistance.¹⁹

10. In the global context of emergency preparedness, the intersection of gender equality and women's empowerment, equity and inclusion is crucial yet often overlooked. Women and marginalized groups (including the elderly and persons with disabilities) are disproportionately affected by emergencies due to existing societal inequalities.²⁰ However, there is a significant lack of sex- and age-disaggregated data in global disaster impact databases. A review of the DesInventar database (recording national disaster losses) showed that only 11 out of 85 countries disaggregated mortality data by sex and, of those, only 0.65 percent of recorded deaths were disaggregated.²¹ Without active involvement in decision making during preparedness, the specific needs and priorities of women and marginalized groups may be ignored.
11. Emergency preparedness is an integral part of disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation and resilience building. The 2022 Global Platform on DRR emphasized the urgent need to synergize efforts between DRR and climate change adaptation in communities. It highlighted the importance of equitable "resilience thinking" in all investments and decisions, from local to global levels.²²
12. Figure 3 in Annex XVIII presents a timeline of the discussed frameworks, agreements and policies.

1.2.2 Internal context

13. Initially, in the 2004–2007 Strategic Plan, emergency preparedness was not a strategic objective. WFP later committed to activities such as developing contingency plans, refining vulnerability analysis and mapping, strengthening early warning systems, and adapting funding mechanisms for upfront funding. It then integrated these actions into programme budgets.
14. In the 2008–2013 and 2014–2017 Strategic Plans, emergency preparedness was explicitly included as a strategic objective. WFP focused on further strengthening vulnerability analysis and mapping, sharing early warning system expertise with governments, and implementing disaster preparedness and mitigation programmes. It also aimed to improve analysis, business continuity, insurance work and knowledge management.
15. The 2017–2021 and 2022–2025 Strategic Plans took a different approach, embedding emergency preparedness across several strategic objectives. These plans emphasize preparedness for WFP operations and strengthening national governments' preparedness systems.
16. Emergency preparedness is included within the 2017–2021 Strategic Plan under two strategic objectives (SOs):
 - SO1: Strengthening disaster risk reduction, prevention, preparedness, and response capacities to ensure access to nutritious and safe food, including through social protection.
 - SO3: Promote livelihood and resilience building, climate change adaptation, risk management and strengthened food systems. Supporting national DRR and climate resilience with innovative tools linking early warning systems with early response mechanisms.²³
17. The 2022–2025 Strategic Plan includes emergency preparedness under three main outcomes:²⁴
 - Outcome 1: WFP focuses on strengthening early warning and anticipatory action by developing and deploying its workforce for emergencies and strengthening national and

¹⁸ World Bank, 2021. *Updated Estimates of the Impact of COVID-19 on Global Poverty: Turning the Corner on the Pandemic in 2021?*.

¹⁹ OCHA, 2022. *Global Humanitarian Overview*.

²⁰ UN Women and UNICEF, 2019. *Gender and Age Inequality of Disaster Risk*.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Global Platform 2022, 2022. *From Risk to Resilience: Towards Sustainable Development for all in a COVID-19 Transformed World*.

²³ "WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021)" (WFP/EB.2/2016/4-A/1/Rev.2*).

²⁴ "WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2025)" (WFP/EB.2/2021/4-A/1/Rev.2).

local disaster risk management capacity. A specific output is “emergency preparedness organized”.²⁵

- Outcome 4: WFP leverages its presence, partnerships, and technical skills to strengthen national and local emergency preparedness, response systems, food systems and social protection systems. While there are no dedicated emergency preparedness outputs, the five outputs to strengthen institutional capacity include preparedness elements.
- Outcome 5: WFP aims to strengthen partnerships with humanitarian and development actors, including its leadership roles in the Logistics Cluster and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), and co-leadership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in the food security cluster, to support more efficient, effective and coordinated emergency response. Preparedness is integrated into WFP’s collaborative efforts with humanitarian and development partners.

18. Additionally, being “risk-informed” is one of the seven guiding principles of the Strategic Plan, ensuring WFP assesses threats and risks and designs to mitigate them.

19. Table 1 presents definitions of key concepts,²⁶ with an extended glossary in Annex XIII.

Table 1: Key definitions

Term	Definition
Anticipatory action	Acting ahead of predicted hazards to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold. This requires pre-agreed plans that identify partners and activities, reliable early warning information, and pre-agreed financing, released predictably and rapidly when an agreed trigger-point is reached.
Early action	A set of actions to prevent or reduce the impacts of a hazardous event before they fully unfold, predicated on a forecast or credible risk analysis of when and where a hazardous event will occur.
Early warning	Information provided in advance of a specific hazardous event, disaster or conflict to enable stakeholders to take timely action to reduce disaster risks.
Preparedness	The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters.

Source: Paul Knox Clarke and Risk-informed Early Action Partnership. 2022. Glossary of early action terms and G7 definition from <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/g7-foreign-ministers-statement-strengthening-anticipatory-action-humanitarian> Note: besides the term “preparedness”, the other definitions are not included in the Emergency Preparedness Policy.

1.3 SUBJECT BEING EVALUATED

1.3.1 WFP’s Emergency Preparedness Policy

20. WFP’s 2017 Emergency Preparedness Policy is the organization’s first policy to focus on this topic. It is closely linked with other WFP policies related to disaster risk management and cross-cutting issues, aligning with international efforts and United Nations initiatives to enhance preparedness. More details on the policy context can be found in Section 1.2.

²⁵ From the Theory of Change in “WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021)”.

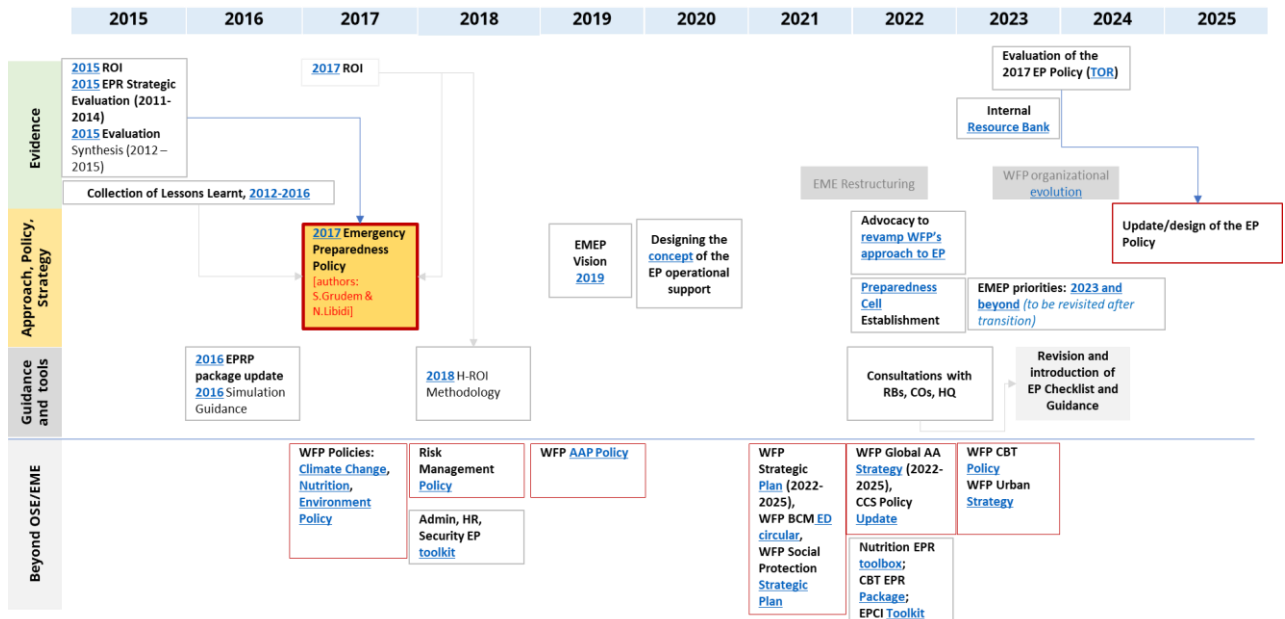
²⁶ The definitions listed in Table 1 adhere to those provided in the Terms of Reference.

21. The policy outlines WFP's approach to anticipating and preparing for emergencies brought on by natural hazard events, outbreaks of disease, conflicts and economic crises. The policy emphasizes the need for WFP to adapt in increasingly frequent and complex situations that affect food security, nutrition and displacement. Its overarching objective is to ensure that WFP can respond to emergencies and make sure those in need are reached in an efficient, effective and timely manner.²⁷
22. The Emergency Preparedness Policy has three main objectives:
- i) Serve as a framework for emergency preparedness in all WFP operations.
 - ii) Inform work with national and local governments, regional bodies and local communities.
 - iii) Build partnerships with civil society and the private sector to reduce reliance on WFP.
23. The policy is based on six overarching principles:
- **National leadership:** Governments lead preparedness with international support.²⁸
 - **Humanitarian principles:** WFP's actions align with humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence.
 - **Accountability to affected populations:** Ensure responsibility to affected populations – women, men, girls and boys – involving them in decisions affecting their lives.
 - **Context specificity:** WFP preparedness is informed by analysis of the specific risks, capacities and requirements of regions and countries, with preparedness actions adapted to specific contexts.
 - **Partnership:** WFP collaborates with partners to leverage their strengths and achieve common goals through joint efforts.
 - **Innovation:** WFP seeks to continuously innovate to improve its preparedness and the effectiveness of its responses based on operational requirements.
24. The policy defines WFP's roles in both operational and supportive capacities, emphasizing a shift towards increased support when national ownership and drive are present. The policy also relates to broader frameworks and policies, including those on climate change (2017), disaster risk reduction and management (2011) and resilience (2015), which provide the context for emergency preparedness. Additionally, policies on safety nets (2012), humanitarian principles (2012), protection (2012) and environment (2017) are all key to preparedness, while cross-cutting policies for gender equality and women's empowerment, capacity strengthening and nutrition also contribute. The timing of the policy's approval reflects WFP's commitment to prioritizing preparedness in response to sudden-onset crises and evolving external challenges in protracted conflicts.
25. Figure 5 presents a timeline produced by the former Early Warning, Preparedness and Analysis Unit (EMEP) showing key processes carried out by WFP to implement the policy.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ IASC, 2013. Common Framework for Preparedness, https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2014-12/common_framework_for_preparedness.pdf.

Figure 5: EMEP key processes timeline



Source: WFP EMEP, June 2023. Note: the timeline provided by EMEP is non-exhaustive.

26. In 2019, a Vision for Preparedness was drawn up and efforts were made in 2022 to renew WFP’s approach to preparedness, a key part of which was the creation of the Preparedness Cell. Around the same time, WFP regional bureaux were consulted on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (EPRP) to remove duplications with Business Continuity Management (BCM) and to rightsize the checklists of minimum preparedness actions required. These more recent efforts also fall within the scope of the evaluation.

1.3.2 Theory of Change

27. A wide range of emergency preparedness actions and tools are outlined in the policy and are depicted in the Theory of Change (ToC).
28. To facilitate the policy evaluation, a ToC was reconstructed by the evaluation team (see Annex VIII), along with the three policy objectives presented above. This involved drawing from the evaluation Terms of Reference, interviews and meetings during the inception phase, and a review of key WFP documentation. The ToC was validated with the Internal Reference Group during the inception phase. Section 1.4.1 briefly presents the rationale for reconstructing the ToC and Annex VIII shows how the ToC assumptions are related to the EQs.
29. The ToC proposes that if the WFP Emergency Preparedness Policy is implemented with a rights-based, inclusive, gender-transformative, accountable and safe (protection-sensitive) approach, it will effectively influence all levels of WFP and contribute to communities’, governments’ and partners’ preparedness for emergency response. This influence will enhance existing tools and mechanisms reinforcing WFP’s own emergency preparedness. It will also help to consolidate and expand partnerships that strengthen preparedness, and support and enable governments and local communities to enhance their capacities for emergency preparedness. Consequently, WFP operations – including infrastructure, distribution systems, technology, equipment, food stocks, funds, material resources and gender-balanced surge capacity – will be in place, maintained and ready for deployment. Risks will be assessed, and early warnings will be disseminated and used for planning and implementing emergency preparedness and early action. Governments’ preparedness and response capacities will increase, as will the preparedness and response capacities of women and men in local communities. The humanitarian community supported by WFP will be equipped and coordinated.
30. The ToC also suggests that, if contextual factors are conducive, WFP’s actions will be aligned with the commitments, principles and approaches outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Policy; WFP monitoring will be adequate; learning will be acted upon; and the assumptions on which the theory is

based will hold true. WFP will then efficiently and effectively take early action and deliver timely emergency response, and enable governments, communities and other humanitarian actors to do so. Implementation within a rights-based, gender-sensitive and inclusive approach will enable WFP and its partners to achieve results by meeting the emergency needs of affected communities and in all circumstances where there are negative effects on food security and nutrition, thereby contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17, among others.

1.3.3 WFP's funding for emergency preparedness

31. While the 2017 policy recognizes earlier work on rolling out the EPRP, which it continues to promote, it emphasizes that preparedness is an ongoing and integrated approach, not a singular programme or initiative. The policy makes clear that strengthening its preparedness capacities will require WFP's funding model to change, and strengthening the preparedness capacities of governments depends on a long-term vision that includes national leadership buy-in and sustained funding.
32. There is no comprehensive data on WFP's financing of its emergency preparedness interventions for the period covered by the evaluation regarding resources required or contributions and expenditure on preparedness. An analysis of emergency preparedness-related activities shows that needs-based plans increased from USD 0.7 million in 2017 to USD 159 million in 2023, and expenditure increased from USD 0.5 million to USD 83 million in the same period (Figure 6).²⁹

Figure 6: Financial resources for activities related to emergency preparedness, 2017-2023



Source: Office of Evaluation analysis based on EV_CPB Overview report and COMET. The analysis includes all activities recorded in COMET with the following activity tag names: "Emergency Preparedness activities", "Climate adaptation and risk management activities" and "Emergency preparedness activities_ Institutional capacity strengthening activities".

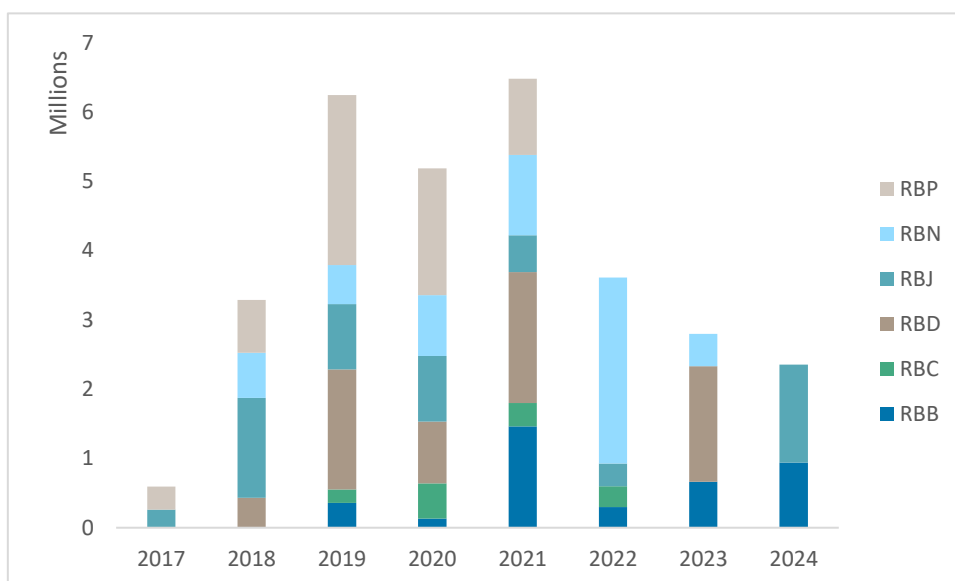
33. The use of WFP's advance financing mechanisms for preparedness and response – the Immediate Response Account (IRA) in particular – provides WFP country offices with rapid access to funds to respond to emergencies. IRA allocations increased from USD 154.2 million in 2017 to USD 433.5 million in 2023. Allocations from the Internal Project Lending (IPL) facility (including macro advance financing)

²⁹ The data is an approximation as identification and tracking of budgeting and spending on emergency preparedness-related activities are, at times, inconsistent.

varied strongly – from USD 1,313.7 million in 2017 to USD 1,172.3 million in 2023, with a peak of USD 2,573.9 million in 2022 (see Figure 7). While these figures do not provide evidence of WFP’s investments in preparedness, since the majority of funding represents advances to operations already facing unfolding emergencies, the mechanisms themselves are an indication of the organization’s financial preparedness and readiness for rapid response actions.

34. Within WFP’s provision of advance funding through the IRA, funds from the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness (IR-PREP) facility are directed specifically to emergency preparedness. USD 6 million is ring-fenced annually for preparedness and the actual amounts allocated through IR-PREP have ranged from a low of USD 0.6 million in 2017 to a high of USD 6.5 million in 2021.³⁰ See Figure 7: for annual totals allocated through IR-PREP between 2017 and 2024.

Figure 7: IR-PREP allocations (2017 to June 2024)³¹



Source: WFP, APPBP Planning and Prioritization, CPB_Advance_Finance_Report_Internal.

35. At a global level, some data is available on the budget for preparedness within the former Emergency Operations Division (EME) (see Table 2). In 2022 and 2023, EME’s budget for preparedness-related costs grew from USD 0.6 million (with two staff members) to USD 1.7 million (with four staff members). However, this only reflects the budget of the former EMEP and does not include other emergency preparedness costs covered by other headquarters teams and stakeholders within and outside EME.

Table 2: Preparedness budget within Early Warning, Preparedness and Analysis Unit

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EME total budget³²	USD 10.7 million	USD 9.6 million	USD 10.4 million	USD 14 million	USD 17.2 million	USD 22.1 million	USD 30.7 million
Preparedness-related costs			No data	No data	No data	USD 0.6 million	USD 1.7 million

Source: WFP EME data.

³⁰ “Use of the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness Activities” (WFP/EB.A/2016/6-C/1).

³¹ The figure uses approval date and advance grant original budget as the main variables.

³² The reported EME total budget consists of programme support and administrative and extrabudgetary costs.

1.4 METHODOLOGY, LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.4.1 Methodological approach

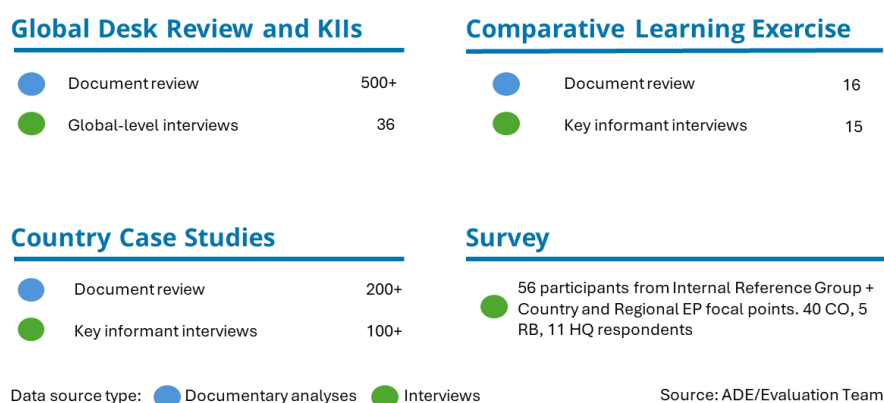
36. The evaluation approach is rooted in the Office of Evaluation's centralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System for policy evaluations and has been tailored to the context of WFP's work on emergency preparedness. The methodology builds on the reconstructed ToC, an evaluability assessment and the evaluation matrix constructed around the three main EQs. The methodology consists of mixed, participatory methods.³³ It is based on a sequential design and integrates the latest guidance and good practices from recent the Office of Evaluation evaluations.
37. Annex III presents the methodology, Annex IV the evaluation matrix, and Annex V the data collection tools, all of which elaborate on the conducted evaluation design.
38. The ToC, including its assumptions, was subject to an iterative consultation process with the Office of Evaluation and the WFP Internal Reference Group. It represents the cornerstone of the methodology, indicating the scope of the evidence to be collected on each level to be able to respond to the EQs.
39. The reconstructed ToC enabled the evaluation team to analyse the contribution of each element of the three activity/output pillars to the results achieved and to assess the extent to which the assumptions materialized or not. While a full contribution analysis was not planned, the evaluation team triangulated the responses to the three EQs to understand and explain the causal chains within the ToC. The assessment primarily used existing WFP documentation from global and country levels to understand policy convergence and divergence. This review helped identify key assumptions and change pathways in the ToC for further investigation in country studies and global key informant interviews (KIIs). The documentation also addressed specific information gaps in the second phase. The analysis compared WFP's emergency preparedness policies with those of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). An online survey gathered insights from 56 internal stakeholders knowledgeable about WFP's emergency preparedness work, aiding in answering the sub-EQs. Figure 5 provides an overview of the evaluation data sources.
40. The country studies included visits to Cuba, Pakistan, Togo, Ukraine and Zambia and the study for the Sudan was carried out remotely.³⁴ Burundi, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Peru, the Philippines and Zimbabwe were selected for desk reviews. These countries prioritize a varied but coherent set of activities and processes across the sample. The evidence collected across these countries was coded and clustered based on the core activities and processes. Findings across clusters were compared and triangulated at the end of data collection to derive preliminary answers to the EQs. From these countries, six emergency responses were selected for a deeper analysis of the efficiency and effectiveness of WFP's and governments' emergency preparedness work and its influence on subsequent emergency responses.³⁵

³³ These include tools relying on artificial intelligence supporting the desk review, content analysis in MAXQDA, and the development of timelines spanning critical moments from early warning to aid delivery to highlight potential efficiencies and delays related to preparedness.

³⁴ While the Sudan was selected for a country visit, the study was conducted remotely due to security advice at that time.

³⁵ Selected emergency responses are: Cuba, 2022, hurricane; Pakistan, 2022, flooding; the Sudan, 2023, conflict; Togo, 2023, non-state armed groups' activities; Ukraine, 2022, escalation of conflict; and Zambia, 2024, drought.

Figure 8: Evaluation data sources



41. The evaluation team considered findings from other relevant centralized and decentralized evaluations, including the Evaluation of the Policy on WFP’s Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings (2023), the Evaluation of WFP’s Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Climate Change Policies (2023) and the Evaluation of WFP’s Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition (2023), as well as findings from recent country strategic plan (CSP) evaluations.
42. The secondary data collected at country level has also been integrated and analysed jointly with global-level data to draw overarching conclusions regarding the effectiveness of WFP’s Emergency Preparedness Policy and associated activities. Compiled interview data was imported into MAXQDA for coding to facilitate triangulation of findings from all sources. Results for each code and across clusters were triangulated at the end of the data collection period to respond to the EQs.
43. To foster appropriation of conclusions and recommendations, the Office of Evaluation organized a stakeholder workshop in September 2024 to present findings and to ensure conclusions and recommendations were first brainstormed and discussed with the most concerned stakeholders before being finalized by the evaluation team.
44. The team ensured that the agreed approach was gender and equity sensitive and appropriate to a diverse range of stakeholders. The views of women and men working for and with WFP were represented throughout the process. In addition to mainstreaming gender dimensions across the EQs, a specific sub-question was included. During data collection, the team also investigated to what extent the Emergency Preparedness Policy enabled WFP to respond to the varying needs and priorities of women and persons with disabilities.
45. **Limitations:** Although field visits were carried out in seven countries, in some cases limited availability of key stakeholders reduced the number of interviews, resulting in the need to collect information mainly from document reviews. The lack of a specific policy on emergency preparedness for IOM and UNICEF meant that the exercise with the comparator organizations did not reach its full learning potential. Consequently, it had to rely more heavily than planned on guidance notes and procedures than actual policies.
46. Despite the evaluation team’s best efforts at determining effectiveness, corporate and country-based quantitative data was not always available. The evaluation team therefore relied on qualitative data gathered from the country deep-dive exercises and the desk reviews undertaken as part of the evaluation. The initial reconstructed timelines of emergency responses and results envisaged in the inception report, which were to support efficiency and effectiveness analysis, proved less useful in determining effectiveness due to the lack of quantitative data.
47. These limitations did not affect the general validity of the evaluation findings. The evaluation team was able to validate the findings by triangulating the information provided by WFP through interviews with donors, government representatives, other United Nations agencies, service providers, cooperating partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as by conducting an in-depth documentary and data analysis. Annex III presents further details on the methodological approach and how it ensured a strong evidence base.

1.4.2 Ethical considerations

48. The evaluation conforms to WFP's and the United Nations Evaluation Group's 2020 ethical guidelines. ADE and the evaluation team ensured the application of ethical standards and safeguards at all stages of the evaluation process. This included obtaining informed consent, protecting the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, and respecting the autonomy of participants. ADE's Quality Assurance System provides adequate safeguards, processes and systems in this respect.

Evaluation findings

2.1 HOW GOOD IS THE WFP EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICY? (CRITERIA: RELEVANCE, COHERENCE, EQUITY)

Finding 1. The Emergency Preparedness Policy was based on a good context analysis and a broad consultation process, ensuring its coherence with WFP's Corporate Strategic Plan. It clearly defines and scopes preparedness; however, it lacks an explanation of synergies and differences with WFP's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Resilience, and Climate Change policies and practices. The policy has remained largely relevant but has not been updated since its inception in 2017 and does not reflect the growth of anticipatory action or persistent calls to work across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

49. **WFP's Emergency Preparedness Policy provides a vision and conceptual framework but lacks conceptual clarity, hindering alignment with DRR, climate change adaptation, and resilience efforts.** The policy envisions that emergency preparedness will enable WFP to respond to emergencies in an efficient, effective and timely manner. The policy does not, however, include a ToC to illustrate how combined efforts across WFP are expected to achieve that vision, as this was not a requirement at the time. It also lacks a conceptual framework explaining how the activities and strategies presented as emergency preparedness relate to DRR, climate change adaptation, and resilience, which also have WFP policies from around the same time, and to BCM. Interviews and documents suggest that the lack of conceptual clarity (on the relationship between the above-mentioned fields related to management of risks, their areas of convergence and differences of scope) may have detracted from WFP's effectiveness in decisively planning, monitoring, reporting on, advocating for and resourcing emergency preparedness work.
50. **The policy includes context analysis and external coherence, emphasizing investment in preparedness, but lacks focus on bridging humanitarian and development efforts, integrating recovery strategies, and updating innovations like anticipatory action and forecast-based financing.** The policy is grounded in a clear analysis of changes in the external context and highlights emerging priorities in the humanitarian and development sectors. It addresses the increasing frequency and complexity of emergencies and the impact of climate change on food insecurity, emphasizing the need for greater investment in emergency preparedness. The policy references frameworks such as the IASC Common Framework for Preparedness (2013)³⁶ and the Transformative Agenda (2011)³⁷ to stress coordinated efforts for more effective humanitarian responses. The analysis also highlights Agenda 2030, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Humanitarian Summit (2016), including global commitments to local leadership and ownership of risk management, proactive data-driven planning, early warning and early action, and gender equity and inclusion. However, the policy does not address how preparedness contributes to bridging humanitarian and development efforts (the nexus), despite recommendations and commitments from across the aid sector.³⁸ Additionally, it lacks focus and guidance on integrating preparedness into risk-informed recovery strategies, despite including preparedness for recovery in the recommended terminology.³⁹ Preparedness for displacement is also a gap in the 2017 policy, as is preparedness for humanitarian access (except through community-level first responders) and security preparedness. The policy also misses WFP's more recent innovations, such as the growth of anticipatory action since 2017. While it mentions forecast-based financing, the term requires an update to reflect current practices.
51. **The policy includes evidence but lacks external research, especially on anticipatory action, to strengthen its approach.** The Emergency Preparedness Policy draws on several return on investment

³⁶ IASC, 2013. Common Framework for Preparedness.

³⁷ IASC, 2011. IASC Transformative Agenda, <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda>.

³⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee Recommendation on the Humanitarian–Development–Peace nexus (OECD/LEGAL/5019).

³⁹ Based on the *Report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology (A/71/644)*, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/276 of 2 February 2017 (A/RES/71/276).

studies commissioned by WFP, UNICEF and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as the results of the WFP Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP) and its evaluation, and compiled lessons from lessons learned exercises following corporate emergencies.⁴⁰ The policy would benefit from incorporating research on preparedness by other actors, including on anticipatory action.

52. **The policy aligns with WFP's strategic plans but lacks clarity on how it complements related policies, causing confusion on terminology and internal leadership.** The objectives of the policy are coherent with WFP's corporate Strategic Plan (2017–2021) and the current Strategic Plan (2022–2025). Both plans reflect increased attention to preparedness and to working with others to ensure emergency responses are efficient, effective and timely. The policy is also internally coherent, listing relevant activities under each of the objectives. However, as the policy includes aspects of WFP's work that are also present in the organization's policies on disaster risk reduction and management, climate change and building resilience, but does not explain how it complements them, some confusion has arisen about issues ranging from terminology to internal leadership on preparedness.
53. **Scope and priorities are clear as the policy reflects WFP's existing efforts and sector priorities, promoting a multi-hazard approach for broad application across diverse contexts.** As a result of the consultative process and analysis of the evolving context and current debates, the Emergency Preparedness Policy reflects the array of preparedness efforts already undertaken and supported by WFP (see the reconstructed ToC), as well as the dominant concerns and priorities in the sector. The multi-hazard approach promoted by the policy facilitates its application to a wide range of contexts.
54. **Gender equality and inclusion are included in the policy, but it lacks clear guidance on how preparedness contributes to achieving them, aside from training and community interventions.** The policy states that it is based on the principle of gender-transformative food assistance, security and nutrition, and refers to the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) and the IASC 2008 Policy Statement on Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action. However, it is not explicit about how preparedness can contribute to this, apart from by training surge staff in "gender considerations" and, for community-level interventions, using the Three-Pronged Approach.⁴¹ The Emergency Preparedness Policy also supports the integration of other cross-cutting issues, but without reference to the policies or tools to do so beyond inclusion in training.
55. **The Emergency Preparedness Policy was built on a solid consultation process.** According to documents provided by the policy owner and staff interviewed during the inception phase, the three-year process to develop the policy involved consultations with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. The process also involved four field missions, an internal workshop, discussions with United Nations Environment Management Group members and briefings to WFP's Executive Board.

Finding 2. The Emergency Preparedness Policy does not provide adequate or specific provisions for implementation. The absence of an accompanying overarching strategy is a major gap. While shared responsibility for preparedness is conveyed, guidance on coordination is missing and accountability mechanisms are not clear. Global capacity to monitor progress is hampered by the absence of contextually adaptable indicators. Without a ToC, the extent of changes from output to outcome and impact is more difficult to assess.

56. **In terms of institutional arrangements, the policy outlines responsibilities for preparedness but lacks guidance on coordination across WFP levels.** The policy describes the overarching responsibilities of headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices for preparedness, with the Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division⁴² at headquarters as the focal point for the policy. However, considering that "All of WFP is responsible for preparedness"⁴³, guidance on how efforts should be coordinated across levels and divisions is lacking. A Preparedness Cell to provide coordinated support from headquarters to regional bureaux and country offices was created to offer

⁴⁰ WFP, 2016. *At a Glance: Major Emerging Themes from 5 Years of Lessons Learning*.

⁴¹ The Three-Pronged Approach tool was reportedly a positive tool engaging all actors, from national to local authorities and community members, in the planning and design of resilience activities, including preparedness.

⁴² The former EME, currently the Emergency Preparedness and Response Service.

⁴³ WFP, 2017. "WFP Emergency Preparedness Policy" (WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1*)

this, but not until five years after the policy came into effect. This critical initiative is perceived to have improved the coordination of WFP's corporate efforts in emergency preparedness and consolidated technical functions to support priority countries (see Section 2.3.1 for analysis of the effectiveness of the Preparedness Cell).⁴⁴

57. **The policy highlights the need for sustained funding and staffing improvements for WFP's emergency preparedness but lacks specifics on accessing resources and required expertise.** The policy states that "WFP's continued preparedness to respond to a multitude of emergencies will largely depend on the investments that it makes in preparedness". It emphasizes the need for a sustained funding model but does not elaborate on the necessary steps to access more funding for preparedness. It also emphasizes the need for changes to staffing but does not state the level of human resourcing required nor the range of skills and expertise needed to ensure WFP is prepared to respond to emergencies and support partners' preparedness to respond. Recent changes to the organizational structure post-date the policy and will require its updating.
58. **The policy has a strong focus on building and consolidating partnerships, in line with the Corporate Partnership Strategy (2017).** It specifically refers to partnerships with national governments, other United Nations agencies, local NGOs, civil society, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and, when appropriate, the private sector. Work with partners is stipulated depending on contextual needs and informed by the return-on-investment studies. The policy's accompanying Emergency Preparedness and Response toolkit includes tools to be implemented with preparedness and response partners at country and regional levels, for contingency planning, simulations and country capacity strengthening. The overarching strategy with respect to existing strategies in clusters (for example the Global Logistics Cluster) is discussed in Section 2.2.3.
59. **The policy provides monitoring guidance but lacks a clear framework for consistent global assessment.** It offers clear instructions on monitoring and indicators but allows country offices freedom to select their own indicators, which has led to difficulty in monitoring progress globally. Also, the absence of a ToC makes it difficult for WFP to assess whether efforts and investments are resulting in the desired outcomes, and to correct where necessary.
60. **The policy emphasizes CSPs for implementation but lacks a coordinated strategy, road map and communication plan for effective awareness and execution.** The policy highlights the crucial role of CSPs as the key programmatic vehicles for implementation, thereby emphasizing the need for long-term planning for preparedness and aligning with local humanitarian leadership commitments. However, an overarching strategy to implement the policy is a clear gap. A road map with specific milestones and priorities was created and used from the fourth quarter of 2021 as an implementation plan for EME, but other relevant divisions and units did not have similar connected maps or plans. An agreed, coordinated approach to operationalization and commitment of resources was still missing, as was a communication plan. The EPRP served as a key implementation tool until 2020, but its withdrawal for updating in 2020 left a gap that was partially filled with the launch of a revamped Emergency Preparedness Checklist for country offices in August 2024.⁴⁵

Box 1: Comparative analysis of policy quality

Compared with the three comparator organizations – IOM, UNICEF and IFRC – WFP is one of two with specific emergency preparedness policies but appears to have less recent technical guidance on emergency preparedness. Neither IOM nor UNICEF has specific policies on emergency preparedness, and neither organization is currently planning to develop a policy. Institutionally, the Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF1) is the key IOM framework for preparedness and response to crisis. MCOF1 brings together the diverse range of IOM's activities in a conceptual model that addresses IOM's role before, during and after a crisis.

Instead, **IOM** has focused on guidance and strategy development. In 2020 the organization developed a guidance note on preparedness, and there is also an internal strategy which is being updated to focus on a more institutionalized approach, including security, supply chains and human

⁴⁴ WFP. 2023. Terms of Reference, Innovation Accelerator ell, updated June 2023.

⁴⁵ WFP, 2024. Emergency Preparedness Checklist.

resources (HR). Work is ongoing to understand how to mainstream preparedness. An approach currently being explored is disaster risk management, which includes preparedness and recovery.

Similarly, **UNICEF** had a procedure published in 2020 which details the principles of preparedness, including: (i) building national capacities for preparedness and response; (ii) ensuring country offices' preparedness to respond; (iii) developing headquarters' and regional offices' capacity to support country offices; and (iv) contributing to inter-agency preparedness. The procedure contains mandatory minimum preparedness actions and standards for country offices, regional offices and headquarters. UNICEF also has a reference guide for emergency preparedness and response, as well as guidance for risk-informed programming, but the latter is reportedly little known by country offices.

This suggests that peer organizations are less reliant on a policy for their preparedness work and are more focused on providing direction – in some instances mandatory – and guidelines in support of preparedness actions. However, underpinning this is a solid conceptual model of preparedness.

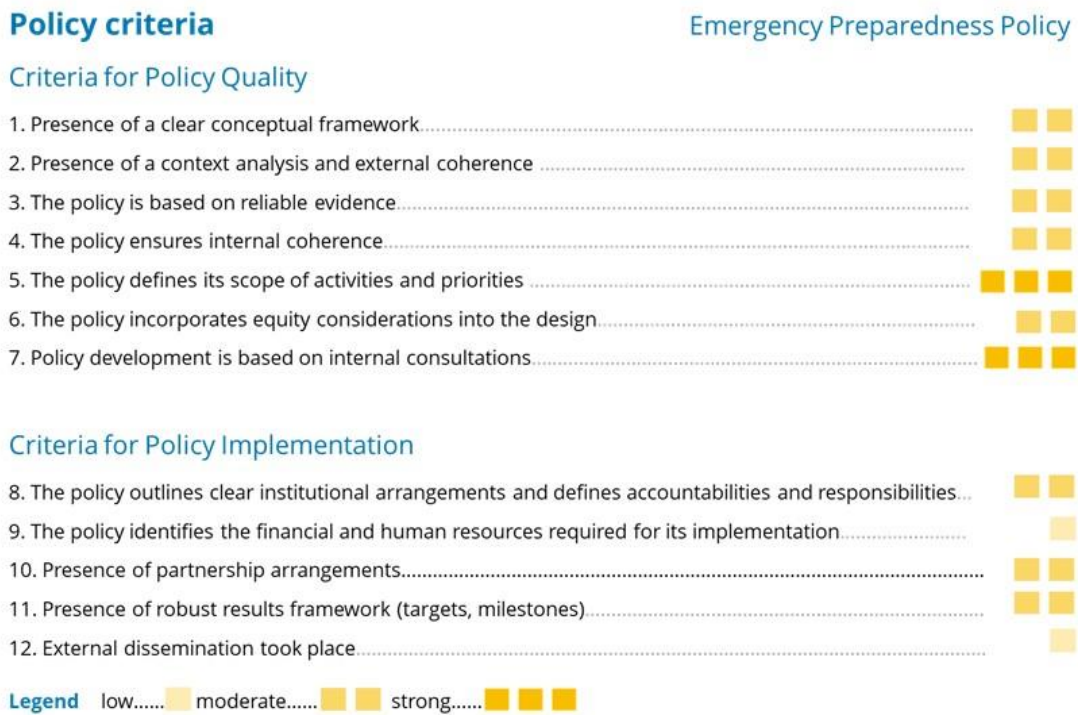
In contrast, **IFRC** developed a disaster risk management policy in 2021 that integrated emergency preparedness, disaster reduction and climate change, recognizing the links between those programme areas. The policy replaced previous IFRC policies on Disaster Preparedness (1999), Emergency Response (1997), Post-emergency Rehabilitation (1999) and Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (2001). In addition, the National Society Preparedness Framework, along with the preparedness for effective response approach, provided the basis for capacity strengthening in preparedness and use of self-assessment to measure progress on gaps identified.

Note: Annex XVI provides additional findings from the comparative analysis.

61. Figure 9 summarizes the policy's ratings against different dimensions of policy quality developed by the Office of Evaluation on the basis of key documents (see footnote) and further contextualized by the evaluation team.⁴⁶ Annex VI provides more details.

⁴⁶ WFP, 2011. WFP policy formulation document; WFP, 2018. *Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality*; WFP, 2020. *Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons from WFP's Policy Evaluations*.

Figure 9: Scores of the Emergency Preparedness Policy against the policy criteria



Source: ADE/evaluation team. Criteria based on the 2011 WFP policy formulation document, the 2020 *Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons from WFP's Policy Evaluations* and the 2018 *Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality*.

2.2 WHAT RESULTS HAS WFP ACHIEVED IN THE AREA OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (WITHIN AND BEYOND THE POLICY FRAMEWORK)? (CRITERIA: EFFECTIVENESS, EQUITY, SUSTAINABILITY)

2.2.1 To what extent have WFP processes, systems and tools been strengthened to enhance emergency preparedness in WFP?

62. This subsection presents a number of key processes, systems and tools which contribute to WFP emergency preparedness capacity. Further details on the application of specific tools are presented in subsequent sections, in response to relevant sub-questions. The evaluation focused on the most critical emergency preparedness tools, as identified in the inception phase, and does not attempt to provide an exhaustive assessment of the full range.

Infrastructure, distribution systems, tools, technology and equipment for early action and emergency response

Finding 3. Significant growth in WFP's supply chain infrastructure and distribution systems has contributed indirectly and directly to emergency preparedness, complementing corporate investments in field-based logistics preparedness through the Logistics Cluster that benefit emergency response operations.

63. **WFP supply chain infrastructure and distribution systems have seen significant growth since the Emergency Preparedness Policy was launched and have enhanced emergency preparedness.** From 2018 to mid-2024, WFP strengthened its global logistics capacity by adding 1,500 contracted trucks (making a total of 6,500), 48 aircraft (making a total of 92) and 200 warehouses (making a total of 850, plus 5 United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots) for storing food, equipment and relief items.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ WFP, 2024. Supply Chain, <https://www.wfp.org/supply-chain>.

This additional capacity has supported WFP's level of preparedness to expand response operations, with the number of people served increasing from 87 million in 2018 to 152 million in 2023.

64. The evaluation team found that WFP staff at headquarters and country offices generally view the enhanced capacity for preparedness positively. In protracted emergencies, this growth has allowed WFP to scale up efforts and redirect resources to specific areas as needs arise following new shocks. However, relying on redirecting resources from existing operations is an insufficient preparedness measure when WFP has no established supply chain and distribution system in an emergency-affected area, as demonstrated in Ukraine where large-scale assistance coordinated by headquarters and the regional bureau enabled WFP to meet initial needs but led to additional administrative work to regularize procurement within corporate systems afterwards.
65. **Durable investments in infrastructure are essential preparedness measures, including when transferred to governments.** For example, WFP's investment in the humanitarian staging area in Nepal enabled a swift response to the 2015 earthquake and remains a crucial hub for inter-agency and government preparedness. The timely activation of the facility saved 21 days in response time, and facilitated a faster delivery of relief supplies to affected populations. Preparing such a staging area opened the path to the construction of 11 additional staging facilities by WFP Engineering between 2015 and 2024.⁴⁸ Similarly, a regional logistics hub constructed by WFP in Barbados, managed by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, will support humanitarian actors and governments across the Caribbean, particularly during hurricane season. In Togo, enhancements to national grain reserve storage facilities and Lomé-Tokoin Airport are seen as investments benefiting WFP, the wider United Nations system and national authorities, aiding distribution within Togo and the wider region.
66. Beyond major infrastructure projects and upgrades, WFP's logistics and supply chain preparedness investments are primarily implemented in collaboration with partners by the Logistics Cluster as part of the Field-Based Logistics Preparedness Project (see Section 2.2.2). Such projects support WFP in fulfilling its mandate as the Logistics Cluster lead agency by designing preparedness initiatives in collaboration with governments, the humanitarian community and other partners. This complements WFP's internal EPR focus on continuity of WFP operations.
67. **WFP has frequently and effectively used simulations to test preparedness levels, particularly in relation to supply chain infrastructure, surge capacity, cash and in-kind distribution systems, information and communications technology, and own staff knowledge.** The usefulness of simulation exercises (SimExs), table-top exercises (TTx) and training of trainers to support emergency preparedness, including to understand barriers different groups may be faced with, was reported by country office staff in Zimbabwe, Pakistan, the Sudan, Iraq, the Philippines, Peru, Togo and Zambia. Technical emergency logistics simulations and training – WFP-led and joint exercises with the Logistics Cluster – were also delivered to government authorities to enhance local and national supply chain preparedness,⁴⁹ and were viewed by participants as effective in supporting preparedness and learning. For example, multi-agency SimExs in Malawi improved supply chain resilience by strengthening emergency preparedness at individual and organizational levels. Improvements were reported in staff knowledge, skills in planning, coordination, information management, decision making, supply chain management and identification of gaps.⁵⁰ WFP-led multi-actor simulations in 2023 aided El Niño preparedness through anticipatory action in seven districts in Zimbabwe.⁵¹ In Peru, simulations integrating disaster risk management and social protection facilitated the testing and validation of the Government's shock-responsive social protection mechanisms and led to the development of procedures for temporary expansion of social protection programmes to meet emergency needs. Participants in the annual Gear.UP global simulation, co-organized by the ETC and the Logistics Cluster, also reported positive experiences with field exercises, giving them a better understanding of how to

⁴⁸ WFP Engineering, July 2024. *WFP Infrastructure in Emergencies*.

⁴⁹ WFP Supply Chain Strategy 2017–2021; WFP Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025.

⁵⁰ WFP, 2024. *Health Supply Chain Simulation Exercises in Malawi*, https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000160277/download/?_ga=2.2783352.993167267.1721835324-420818658.1717982603.

⁵¹ WFP. 2023. *Zimbabwe Annual Country Report*.

support preparedness in information management, teamwork, joint needs assessments, resource mobilization and setting up mobile storage units, among others.

68. **The case studies provided examples of what works and what is missing in terms of systematically integrating gender and disability inclusion in WFP's supply chain and logistics preparedness efforts.** In Pakistan, one of the logistics-related projects for preparedness involved building Humanitarian Response Facilities, but the 2022 Evaluation of WFP Humanitarian Response Facilities concluded that the organization “failed to consider the implications of gender and protection dimensions in disaster preparedness and response, including related to warehousing, stockpiling and supply chain management”, for instance by not considering women’s role as logisticians.
69. **Aligned with international standards and the Emergency Preparedness Policy's commitment to environmental accountability, WFP developed a screening tool in 2022 to identify and manage environmental and social risks. However, as limited evidence of its use was provided to the evaluation team, it was not possible to assess the extent to which supply chain and distribution systems' growth and enhancements are safe and environmentally sound.** In some contexts, the screening tool was perceived as lengthy, cumbersome and inappropriate.⁵² Since 2023, WFP's Sustainable Supply Chain Unit at headquarters has aimed to improve coordination on environmental concerns and green supply chain practices, and ultimately reduce the negative environmental impact on WFP-supported communities.⁵³ Recently, WFP launched ECODASH, an internal tool that aims to support the identification and implementation of more environmentally sustainable supply chain practices, yet at this stage no evidence was found regarding its results.⁵⁴
- Finding 4.** WFP's current corporate toolkit for preparedness supports country office strategic planning for emergency preparedness but lacks critical guidance and resources for application of key tools. The EPRP, the main corporate tool for strengthening country office-level preparedness, has been under revision since 2020, leaving an important gap. Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and BCM are widely used by country offices and considered useful. The recently updated Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index (EPCI) appears promising but requires significant and sustained investment by country offices. WFP also has tools for cash-based transfer (CBT) preparedness, developing anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection, but their application depends on country office priorities and access to resources, including technical support.
70. **CSPs are identified in the Emergency Preparedness Policy and used as the organization's main tool for medium- to long-term planning and implementing emergency preparedness.** Interviews with staff at country office and regional bureau levels for the Emergency Preparedness Policy Evaluation and the CSP Policy Evaluation⁵⁵ confirm that the integrated CSP framework is generally effective for integrating preparedness within WFP country-level actions, including for supporting national preparedness capacities and national leadership of response, improving readiness to scale up (or down), and leveraging partnerships. The CSP Policy Evaluation report also states that the CSP framework has proven useful for identifying pathways to contribute to shock-responsive social protection systems but has not yet fully integrated them with preparedness programming. Budget revision processes have caused bottlenecks in some cases and affect country offices' ability to respond quickly to changing needs.
71. **For internal preparedness, the EPRP, which preceded the Emergency Preparedness Policy, was WFP's main emergency preparedness toolkit until 2020 when it was withdrawn for revision, leaving an important gap.** In agreement with EME and as an interim measure, some functions, such as Information and Technology (I&T), continued to update their respective minimum preparedness actions but without overall consolidation or oversight. With the exception of a revised version of the Emergency Preparedness Checklist (released in August 2024), a global revised EPRP has not yet been produced or rolled out, which is negatively affecting country office and regional bureau capacity to guide and monitor preparedness using common standards. The EPRP consisted of a risk assessment

⁵² WFP, 2024. *Evaluation of WFP's Environmental Policy (Draft 1)*.

⁵³ Logistics Cluster, 2024. WREC 2024 Waste Management 3W's Mapping, <https://logcluster.org/en/document/wrec-2024-waste-management-3ws-mapping>.

⁵⁴ WFP Innovation Accelerator, 2024. ECODASH, <https://innovation.wfp.org/project/ecodash>.

⁵⁵ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of WFP's Policy on Country Strategic Plans*.

methodology and checklists for minimum preparedness actions, emergency readiness actions, and Standard Operating Procedures for the first 72 hours after the start of an emergency. The minimum preparedness actions checklist, which became mandatory for all country offices, was generally perceived as useful to identify country office-level gaps and to track preparedness regionally and globally. Following its withdrawal for review, contradictory feedback from regional bureaux on the new draft led to a delay due to the need for further consultations, which in turn were slowed down by limited staffing on preparedness at headquarters from 2020 to 2021. A revised version of the checklist was released in August 2024, which may go some way to reducing widespread frustration in country offices and regional bureaux at the time it has taken to develop new guidance and tools.⁵⁶ Country office and regional bureau emergency preparedness staff also reported that the package should include tools for scenario planning, SimExs and TTx, not just a new version of the minimum preparedness actions checklist.

72. **The only common internal preparedness tool being used by country offices is CONOPS, in which they summarize their response plans for likely emergency situations and, where possible, align them with national response plans. In several deep-dive countries the evaluation team found evidence of CONOPS being actively used and adapted.** For instance, in the Philippines country office the current CONOPS was tested through TTx and is under revision to link food assistance for asset response and recovery activities with ongoing resilience programming. Other country offices where CONOPS is considered useful include the Central African Republic country office, which produces regular CONOPS to guide assessment, distribution and monitoring missions; the Mali country office, which used a coordinated United Nations CONOP to mitigate risks associated with the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali; and the Cuba country office, which foresees different scenarios with appropriate partnerships and responses.
73. The process to produce CONOPS is also connected to BCM in WFP, because both processes require analysis of likely emergency situations and potential crises. In 2021, following its introduction in an Executive Director's Circular⁵⁷ as mandatory at corporate, regional bureau and country office levels, the BCM Unit provided a checklist similar to the former EPRP minimum preparedness actions checklist, the results of which are tracked globally to identify issues that could interrupt WFP's capacity to maintain critical business processes. Interviews with country office staff during deep-dive missions found that BCM checklists are considered useful and are applied by all country offices visited. According to the Emergency Preparedness Policyholder, the updated EPRP guidance and tools will complement and build on BCM tools and processes, due to a collaborative approach by the headquarters teams responsible for them.
74. **General tools for CBT are increasingly being used to good effect for CBT preparedness. Additional emergency preparedness-specific tools for CBT are a work in progress, the success of which depends on linkages with other corporate emergency preparedness tools.** The Cash and Vouchers Manual, although now decommissioned, is still used by WFP country offices and regional bureaux, food security clusters and cash working groups to conduct market analyses, select financial service providers and voucher providers, research and set transfer values and define targeting criteria during periods prior to or in between emergencies. The tool plugPAY, developed through WFP's Innovation Accelerator and piloted in Zambia and Sri Lanka, has the potential to save time and money in emergencies if current data protection challenges can be resolved.⁵⁸
75. The CBT team also produced a CBT Emergency Preparedness and Response toolkit in 2022, which country offices have found useful for financial service provider selection and onboarding. Fifteen "mandatory preparedness actions" were also included in the minimum preparedness actions checklist, but as this was retired, they have had limited uptake at country level. Lessons learned on CBT strongly indicate that scenario planning and logistics preparedness (for cash and vouchers), for which WFP is developing new guidance, are critical for CBT preparedness.
76. **The EPCI tool created in 2011 has undergone a revision during the evaluation period, which key informants reported was useful. However, it is reportedly resource intensive, with a need to**

⁵⁶ Some regional bureau-level guidance has also been put in place, for example the Regional Bureau EPR Package (2021).

⁵⁷ Executive Director's Circular, 8 July 2021 (OED2021/015).

⁵⁸ WFP Innovation Accelerator, 2024. plugPAY, <https://innovation.wfp.org/project/plugpay>.

invest considerable time in building relationships and trust with government counterparts as its application requires identification of capacity gaps, which can be sensitive. While successfully applied and adapted in several countries, including Peru, the Philippines and Kenya, smaller country offices, such as Togo, and those in transition from humanitarian to development contexts, such as Iraq, find it difficult to use the tool due to resource constraints. In addition, partners and WFP informants questioned the process given the lack of follow-up as a result of resource constraints, unlike their experience with SABER (a similar tool for assessing school feeding systems), which combines capacity gap assessment with identification of appropriate support from potential funding sources. These concerns are validated by the evaluation findings on the reported values (see Section 2.2.2). While key informants reported that support for the EPCI tool from headquarters and regional bureaux was available and was found to be useful, it was unclear to country offices which division at WFP headquarters had overall responsibility for this at the time of the data collection, following the organizational review in early 2024. Support requirements from country offices include both content and process implementation.

77. Other corporate programming tools that support preparedness and early action by governments include anticipatory action tools that WFP has developed with IFRC, FAO, the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership and others; shock-responsive social protection guidance, as discussed in Section 2.2.2; and the International Telecommunication Union–ETC Emergency Telecommunications Preparedness Checklist.

Finding 5. Investment by WFP in digital transformation and technology is gradually enhancing preparedness to enable more agile, efficient, effective and accountable emergency responses. However, challenges remain as new tools are implemented. Recent efforts to improve I&T preparedness support are promising.

78. **Boosted by additional funding as a critical corporate initiative from 2019 to 2022,**⁵⁹ WFP has made significant strides in digital transformation by investing in increased digitalization (e.g. COMET, LESS, SCOPE and DOTS) and advanced digital solutions (e.g. Optimus, Prisma). As stated in the Management Plan (2019–2021), these investments have parallel and complementary aims to enhance agility, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. As the scope of the Emergency Preparedness Policy states that WFP aims to have the procedures, systems and tools that allow the organization to be prepared and agile enough to adapt to an evolving global context, the corporate investment in innovative digital tools is regarded by the evaluation team as a contribution to preparedness. However, while WFP's use of digital technologies contributed to positioning the organization to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and adapt to the constraints and opportunities in different countries,⁶⁰ the full benefits of these digital tools have been slow to materialize (see Annex XIX).
79. **In line with the I&T Strategy (2023–2026), I&T-related preparedness in WFP was recently enhanced through the development of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Framework by the Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch (TECF).** A new Standard Operating Procedure detailing the emergency preparedness roles and responsibilities of field I&T staff was successfully rolled out in 2023 and 2024 through webinars to all six regional bureaux and all country offices.⁶¹ A new I&T preparedness monitoring tool, the Field I&T Emergency Data Tool (FITED), was developed and rolled out in 2023. By September 2024, 81 country offices had enrolled to use FITED and 327 IT staff had been trained on it.⁶² The Venezuela country office was among the first to apply FITED and, with the results, obtained additional funding to invest in I&T preparedness. The Malawi country office also stated that FITED provided it with a clear EPR road map for I&T. These enhancements contribute to fulfilling WFP's IT objectives related to preparedness and operational agility, ensuring WFP has appropriate IT equipment, tools and systems in place to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies. They also provide a more comprehensive framework for the deployment of WFP's Fast Information Technology

⁵⁹ WFP Management Plan (2019–2021); WFP Management Plan (2020–2022); :Systems Integration and IT-enabled Efficiencies.

⁶⁰ WFP, 2021. *Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Use of Technology in Constrained Environments*; WFP, 2022. *Evaluation of the WFP Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic* (OEVI/2020/062).

⁶¹ WFP, 2023. I&T EPR Framework, Standard Operating Procedure.

⁶² WFP, 2024. *The FITED Tool. Roll Out Report*.

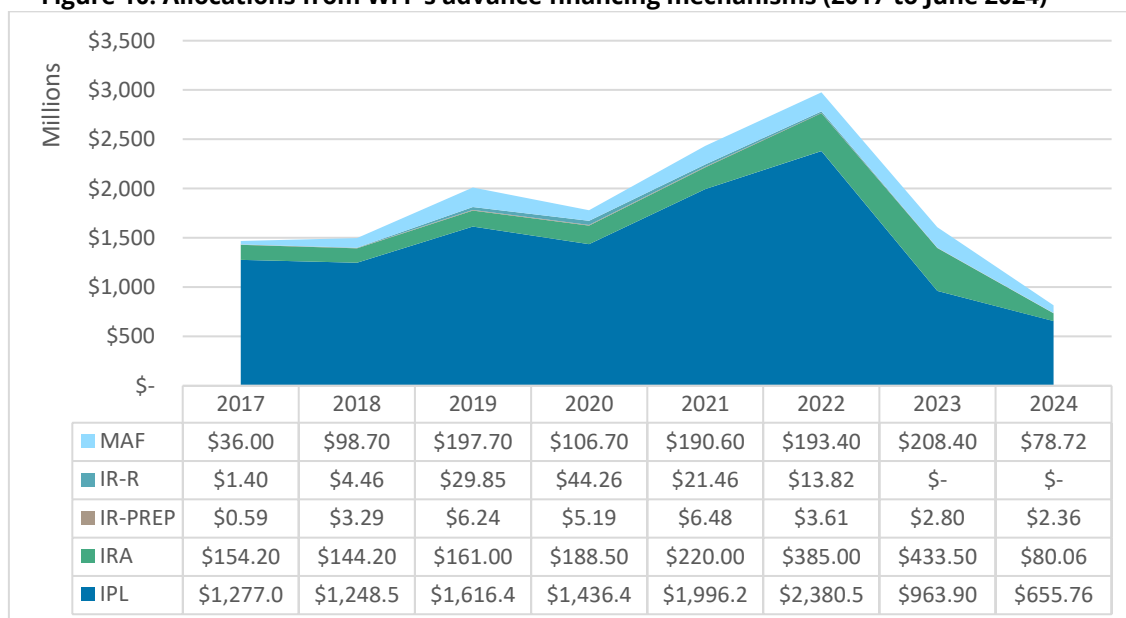
and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST), to accelerate preparedness efforts in country offices with a high risk of emergencies and strengthen I&T in ongoing emergencies.

Advance financing and availability of funds for emergency response

Finding 6. Overall amounts from Immediate Response Account (IRA) and Internal Project Lending (IPL) advances have increased since 2017. This has enabled country offices to initiate more timely emergency responses ahead of contributions from donors, averting or minimizing pipeline breaks. However, advance financing specifically dedicated to emergency preparedness has decreased since 2021 and is too low to encourage and enable country offices to adequately invest in emergency preparedness initiatives at scale.

- 80. **During the period covered by the evaluation, WFP has increased available funding for emergency preparedness and response through its advance financing mechanisms** – the IRA (including IR-PREP and Immediate Response Account for Response) and the IPL facility. Between 2017 and 2023, allocations from the IRA increased significantly, from USD 154.2 million in 2017 to USD 443.5 million in 2023. Allocations from the IPL facility (including macro advance financing) increased even more, ranging between USD 1,313.7 million in 2017 and USD 1,172.3 million in 2023, with a peak of USD 2,573.9 million in 2022 (see below).

Figure 10: Allocations from WFP’s advance financing mechanisms (2017 to June 2024)⁶³



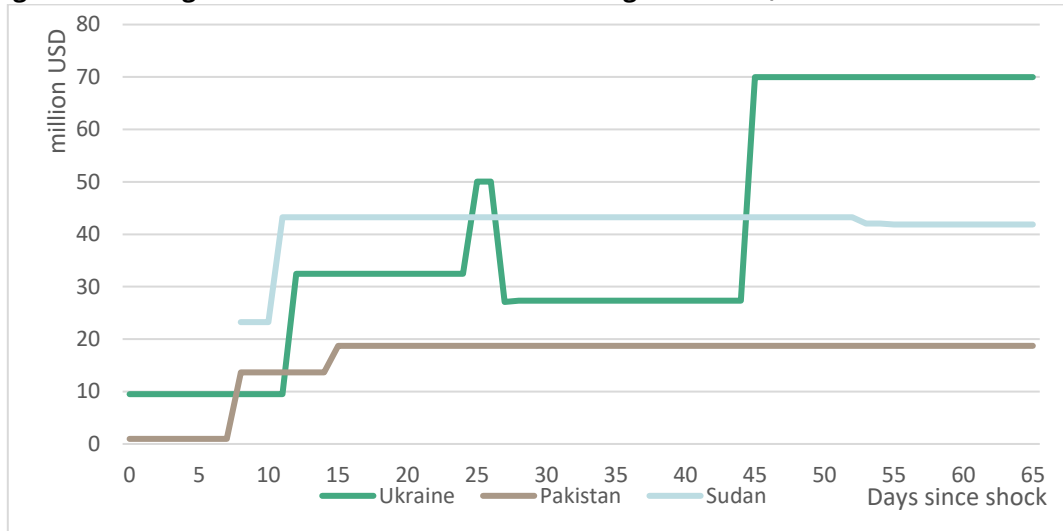
Source: WFP, 2024. Report on the Utilization of WFP’s Strategic Financing Mechanisms. WFP, APPBP Planning and Prioritization, CPB_Advance_Finance_Report_Internal. Note: 2024 values as of 16 July 2024.

- 81. **The evaluation found several examples of IRA financing being used as bridge funding to allow country offices to initiate emergency operations.** In Ukraine, a large allocation of IRA funding at the outset of operations in February 2022 allowed the newly re-established country office to begin procuring commodities and build a pipeline in response to urgent humanitarian needs.⁶⁴ WFP key informants in other countries provided similar examples of IRA and IPL funding being used to allow timely and uninterrupted assistance. Figure 11 shows the timing of the release of IRA and IPL funding to country offices following large-scale emergencies in Ukraine, the Sudan and Pakistan, allowing country offices to start procurement processes ahead of the receipt of additional donor funds for response and kickstarting WFP emergency operations.

⁶³ The figure uses the approval date and advance grant original budget as the main variables.

⁶⁴ WFP, 2023. *Ukraine Annual Country Report 2022*.

Figure 11: Timing of the release of IRA and IPL funding to Ukraine, the Sudan and Pakistan⁶⁵



Source: IRA and IPL, November 2023. Note: the graph shows cumulative IRA and IPL funds, including repayments.

82. **Within the IRA, the IR-PREP is specifically designed to support investments in country-level preparedness – both for WFP’s own preparedness and increases in partners’ capacity to effectively respond to emergencies.**⁶⁶ The majority of survey respondents were positive about improvements to advance financing mechanisms.⁶⁷ The deep-dive countries provided examples of how IR-PREP funding had been used at critical moments to cover preparedness activities, such as in Burundi, where an allocation of IR-PREP in 2020 was credited with averting pipeline breaks and supporting preparedness activities in response to the deteriorating security environment at the time.⁶⁸
83. **However, the amount of advance financing allocated to preparedness through the IRA is too low.** The data shows that IR-PREP allocations represent less than 2 percent of the value of total IRA allocations in the period 2017–2023; and, as IRA allocations increased from 2020 onwards, the proportion of total IRA resources allocated to IR-PREP decreased – falling from 2.9 percent of the total in 2020 to just 0.5 percent in 2023. While there is no target ratio for preparedness versus response funding, the data shows (and interviewees concurred) that IRA allocations for emergency preparedness have not kept pace with allocations for emergency response. There are several constraints on IRA allocations for emergency preparedness that have hindered WFP’s emergency preparedness efforts at country level, impacting on the overall implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Policy and achievements of results at scale. These include:
- **Difficulties for countries to understand and meet the eligibility criteria for IRA funding:** WFP key informants in several countries, particularly those facing small-scale, recurrent or protracted crises, highlighted the challenge of accessing IRA funding due to its perceived focus on providing resources for life-saving assistance in countries included in the Corporate Alert System (CAS). The revision of eligibility criteria for IR-PREP funding in 2022 (linked to the introduction of the Emergency Activation Protocol and the consolidation of previously separate

⁶⁵ For Pakistan, the values reported on the x-axis refer to days since the official government declaration of emergency.

⁶⁶ The IR-PREP was approved through a 2004 Executive Board policy and amended in 2016. The 2016 amendment included an expansion of the IR-PREP to include “enhancement of partners’ capacities for joint responses to emergencies”. WFP, 2004. “Review of the Immediate Response Account” ([WFP/EB.3/2004/12-A](#)); WFP, 2016. “Use of the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness Activities” ([WFP/EB.A/2016/6-C/1](#)).

⁶⁷ Within the survey conducted for this evaluation, 66 percent of respondents felt that advance financing and pre-positioning mechanisms (including the GCMF) had improved. They were more split on whether the mechanisms were adequate, with 46 percent rating them as adequate and 41 percent as inadequate.

⁶⁸ Through the KILs.

funding instruments into the IRA), while not strictly applied in practice, has nevertheless acted as a disincentive for country offices to request funding.⁶⁹

- **Restrictions on the size and timeframe of IRA allocations:** Individual IR-PREP allocations are designed to be capped at USD 300,000,⁷⁰ and allocations must be in response to an immediate risk (specified as “within a three-month timeframe”).⁷¹ These restrictions were referenced by country offices as disincentives for requesting internal funding, particularly the short timeframe in instances where longer-term investments are required to build preparedness capacity over time.
- **Lengthy application and approval processes:** Several countries highlighted “heavy” and “slow” processes to access IRA/IR-PREP funding, including several rounds of back-and-forth communication between country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters to process requests and secure approvals, which have acted as a disincentive to requesting advance financing in some instances.
- **Repayment of advances:** The IRA was established as a replenishable multilateral funding mechanism and its effectiveness relies on donor replenishments, albeit with evidence of flexibility in terms of the repayment timeframe.⁷²

84. WFP advises that flexible, multilateral funding is not intended to cover all emergency preparedness requirements: preparedness initiatives and budgets should be mainstreamed in CSPs, with the IRA used to fund exceptional activities when no alternative is available.⁷³ Other funding sources for emergency preparedness include the WFP Trust Fund for Hunger-related Climate Change (see Section 2.3.2), which has been used to channel funds to WFP for anticipatory action, and a dedicated WFP Trust Fund for Emergency Preparedness and Response, both of which have provided important additional funding – the former particularly within the last two years – demonstrating potential to transform the organization’s investments in preparedness moving forward.⁷⁴ Knowledge of the different sources of funding for emergency preparedness and how to access them at country level was mixed, however, limiting their potential application.
85. Box 2 provides an overview of funding mechanisms for the organizations included in the comparative analysis.

Box 2: Comparative analysis of advance financing

The three organizations from which comparative learning was sought reported having funding mechanisms supporting the preparedness capacity of country offices, regional bureaux and partners. IOM’s Internal Early Action Fund, an anticipatory action fund, provides IOM country offices with capped (at USD 20,000) seed funding that can be used to leverage other funding. In addition,

⁶⁹ WFP, 2022. *Immediate Response Account – WFP’s Life-saving Emergency Reserve* (DED 2022/003).

⁷⁰ The ceiling on country allocations is referenced in an internal WFP paper on funding preparedness (WFP, 2020. *Funding Emergency Preparedness: A Review of the IR-PREP*), but is not made explicit in the 2004 “Review of the IRA” ([WFP/EB.3/2004/12-A](#)), the 2016 report “Use of the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness Activities” ([WFP/EB.A/2016/6-C/1](#)) or the 2022 IRA Technical Note. In practice, allocations have occasionally exceeded the ceiling: data for the period 2017–2023 includes seven instances in which IR-PREP allocations exceeded USD 300,000.

⁷¹ WFP, 2022. *Immediate Response Account Technical Note*, Version 16.

⁷² In cases where countries are unable to repay allocations, WFP’s Deputy Executive Director has the authority to convert an outstanding IRA allocation into a grant. See WFP, 2022. *Immediate Response Account – WFP’s Life-saving Emergency Reserve* (DED 2022/003). IRA data shows that a considerable number of allocations have not been repaid, demonstrating a flexible approach.

⁷³ WFP, 2004. *Review of the Immediate Response Account* ([WFP/EB.3/2004/12-A](#)), 7 September 2004.

⁷⁴ According to WFP management plans in 2018 and 2022, planned trust fund expenditure for the thematic area of climate change and DRR increased from USD 10.8 million in 2019 to USD 94 million in 2023. WFP management plans in 2018 (for 2019–2021) and 2019 (for 2020–2022) show that USD 62.65 million of corporate trust fund income between 2014 and 2018 and USD 54.2 million between 2015 and 2019 were distributed to the thematic area of emergency preparedness and response. Despite clear data and criteria on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Trust Fund in management plans, the evaluation was not able to find evidence of the use of the trust fund from other sources, nor did it receive feedback from stakeholders on what had been achieved with the funding.

IOM’s Migration Emergency Fund is a loan mechanism to provide rapid assistance during emergencies. IOM reported that the heavy reliance on donor funding affects the scale of its preparedness efforts. IFRC has a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund which supports preparedness for imminent crises and anticipatory action for national societies.

Note: Annex XVII provides additional findings from the comparative analysis.

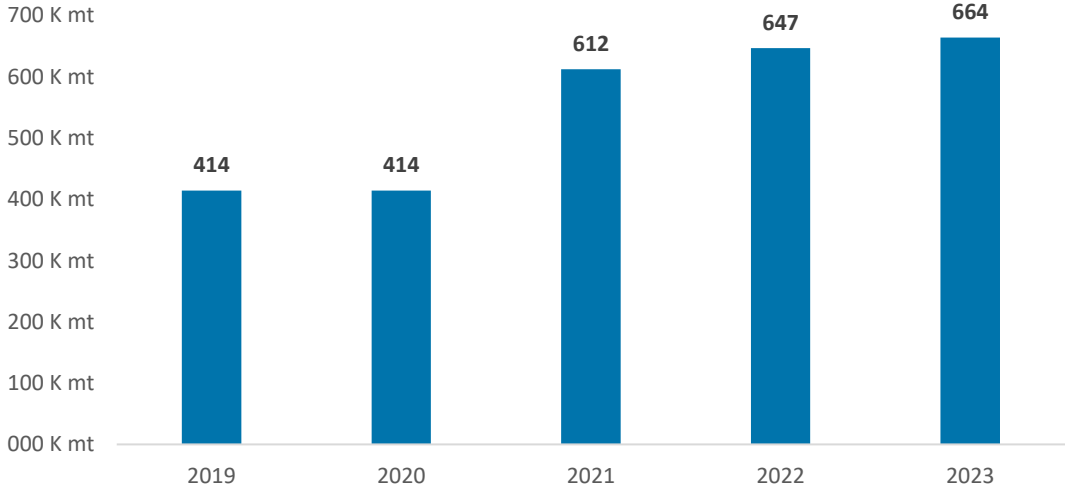
Strategic pre-positioning of food stocks and pre-emergency agreements with local food suppliers and financial service providers

Finding 7. WFP’s emergency preparedness has been enhanced through increased pre-positioned food stocks using the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF), with potential for more strategic pre-positioning in the future. Non-GCMF pre-positioning of food stocks at national or subnational levels appears to be decreasing, replaced to some extent by pre-emergency agreements with local food suppliers and financial service providers, in support of the organization’s preparedness and local markets.

86. **Between 2019 and 2023, pre-positioning of strategic inventory through the GCMF has significantly increased**, as shown in Figure 12. Annual procurement of supplies through the GCMF currently accounts for around 57 percent of WFP’s total procurement, with potential for expansion in the coming years.⁷⁵ Most of WFP’s Level 3 and Level 2 operations over the past five years have utilized pre-positioned GCMF inventory, including operations in Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic, South Sudan, Mozambique, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

87. **Commodities accessed from the GCMF were in some contexts found to be of poor quality or close to expiry dates, or at non-competitive prices.**⁷⁶ However, overall, the prices of food procured through the GCMF are consistently lower than conventional procurement, and clear gains in timeliness are observed (see Section 2.2.4), indicating the constant challenge of balancing speed, cost efficiency, quality and quantity in WFP emergency preparedness activities.

Figure 12: GCMF average annual inventory (thousands of metric tons)



Source: WFP, former Strategic Financing Unit, now Supply Chain Planning and Optimization.

88. **Non-GCMF pre-positioning of food stocks at national or subnational levels has reduced over the past six years, at the same time as WFP’s strategy shifted towards strategic advance contracts for local food procurement and CBT where appropriate.** This approach aligns with WFP’s Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy, its commitment to strengthening the existing supply chain capacity

⁷⁵ “Report on the Utilization of WFP’s Strategic Financing Mechanisms (1 January – 31 December 2023)” (WFP/EB.A/2024/6-F/1).

⁷⁶ In the Burundi, Central African Republic and Togo KILs.

of national actors⁷⁷ and, where possible, implementation of a preference for applying different push (pre-positioned stocks) and pull (purchase on demand) strategies depending on the needs of each context.

89. **Additional preparedness practices, including buffer stocks, have been modelled and piloted by WFP, demonstrating potential for greater preparedness in the future.** Strategic positioning of stocks – whereby the scope of the GCMF is extended to all operations and commodities, buffer stocks are retained in all corridors, and additional inventory is pre-positioned in strategic locations – shows potential for increasing WFP’s preparedness and reducing supply chain lead times.⁷⁸ Some risks are associated with the approach, including increased costs and potential losses, though discussions are under way to ensure that any significant risks to the organization are mitigated as far as possible. It is too early to understand the potential impact of this new approach, but early modelling of its effects is promising.
90. **WFP has enhanced its emergency preparedness in many country offices through strategic advance contracts and agreements.** Interviews at headquarters and with country offices highlighted the multi-sourcing approaches, resource-sharing agreements with governments, standby and long-term agreements with suppliers, food supply agreements and rapid field-level agreements. Evidence of these preparedness measures in deep-dive countries includes long-term agreements with suppliers and a government resource-sharing agreement in Pakistan, as well as the use of field-level agreements to contract cooperating partners in Ukraine and the Philippines. The Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean has secured regional long-term agreements for supporting country office operations during emergencies. Some country offices have also mapped vendors for potential provision of meals (or scale-up of existing programmes), despite a lack of corporate guidance and tools for preparedness for this form of assistance.
91. **With the growth of WFP’s use of CBT from USD 1.2 billion to USD 2.8 billion between 2018 and 2023, country office-level preparedness is increasingly incorporating market assessments, research on targeting, and building networks of financial service providers, including banks, mobile network operators, remittance companies and retailer services that can be activated on demand.** All deep-dive countries, except Cuba, have ongoing CBT preparedness supported by CBT expertise in regional bureaux or headquarters. In Latin America, preparedness for cash transfers in emergencies has focused on enhancing social protection systems to be shock-responsive. In Ukraine, where WFP initially lacked pre-existing contracts with financial service providers for the implementation of CBT, a global agreement with Western Union was used for initial distributions. Afterwards, WFP leveraged collaborative procurement arrangements for CBTs with a Ukrainian bank, highlighting the importance of partnerships in preparedness. As noted in Section 2.2.4, the development and rollout of CBT tools and guidelines have supported CBT preparedness, including with cash working groups and other partners, though uptake remains limited.
92. **Logistical preparedness for multi-modality responses is still evolving.** Interviews in deep-dive countries indicated a need for closer integration of emergency preparedness across actors (including CBT and supply chain units – mirroring the recent changes in headquarters) to ensure adaptive preparedness and allow country offices to rapidly shift between modalities as required.

Availability of specialist/skilled gender-balanced surge capacity deployable for early action and emergency response operations

Finding 8. WFP has increased its standing and deployable staff capacity for emergency preparedness, early action and response, though gaps still exist. There is a lack of oversight and management of WFP’s different rosters, and international deployments were not gender balanced. Short-term deployments have enabled WFP to scale up quickly when needed, but building a stable workforce with emergency expertise at country level is preferable. Many different training resources exist on emergencies, including on preparedness, but they are disjointed. Preparedness is not visible as a strong organizational priority within different training resources on emergencies, and an overall strategic approach to developing staff

⁷⁷ WFP, 2023. Supply Chain: Executive Board Induction, https://executiveboard.wfp.org/fr/document_download/WFP-0000132326.

⁷⁸ WFP, 2024. Strategic Stock Model.

capacity in this area is lacking. Other than improved attention to staff wellness in emergency contexts, staffing policies and practices overall have not paid sufficient attention to emergency preparedness.

93. **Some level of staff capacity for emergency preparedness exists in most of WFP's country operations**, though the functions of emergency preparedness and emergency response are generally combined within teams and individuals and spread across different functional areas of responsibility. Responsibilities for emergency preparedness are spread across multiple functions within WFP beyond Emergency Preparedness and Response Teams, including in senior management, programme and policy, logistics and supply chain, security, IT and others. This division of labour is positive, making implementation of the policy on emergency preparedness a cross-organization responsibility. However, a lack of clear data on the staffing needs and gaps for particular functions makes it difficult to assess the sufficiency of specialist staff for emergency preparedness.⁷⁹
94. **Country offices have made efforts to increase the number of staff working on emergencies, including for emergency preparedness.** Several of the country offices covered by this evaluation described how they had built up the size of their teams working on emergency preparedness and response. In Pakistan, for example, many of the additional staff recruited in preparation for an anticipated influx of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan in 2021 were retained, thereby strengthening the country office's ability to prepare for and respond to severe flooding in 2022 (see the timelines for Pakistan and other countries in Annex X for more details). It may be challenging for these country offices to maintain such staff capacity given the significant funding shortfalls since 2023.
95. **WFP has rosters and other mechanisms in place to surge staff when needed – a key element of preparedness – and has demonstrated their effectiveness in filling gaps in standing staff capacity before, during and after emergencies. However, overall management and oversight of rosters is lacking, and the composition of surge staff is not gender balanced.** Previous evaluations have noted WFP's success in scaling up its emergency workforce when needed, reflecting the organization's preparedness to respond to emergencies in a timely manner.⁸⁰ This evaluation also found multiple examples of centralized mechanisms for staff deployments, a key aspect of preparedness. These include FITTEST, Nutrition Division's rapid response team, roaming finance officers, , and standby rosters and partners. Functional departments and regional bureaux are responsible for building surge capacity and triggering deployments using the various mechanisms at their disposal, with a degree of coordination by the Office of the Deputy Executive Director. A database of centralized deployments shows that WFP surged over 730 staff to country offices and regional bureaux between 2021 and 2023, though the numbers are likely to be much higher taking into account deployments managed through non-formal surge mechanisms. Gaps in standing staff capacity appeared to cluster around particular skillsets, including emergency operations⁸¹ and male staff accounted for the majority of both surge applicants and deployments.⁸²
96. Internal perceptions are mixed, however, on the adequacy and effectiveness of current staff scale-up mechanisms, with almost equal numbers of survey participants rating WFP's rosters and surge deployments as sufficient versus insufficient. Interviews highlighted different hindering factors, including a lack of clarity on who leads on rosters, and the role of HR versus other functional units for their development and management. The diversity of rosters and deployment mechanisms within WFP was also highlighted positively, providing country offices with a range of options for quickly accessing surge staff when needed, including through informal channels.
97. Many country offices covered by this evaluation filled gaps in staff capacity using staff on temporary duty assignment (TDY). Regional bureaux have provided particularly strong support for country offices in their regions through TDY deployments – for example, WFP's regional bureau in Dakar played a critical

⁷⁹ WFP, Office of the Inspector General, 2023. *Internal Audit of Staffing in Emergencies* (AR/23/11).

⁸⁰ WFP, 2020. *Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies*; WFP, 2022. *Evaluation of the WFP Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

⁸¹ In order, the three most common positions to be surged were in Supply Chain, Programme and Policy, and Emergency Operations, accounting for well over half of all deployments combined in that period.

⁸² In total, 40 percent of all applicants to WFP's surge mechanisms between 2021 and 2023 were female, and female staff represented 38 percent of all deployments in that timeframe.

role in boosting the capacity of country offices to respond to the crisis in the Sahel region.⁸³ In addition, capacity from a combination of sources enabled WFP's Ukraine response to acquire over 50 additional staff within one week. Following Cyclone Idai in 2019, staff were deployed within days to Zimbabwe through TDY and regional rosters.

98. **Investing in building a stable workforce with strong emergency preparedness and response capacities and skills is preferable to an over-reliance on temporary deployments.** While TDY and other short-term gap-filling mechanisms are useful for strengthening WFP's readiness to respond in emergencies, other country experiences demonstrated the advantage of building longer-term staff capacity to respond to emergencies as a key preparedness measure. In Togo, for example, several consecutive TDY appointments were followed by the recruitment of dedicated staff for emergency preparedness and response, allowing for greater continuity and growth within WFP's emergency work. An internal audit of WFP's staffing in emergencies concurs that investing in a stable workforce is preferable to the prolonged use of temporary staff.⁸⁴
99. **Significant budget cuts since 2023 are likely to further affect WFP's ability to continue building a strong workforce for emergency preparedness as the organization faces difficult decisions about where to allocate dwindling resources and which staff positions to prioritize.** The impact of budgetary pressure may result in a reduced number of dedicated emergency preparedness and response personnel within regional bureaux and country offices in the future.
100. **National rosters and other initiatives are frequently used as preparedness measures to boost WFP's readiness to respond in emergencies, with particular attention to strengthening the gender balance of national staff.** National rosters were successfully created and sustained in Pakistan, Togo, Zimbabwe, Ukraine and Zambia, where profiles of qualified but unsuccessful candidates for positions were retained in order to speed up future recruitment. In the case of Pakistan and Zambia, country offices retained female candidates on rosters for longer than their male counterparts in an effort to strengthen the gender balance of the national workforce. In Ukraine, given the challenges of recruiting skilled national staff in the initial phase of the emergency, the country office retained "evergreen positions" – posts that are kept perpetually vacant and regularly advertised in order to keep attracting new talent in anticipation of future staffing needs.
101. **Multiple training resources include aspects of emergency preparedness content, and increasing numbers of staff have completed relevant training courses. However, efforts appear disjointed, and the evaluation team found no coherent approach to capacity development for preparedness.** While no dedicated course on emergency preparedness exists at WFP, several of WFP's other training resources contain related elements, aligning with the approach of embedding emergency preparedness across different staff functions, though not necessarily adequately emphasizing emergency preparedness as an organizational priority. Nor do existing training resources incorporate lessons on how to integrate gender into emergency preparedness, including different levels of capacity to prepare for emergencies and withstand shocks among women, girls, men and boys in all their diversity. For all relevant online training modules combined, the data shows that over 37,000 staff had accessed the resources since 2017, and 21,796 staff had completed them by 2023 (out of a current workforce of approximately 23,000).⁸⁵ According to the survey, perceptions of staff on the sufficiency and relevance of this and other training content were mixed (see also Section 2.3.1). Few interviewees at country level commented on the usefulness of training, particularly online training, more often citing hands-on support from regional bureaux and headquarters and learning by doing as contributing to increased capacity on emergency preparedness.
102. **Requirements and incentives for investing in skills development for preparedness are lacking.** There was no obvious motivation for staff to invest time in training, given the lack of clear career progression linked to emergency preparedness. This was particularly true for national staff, who remain in countries when international staff rotate and can most meaningfully sustain WFP's investments in emergency preparedness if they have the relevant knowledge and skills. Face-to-face training, such as

⁸³ WFP, 2024. *Évaluation de la réponse d'urgence du PAM aux crises prolongées au Sahel et dans d'autres pays d'Afrique centrale 2018-2023*.

⁸⁴ WFP, Office of the Inspector General, 2023. *Internal Audit of Staffing in Emergencies* (AR/23/11).

⁸⁵ Data shared by the [Emergency Preparedness and Response Service](#) covering the period from 2017 to mid-2024.

FASTER, and learning from experience were noted as being preferable to online learning, as were opportunities to network and exchange experiences with other emergency preparedness professionals.

103. **Despite evidence of good practice in some areas, such as staff wellness, staffing policies and practices have not sufficiently strengthened WFP's emergency preparedness capacity.** WFP's internal audit of its staffing in emergencies stated that existing guidance was out of date and highlighted gaps in WFP's ability to effectively and efficiently staff emergencies. Thus far, all recommended actions from this internal audit remain open in WFP's internal tracker.⁸⁶ In particular, it noted that the HR Emergency Preparedness and Response toolkit, developed in 2018, had not been formally rolled out and consistently applied across country offices and regional bureaux.⁸⁷ Stakeholders who participated in the evaluation did not comment on the toolkit, reinforcing the finding that it is not well known or much used within the organization. Beyond the toolkit, internal KIIs revealed other missed opportunities to strengthen WFP's readiness to deploy skilled staff for early response, including a lack of pre-emptive action to ensure that all deployable personnel have completed relevant training, such as the United Nations System Staff College SSAFE course for Surge Deployment.⁸⁸ More positively, there was good feedback from some country offices on WFP's attention to staff wellness – an area that the organization has made efforts to strengthen since the approval of the Emergency Preparedness Policy.⁸⁹

Box 3: Comparative analysis of HR for emergency preparedness

The three organizations from which comparative learning was sought also highlighted HR as a key component of preparedness. In UNICEF and IOM headquarters, units were relatively small or nascent respectively, while in IFRC preparedness was reportedly scattered across many departments and individuals. All the organizations had invested in training, with UNICEF wanting to model its revised training on WFP's FASTER model. Rosters of personnel also formed a key component of all reviewed organizations' preparedness approaches; however, both IOM and UNICEF noted that WFP is able to deploy staff more rapidly. IFRC has recently revamped its roster approach, diversifying staff available on rosters and ensuring a competencies-based approach to recruitment and training.

Note: Annex XVII provides additional findings from the comparative analysis.

Risk analysis and early warning

Finding 9. WFP has made significant progress in supporting risk analysis and early warning systems that inform preparedness and early action in relation to climatic hazards, internally and for governments, clusters and other partners. Analysis and early warning systems for conflict have been less effective but are improving as a result of recent efforts.

104. **An array of risk analysis and early warning tools and processes now guide WFP's programming and support to partners, and inform resource allocations.** These include the Advanced Disaster Analysis and Mapping (ADAM) tool, the monthly Early Warning Watch List, the CAS, biannual Hunger Hotspot analyses, and others.
105. Launched by WFP in 2015, ADAM was designed to provide post-earthquake impact maps. In 2017 it was expanded to provide forecasts of flood events and their impacts at subnational level, and forecasts of potential exposure to approaching storms. It currently has 4,000 subscribers, including governments, United Nations agencies and NGOs, and has become a valued, common multi-hazard early warning system. Informants in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Pakistan and the Philippines referred to ADAM alerts as preceding or validating other sources of information they received prior to unfolding emergencies, which led the country offices to activate or augment preparedness measures such as surge rosters and coordination with government partners.

⁸⁶ Status shared by the Office of Evaluation as of 23 August 2024. It should be noted that some of the recommended actions have deadlines beyond the date of this evaluation, and it is therefore reasonable that they have not yet been completed.

⁸⁷ WFP, Office of the Inspector General, 2023. *Internal Audit of Staffing in Emergencies* (AR/23/11).

⁸⁸ See <https://www.unssc.org/ssafe-course-surge-deployment>.

⁸⁹ WFP, 2020. *Evaluation of the WFP People Strategy (2014–2017)*.

106. **An increase in country-level investments and strengthened capacities in early warning systems for natural hazards is related to the recent growth of anticipatory action programming.** All anticipatory action interventions couple risk monitoring and communication with pre-agreed financing, with the former serving to activate the latter. In 2023, WFP saw ten activations in nine countries (in Bangladesh (2), Burundi, Guatemala, Haiti, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Somalia and Zimbabwe), up from six in 2022⁹⁰.
107. **Regional bureau support for risk analysis and early warning has also made an important contribution to the preparedness of WFP and other stakeholders.** For example, the Southern Africa Drought Hot Spot Analysis produced by the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa on the poor food security outlook is considered by Zambia country office staff, government and NGO partners and other food security cluster members as playing a key role in raising donor awareness and securing resources in time to respond to humanitarian needs.
108. **While climate data analyses are becoming increasingly prominent in WFP products and services, particularly for country offices where WFP has established or is introducing anticipatory action, WFP's risk analysis capacity, tools and early warning systems related to conflict have been less effective.** Ukraine did not feature on WFP's CAS prior to the beginning of the conflict in 2022, and in the Sudan, where WFP was reliant on the United Nations joint analysis system, all agencies were caught unprepared when conflict broke out. While conflict-related data is politically sensitive and governments can restrict dissemination, WFP and its partners are frequently failing to develop systems that prepare them for providing humanitarian aid in such contexts.⁹¹ In addition, despite awareness among WFP staff and partners about "doing no harm", the Evaluation of the Policy on WFP's Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings revealed limited examples of systematic, structured and inclusive processes for ensuring the consideration of conflict dynamics and conflict sensitivity.
109. As conflict is closely linked with displacement, it is critical for emergency responders to be prepared for conflict-related population movements. Recent efforts by WFP to integrate conflict, climate and economic analyses through an Early Warning Working Group are making conflict early warning more visible and systematic, as well as promoting a multi-hazard approach to preparedness for increasingly connected and cascading risks. The group also provides analytical support to country offices that aim to build scenarios and CONOPS, thereby connecting early warning with early action.
110. **The CAS has enabled WFP to prioritize resource allocations and prompted country offices to start urgent preparedness actions.** In general, it has been well received internally, albeit with some gaps in communication about how classifications are produced and their implications. The CAS has evolved significantly since the Emergency Preparedness Policy was developed. It now synthesizes analyses of multiple emerging risks of different origins that could impact WFP operations or require new responses (which are also disseminated internally in the form of an Early Warning Watch List) and translates them into phases based on urgency and scale. The CAS and Early Warning Watch List play a key role in informing the cross-functional discussion within monthly Preparedness Cell meetings. Going forward, regional bureaux are seeking greater involvement in the classification process, guidance on what support country offices can expect (staff, funding, guidance) during each phase, and clarity on how to use WFP's risk analysis and early warning tools most efficiently. In July 2024 the Emergency Coordination Service (COOE) started a process to review and enhance the CAS, closely engaging and involving regional bureaux.

2.2.2 To what extent has WFP contributed to enhance governments' and communities' emergency preparedness?

Finding 10. WFP has contributed to the enhancement of governments' and regional governmental bodies' emergency preparedness through a diverse range of activities and South-South triangular cooperation, achieving results at output level. However, there is less robust evidence of outcome-level results. Inconsistent use of the EPCI by country offices, as the corporate tool for measuring progress on

⁹⁰ [WFP.2024. Scaling up anticipatory actions for food security: Anticipatory Action Year in Focus.](#)

⁹¹ IASC, 2024. *Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Northern Ethiopia*, <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluations-steering-group/inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluation-response-humanitarian-crisis-northern-ethiopia>.

capacity strengthening of government emergency preparedness, has prevented an overall assessment of WFP contributions.

111. **Country deep dives identified a diverse range of activities undertaken by WFP to strengthen the emergency preparedness capacity of governments.** These included both upstream and downstream operational capacity support.
112. **WFP's emergency preparedness capacity strengthening of governments included work on food security information systems, early warning systems and support to studies, as well as provision of hardware for data collection.** In Togo, WFP supported the Government with food security and nutrition studies⁹² that fed into the *Cadre Harmonisé*,⁹³ as well as installing weather stations for flood early warning. In Iraq, WFP pivoted from food security data collection support to government statistics offices to supporting land use mapping and a drought study meeting government needs, plus supporting a shift to climate change programming.⁹⁴ In Zambia, key informants reported that WFP supported rain gauge installation for improved climate information,⁹⁵ and the use of technology for assessments, including the piloting of drones and digitalizing data collection and analysis.
113. **Climate and anticipatory action formed a key area of government emergency preparedness capacity strengthening.** This included work to integrate climate change data into planning at provincial/local levels in the Philippines, coupled with efforts to access funding from the Green Climate Fund for multi-hazard impact-based forecasting to support anticipatory action,⁹⁶ as well as work on a draft bill on the declaration of an imminent disaster. Similar emerging efforts took place in Iraq and Zambia. In addition, countries such as the Sudan were supported in their engagement with the African Risk Capacity (ARC) insurance for flood preparedness prior to the outbreak of conflict in April.⁹⁷ This innovative risk transfer and risk financing tool, developed and piloted by WFP, has changed the way governments plan and budget for emergencies. In Africa, the United Nations provided USD 15.7 million in 2022/23 through ARC.⁹⁸ Similar products are experiencing rapid expansion across the Caribbean. Indeed, the evolution and expansion of anticipatory action, pioneered by WFP and IFRC since 2015, are contributing to changing paradigms in risk management. Sitting at the nexus of preparedness and response, anticipatory action plans that trigger pre-positioned financing – once agreed risk or impact thresholds are reached – were in place in 36 countries by 2023, covering more than 4.1 million people.⁹⁹
114. **WFP support to national social protection systems was relevant to enhance government emergency preparedness.** This support included upstream work. For example, through the signing of a letter of understanding with the Government of Zimbabwe, WFP supported the development of a road map for shock-responsive social protection.¹⁰⁰ In Peru, WFP and the Government assessed regional social protection mechanisms to strengthen the country's social protection policy. This assessment highlighted that WFP's sustained collaboration was crucial to advancing the road map established by the Government, which further contributed to the adoption of a law for adaptive social protection in emergencies.¹⁰¹ Downstream work supported by WFP included the operationalization of social protection systems by developing beneficiary registries and the digitalization of systems, examples of which include Iraq¹⁰² and the Sudan. By improving registries, these systems are better placed to quickly identify the most vulnerable and support targeting at times of crisis, thereby enhancing the shock

⁹² WFP. 2022. Togo Annual Country Report 2021.

⁹³ The *Cadre Harmonisé* is used in West Africa and is the equivalent of the Integrated Phase Classification used in other countries for consensus on food security analysis.

⁹⁴ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of Iraq Country Strategic Plan 2020–2024*.

⁹⁵ The use of these was enhanced using trained community rain gauge minders.

⁹⁶ WFP. 2023. Case study Philippines. Calm before the storm. Anticipatory Action Strengthens Disaster Risk Management in the Philippines.

⁹⁷ WFP, 2024. *Optimizing Early Action and Risk Financing Opportunities: Evidence from WFP's Participation in the ARC Replica Initiative*.

⁹⁸ As an insurance risk pool, ARC's objective is to capitalize on the natural diversification of weather risk across the African continent, allowing countries to manage their risk as a group in a financially efficient manner to respond to probable but uncertain risks. See <https://www.arc.int/how-arc-works>.

⁹⁹ WFP, 2023. Anticipatory action for climate shocks, <https://www.wfp.org/anticipatory-actions>.

¹⁰⁰ See <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-and-government-zimbabwe-launch-roadmap-toward-food-security>.

¹⁰¹ WFP, 2024. *Peru Annual Country Report 2023*.

¹⁰² WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of Iraq Country Strategic Plan 2020–2024*.

responsiveness of social protection mechanisms with large-scale coverage. WFP supported similar downstream work in Zambia, while in Cuba mechanisms are being developed to integrate social protection systems that proactively respond to crises through anticipatory action plans. This approach will be linked to local food systems by supporting food production for social protection programmes.

115. **Upstream support also included work with governments in policy and strategy development, as well as institutional mechanisms for preparedness.** For example, in Zambia key informants reported that WFP supported the Government to pass a Disaster Management Act as well as to develop a Disaster Management Framework. In Togo, WFP supported the development of an Integrated Disaster Reduction Strategy and an operational contingency plan.¹⁰³ In Gambia, WFP supported the development of the Early Warning Coordination Committee, including the mapping of roles and responsibilities for institutions and the development of a road map. WFP also supported the Government through a secondment to the National Disaster Management Agency to support synchronizing the different sector plans among agencies.¹⁰⁴ These activities helped lay the foundation for emergency preparedness and response in these countries.
116. **Since the 2017 Emergency Preparedness Policy, WFP has bolstered government logistics and supply chain capacity, and increased government resource mobilization in emergencies,¹⁰⁵ through warehouses, staging areas and mobile storage units.** Efforts in this regard have not always been successful, with a stalled supply chain project in Iraq as a result of lack of resources. Tools developed by the Logistics Cluster have also contributed to information preparedness and digital humanitarian supply chain and logistics preparedness. These include the Logistics Information Exchange tool for direct government capacity strengthening, which has strengthened government capacities in countries such as Madagascar, and the Logistics Capacity Assessment platform, which has high global usage.
117. **Support to governments on emergency telecommunications pre-dates the Emergency Preparedness Policy but, thanks to constant innovations, has continued to enhance communications preparedness ahead of emergencies.** In the Philippines, the WFP-led ETC supported the Department of Information and Communications Technology to develop emergency communication systems as a preparedness measure for response. This project was predominantly funded by the Philippines Government, with WFP sourcing USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance funding to support the training of government staff.¹⁰⁶

Box 4: Good practice preparedness approach in the Philippines¹⁰⁷

In the Philippines, emergency preparedness in the CSP focuses on enhancing equipment, infrastructure, human capital, and digitalization of social protection, food and EPR systems. Government authorities attribute improvements in their emergency preparedness capacities to the partnership with WFP, which includes regular training, SimExs and support for pre-positioning of food, including preparing local warehouses and technical support to the Government on packaging. Additionally, advanced long-term agreement contracts with commercial transporters complement and support the Government's supply chain capacity.

118. **Underpinning many of these country capacity strengthening activities were substantial WFP investments in government human resource development.** Efforts in this regard included investments in SimExs and training of civil servants on emergency preparedness and response, needs assessment, technologies such as the use of drones, and early warning. Annex XV provides examples of WFP investment in capacity strengthening of government personnel.

¹⁰³ WFP, 2022. *Togo Country Strategic Plan 2022–2026*.

¹⁰⁴ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of Gambia Country Strategic Plan*.

¹⁰⁵ In Pakistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Togo, the Philippines and Zambia.

¹⁰⁶ WFP, 2021. *Philippines Annual Country Report*.

¹⁰⁷ Identified through KIIs during the Philippines country deep dive.

Box 5: Good practice preparedness approach in Malawi¹⁰⁸

In Malawi, WFP collaborated with the Ministry of Health and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs to conduct two health supply chain SimExs in July 2022 and August 2023. These aimed to test and strengthen the response capabilities of Malawi's health and humanitarian logistics actors. The SimExs brought about notable improvements in knowledge and skills in planning, coordination, information management, decision making and supply chain management.

119. **South-South triangular cooperation and support to regional bodies on preparedness was also facilitated by WFP.** In 2019, WFP facilitated a Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Resilience workshop in collaboration with the National Centre of Disaster Risk Reduction in China, attended by 50 participants from seven countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Peru, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste).¹⁰⁹ Another example of South-South cooperation facilitated by WFP included an exchange between Lebanon and Peru to learn about Peru's Social Protection programme and particularly the use of CBT.¹¹⁰ WFP Indonesia also hosted a visit by the Government of the Philippines in Jakarta, as part of its multi-year strategy to bolster preparedness and response excellence in the Philippines. Visits were made to key institutions to exchange information, and there were also site visits to introduce mobile kitchen equipment and resources.¹¹¹ Separately, WFP Indonesia and WFP Philippines facilitated a South-South triangular cooperation knowledge exchange visit on early warning systems and the institutionalization of anticipatory action.¹¹²
120. **WFP has also been active at regional level to support the emergency preparedness of regional bodies.** For example, WFP engaged with the Southern Africa Development Committee and, in collaboration with MapAction, trained the Southern Africa Development Committee Emergency Response Team on the use of drones for assessments and mapping in emergencies.¹¹³ In a long-standing partnership, WFP also supported the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with the pre-positioning of its humanitarian supplies in WFP-managed United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots as part of the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN, which is a key mechanism to facilitate provision of relief items to ASEAN countries facing emergencies.¹¹⁴ In the Sahel region, WFP's support to regional entities (the Permanent Interstate Committee for drought control in the Sahel, the Economic Community of West African States and others) played a key role in improving the methodology for food security analyses and informed regional advocacy efforts, although a recent evaluation found that WFP's technical support capacity in other areas remains underutilized and WFP could play a more active role in policy dialogue, given the convergence of strategic thinking with regional institutions.¹¹⁵
121. **The results achieved through many of WFP's activities are not yet visible at the outcome level.** Many of the activities were ongoing or required continued support, highlighting the long-term nature of emergency preparedness. In addition, there were relatively few examples where WFP's capacity strengthening activities were tested in real emergencies, thereby enabling only an assessment of output-level results. In the Sudan, WFP investments in government capacity have all been lost due to the ongoing conflict and the country deteriorating into a failed state,¹¹⁶ although WFP has been able to establish itself as a leading agency in the response to the conflict.

¹⁰⁸ WFP, 2024. *Health Supply Chain Simulation Exercises in Malawi*.

¹⁰⁹ WFP, 2019. *South-South Quarterly Newsletter January*.

¹¹⁰ WFP, 2019. *South-South Quarterly Newsletter December*.

¹¹¹ WFP, 2024. *Indonesia Country Brief, April 2024*.

¹¹² WFP, 2024. *Indonesia Annual Country Report 2023*.

¹¹³ WFP, 2024. *Soaring into Action: SADC Teams up with WFP and MapAction for Drone Training*.

¹¹⁴ Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN, 2018. *Factsheet: Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN*.

¹¹⁵ WFP, 2024. *Summary Report of the Evaluation of WFP's Emergency Response to the Prolonged Crisis in the Sahel and other Countries of Central Africa (2018-2023)*.

¹¹⁶ See *The Economist*, 2024. After a year of war, Sudan is a failing state, <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2024/04/15/after-a-year-of-war-sudan-is-a-failing-state>.

122. **While clear efforts have been made with both the design and implementation of the EPCI¹¹⁷ at all organizational levels, reporting in annual country reports was inconsistent.** Acting on findings from previous WFP evaluations, a new EPCI methodology user guide was developed in 2022 and workshops on the tool were organized. Overall, the number of countries reporting sufficient values to allow for analysis over time rose from 8 in 2021 to 12 in 2023, out of 24 countries that at some point implemented the EPCI.¹¹⁸ Where a country office did report values for different years, improvements in the index were observed (e.g. in Cuba, Ecuador and the Philippines). Annex XVI contains a summary of EPCI values for country deep dives. Eight of the reviewed country offices reported application of the EPCI with national, regional and local governments.

Finding 11. WFP efforts to enhance community emergency preparedness were observed in 8 out of 12 countries studied. Often such efforts were part of resilience programming and focused on early warning, advisory information and community elements of anticipatory action.

123. **The country deep-dive exercises and country desk reviews found no evidence of current direct support to community emergency preparedness by WFP in 4 of the 12 countries studied.** In the Central African Republic and Iraq, community capacity strengthening consisted of smallholder farmer support without early warning, although in Iraq the country office is planning a project that links climate change adaptation with anticipatory action. Community preparedness efforts were entirely absent in Ukraine, although this is understandable given the start-up nature of WFP operations at the onset of the conflict and the necessity to focus on response and support to the Government's social protection mechanism. In the Sudan, community-level preparedness work ceased as a result of the outbreak of the conflict in 2023.

124. **In country offices with community-level preparedness efforts, these were one part of broader resilience building and were not always conceptualized as preparedness.** In the Philippines, WFP supported farmers to build small water reservoirs to cope with periods of water scarcity, the success of which led the Government to provide additional funds to expand the project. In Zambia, the Rural Resilience project included dissemination of weather forecasts, weather index insurance, savings and access to credit. An integrated resilience programme in the Sahel region also showed positive results, with household food security being maintained or even improving during times of hardship. There was also some evidence that households would be able to withstand severe shocks. The success of the programme has led to a new phase, part of which aims to further integrate shock-responsive social protection.¹¹⁹ The R4 Rural Resilience Initiative, a global programme collaboration between WFP and Oxfam America, included access to insurance as part of its integrated approach to resilience, providing a means for farmers to undertake risk transfer. This insurance against weather-related shocks enables farmers to invest in riskier but more rewarding livelihood strategies, as well as in the purchase of seeds, fertilizers and new technologies.¹²⁰

125. **WFP implemented early warning mechanisms at community level in 6 of the 12 countries studied** (Zambia, Cuba, the Sudan, Burundi, Togo and Zimbabwe). In Cuba, WFP strengthened its early warning partnership with the Institute of Meteorology and the National Centre for Seismological Research to provide information to communities potentially affected by hazards. In addition, WFP worked with the National Civil Defence, which led and monitored developments of the hurricane season and seismic activity in order to provide community-level warnings, particularly in the eastern region, which is prone to high-intensity earthquakes.¹²¹ In Burundi, WFP worked with the Government and the Burundi Red Cross through a European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office-funded forecast-based financing project that targeted investments at the community level and organizational preparedness, including pre-positioning of supplies. In Zambia, WFP installed rain gauges to provide weather information. Two

¹¹⁷ The corporate tool for measuring progress on strengthening government emergency preparedness.

¹¹⁸ WFP, 2024. *EPCI Reporting by Country from 2018 COMET Extraction*. Sufficient values are defined as having (i) a previous baseline value; (ii) a target set for the observed year; and (iii) a reported value for the observed year. These are necessary conditions for correct interpretation of EPCI values, as per the WFP 2022 *EPCI Methodology User Guide*.

¹¹⁹ WFP, 2023. *Evidence from WFP's Integrated Resilience Programme in the Sahel – Equipping Communities to Withstand Food Crises*.

¹²⁰ WFP, 2023. *Factsheet R4, Rural Resilience Initiative*.

¹²¹ WFP, 2023. *Cuba Annual Country Report*.

countries studied, Pakistan and Iraq, had nascent activities with regard to early warning, which were linked to anticipatory action and risk insurance.

126. **Community-focused elements of anticipatory action support provided by WFP in collaboration with governments and partners, such as early warning and advisory information for drought and floods, proved to be an effective approach to preparedness.** For example, in the Philippines WFP can now reach 125,000 people with cash transfers for category 2 to 5 cyclones as well as “last mile” early warning information. In Zimbabwe, WFP provided solar-powered boreholes and early warning and advisory information to farmers when the triggers for a moderate drought were reached.¹²²

2.2.3 To what extent has WFP consolidated and expanded mutually beneficial partnerships in emergency preparedness?

Humanitarian clusters at global and country levels

Finding 12. Global, WFP-led clusters have contributed to emergency preparedness and WFP’s leadership has been instrumental in catalysing collective preparedness in some instances, particularly within the Global Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications clusters. However, the clusters have not always been consistent in prioritizing emergency preparedness due to unclear responsibilities for inter-agency preparedness – particularly when clusters have not been (re)activated at country level – lack of resources, and inconsistent oversight and accountability.

127. **For all three clusters that WFP leads or co-leads – Food Security, Logistics and ETC – the evaluation found examples of good practice on emergency preparedness, both at global and country levels.**¹²³ Select examples from the country level are summarized in Annex XX. These include: the development and sharing of Logistics Capacity Assessments and a shortlist of transporters with Logistics Working Group members in Togo; ETC contributions through providing data connectivity for humanitarian personnel in anticipation of data blackouts in Ukraine; conducting detailed technical training for specialized information and communications technology personnel in Iraq, with a focus on national staff; and the food security cluster (FSC) contribution to preparedness efforts by leading contingency planning for flooding in the Central African Republic in 2020, and organizing meteorological and earthquake analysis in Haiti in preparation for the cyclone season.
128. WFP provides a credible lead on preparedness in clusters and working groups due to the organization’s good track record in preparing for and responding to emergencies and emerging crises.¹²⁴ Respondents highlighted WFP’s expertise in relevant areas – including food security assessment and analysis, information management and information sharing, emergency telecommunications, supply chains and logistics – all augmented by its strong field presence.
129. **Globally, the Logistics Cluster has made particularly notable investments in emergency preparedness.** Preparedness was included in the Global Logistics Cluster Strategy for 2016–2021,¹²⁵ then scaled up to form an important element of the strategic pillar on strengthened response capacity within the 2022–2026 Strategy.¹²⁶ Through its Field-based Preparedness Project, the Global Logistics Cluster aims to strengthen resilience of local supply chains and ensure coordination among host governments and private sector and humanitarian actors, guided by its System Ability and Readiness Model, which assesses existing supply chain and logistics preparedness in a given context and plots an appropriate pathway to augment capacity.¹²⁷ It was first piloted in Haiti in 2017 and subsequently expanded, with the participation of 23 countries to date. The project integrates an institutional capacity strengthening approach, which includes government-led training and simulations to identify supply

¹²² WFP, 2023. Anticipatory action for climate shocks, <https://www.wfp.org/anticipatory-actions>.

¹²³ Cluster lead agencies are expected to support national actors to operationalize emergency response preparedness in their respective sectors and monitor its quality and comprehensiveness. See IASC, 2015. Reference Model for Cluster Coordination at Country Level.

¹²⁴ According to the online survey and external KIs.

¹²⁵ Global Logistics Cluster, 2016. Logistics Cluster Strategy 2016–2021.

¹²⁶ Global Logistics Cluster, 2021. Logistics Cluster Strategy 2022–2026.

¹²⁷ Global Logistics Cluster, 2021. *Logistics Cluster, Field-based Preparedness Project (FBPP), System Ability and Readiness*.

chain challenges, drafting of key documents and plans, and the use of data and mapping technology to enhance disaster planning (see also Section 2.2.2).

130. The Logistic Cluster's LogIE is also an important preparedness tool, providing a common platform for collecting, analysing and sharing humanitarian logistics information; as is conducting the annual Gear.UP simulation exercise to train logisticians.¹²⁸ Other notable efforts by the Logistics Cluster include the logistics operational guide, Relief Item Tracking Application, e-learning platform, flight routing data platform (EDUARDO), Preparedness Enabler's Guide, partnerships with private sector entities, such as DHL, and projects such as WREC.¹²⁹
131. **The ETC has also prioritized emergency preparedness activities.** ETC's Global Strategy 2021–2025 includes a dedicated pillar on regional and country preparedness, which aims at collaborating with governments, humanitarian stakeholders and the private sector through workshops and emergency preparedness planning to strengthen telecommunications networks.¹³⁰ Through the preparedness workstream, the cluster has developed a series of resources based on its experience, including guidance on capacity assessments and implementing country preparedness and resilience, a table-top simulation guide and a checklist for emergency telecommunications preparedness.
132. **The FSC, co-led by WFP and FAO, has invested less in emergency preparedness but is now working to address that gap.** While FSC is yet to dedicate the same level of resources to emergency preparedness as the other WFP-led clusters, preparedness is one of the main pillars of its plan of action (albeit with an emphasis on contingency planning and early action rather than preparedness more broadly). The global FSC has brought on board a roving cluster coordinator for emergency preparedness. That person is working with in-country clusters and national authorities to focus initially on strengthening collective preparedness for cyclical natural hazards in Madagascar, the Philippines and countries in the Pacific region.
133. Despite these and other examples of good practice, **there are gaps in cluster-led emergency preparedness at country and global levels. The main challenges and hindering factors identified included:**
- **Lack of financial and human resources**, particularly where clusters were already fully focused on coordinating large-scale emergency responses, usually with annual funding preventing longer-term planning, or where there were gaps in cluster coordination positions.
 - **The "missed opportunity" to work on emergency preparedness when clusters were dormant or had not yet been (re)activated**, as well as lack of government engagement during dormant periods, which was noted as a frustration in several contexts.
 - **Conceptual confusion** and uncertainty about what emergency preparedness entails for clusters, beyond a somewhat simplistic, limited interpretation of preparedness as the development of contingency plans.
 - **Inconsistent support, oversight and accountability** from global clusters and from senior United Nations/IASC decision makers in-country with regard to the responsibility of clusters for emergency preparedness. While IASC guidance on emergency preparedness and response exists, there are inconsistencies in the way that the role of clusters in preparedness with regard to the role of national actors is described.¹³¹ Indeed, country-level interviews suggest that responsibilities are inconsistently understood and implemented across clusters and countries.

Box 6: Comparative analysis on working with humanitarian clusters

The comparative analysis identified that each of the organizations reviewed led or co-led a cluster at the global level. UNICEF leads the Nutrition, Education and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene clusters,

¹²⁸ See <https://logcluster.org/en/gearup-2024-neuhausen-germany-14-21-september-2024>.

¹²⁹ See <https://www.logcluster.org/en>.

¹³⁰ ETC, 2020. ETC Strategy: ETC2025, 2020–2025.

¹³¹ IASC, 2006. *Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response*; IASC, 2013. *Common Framework for Preparedness*; IASC, 2015. *Guidance: Emergency Response Preparedness*; IASC, 2020. *Interim Guidance: IASC Emergency Response Preparedness Approach to the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

while IOM co-leads the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster, as well as being a consignee for non-food items for the Logistics Cluster (led by WFP). IFRC co-leads the Shelter Cluster with UNHCR. All the organizations reviewed during the comparative analysis have preparedness as a key component of their cluster activities, including making available global guidance and toolkits for preparedness as well as supporting preparedness planning at country level where clusters are activated.

Note: Annex XVII provides additional findings from the comparative analysis.

IASC working groups on early warning and emergency preparedness

Finding 13. There is evidence of WFP's engagement in IASC working groups on early warning and emergency preparedness, but few demonstrable results as yet.

134. At the global level, WFP engages in the inter-agency Preparedness, Early Action and Readiness Group co-chaired by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and UNICEF. The group has close coordination and collaboration with the IASC Early Warning and Analysis Group, which is led by WFP, and recommendations from these groups inform decision making within the IASC Emergency Directors Group. A review of background documents shows that the two groups have led on some important initiatives within IASC: jointly producing the IASC Horizon Scanning report, which identifies countries at risk, and proposing inter-agency preparedness actions for the attention of the IASC Emergency Directors Group. Interviewees indicated that WFP has played a key role in facilitating the Early Warning and Analysis Group's work and consolidating analysis within the Horizon Scanning brief, enabling the directors to prioritize at-risk countries for inter-agency support. WFP also participates in other IASC groups that include work on emergency preparedness within broader agendas.¹³² Past initiatives include support for the Index for Risk Management and development of its subnational rollout project; publication of guidance on emergency response and preparedness; and support for preparedness in select high-risk countries.¹³³
135. **WFP's engagement in inter-agency working groups on preparedness, early action and readiness at country level depends on the inter-agency setting and activities in each country.** Not all countries have United Nations or IASC working groups on emergency preparedness: the initiation of a group or process is at the discretion of senior United Nations/IASC leadership at the country level.¹³⁴ There were few examples of WFP's engagement in IASC working groups on emergency preparedness (or IASC working groups covering broader agendas, which might include preparedness) among the deep-dive countries. However, in Togo, one clear example was WFP's leadership of the United Nations Country Team inter-sector emergency working group. External interviewees provided positive feedback on the role that WFP had played, which included leading on the drafting and updating of an inter-agency contingency plan covering epidemic outbreak, flooding, the spread of conflict and the arrival of refugees from the Sahel region.

Box 7: Comparative analysis on engagement with IASC working groups

Similarly to WFP, UNICEF engaged with the IASC Preparedness, Early Action and Readiness Group by providing upward feedback through its Horizon Scan,¹³⁵ a system similar to WFP's CAS. UNICEF reported that engaging in the working group provided regional offices with a voice in the IASC preparedness process. UNICEF also noted that engaging in this group enabled it to benefit from exchanges about other agencies' activation systems and risk insights, and supported alignment with inter-agency preparedness priorities. Similarly, IOM and IFRC were members of the IASC Reference Group on Risk, Early Warning and Preparedness, which developed the Index for Risk Management. In addition, IOM and IFRC contributed or aligned their work to normative frameworks including

¹³² For example, WFP participates in the IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action, which includes aspects of emergency preparedness.

¹³³ IASC, 2018. *IASC Progress Report 2018–2020 – Reference Group on Risk, Early Warning and Preparedness*.

¹³⁴ IASC, 2015. *Guidance, Emergency Response Preparedness – IASC Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience*.

¹³⁵ UNICEF's Horizon Scan coordinates emergency preparedness support from headquarters to regional office efforts to ensure readiness in country offices with a near future high likelihood of significant new or increased humanitarian needs or severe operational challenges.

standards and practices endorsed by IASC, and the IASC framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons.

Note: Annex XVII provides additional findings from the comparative analysis.

Evidence of collaboration between WFP and partners on emergency preparedness

Finding 14. WFP's partnerships with other organizations on emergency preparedness at country level are disparate and country-driven. A deliberate overall strategy on strengthening preparedness within existing partnerships, or seeking out new partnerships, is lacking.

136. **Almost all the deep-dive countries for the evaluation revealed some degree of collaboration between WFP and its partners on emergency preparedness. Beyond partnership within the clusters, there were several bilateral partnerships and small-scale collaborations of note.** WFP's partnership with FAO on preparedness was particularly visible in several contexts, including where the two organizations are collaborating on Hunger Hotspot analysis to provide early warning of acute food insecurity (see Section 2.2.1), such as in Zambia. Other notable WFP-FAO collaborations included work with the Food Security Climate Resilience Replenishable Fund in Zimbabwe, and multiple WFP-FAO initiatives in Pakistan, including emergency preparedness initiatives with an emphasis on resilience building with the Government and communities. WFP's role in the "Early Warnings for All" initiative, led by the World Meteorological Organization, to decrease the number of deaths and reduce losses and damage resulting from hazardous weather, water or climatic events, is also worth highlighting (see Section 2.2.1).
137. **Cooperating partners (CPs) play a major role in supporting WFP to achieve its objectives. Yet their role in the implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Policy is not well-evidenced and there are several constraints to WFP's way of working with CPs that limit their potential contribution to preparedness.** A synthesis of evaluative evidence on WFP's CPs highlights the important contributions of CPs to WFP's programme delivery, including in emergency preparedness, but also a number of capacity gaps.¹³⁶ In addition, it notes tendencies in WFP's way of working with CPs, such as short-term contracting, that have constrained WFP's ability to build relationships with CPs over time and strengthen their capacities to contribute to WFP's work on preparedness.
138. **Partnerships between global clusters and private sector entities have strengthened WFP's emergency preparedness. Little evidence of partnerships with the private sector or other actors was found at country level.** Standby partnerships at global level have strengthened WFP's emergency preparedness, such as the partnership between the Global Logistics Cluster and DHL for ad hoc logistics expertise. At country level, there were few examples of WFP collaboration on emergency preparedness with other actors, including the private sector and academia, other than WFP's support for the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (the country's major private sector vehicle and coordinator for disaster risk reduction and management). That is not to suggest that such collaborations do not exist, but they were not highly visible to the evaluation team during data collection.
139. **The evaluation found no particular evidence of a corporate emphasis on emergency preparedness within WFP's existing or new partnerships and collaborations.** Examples of good practice existed but they were sporadic and largely driven by country offices or individuals within country offices. The same applies to new partnerships, which have tended to be opportunistic, country-led and not underpinned by any particular corporate strategy to mobilize stakeholders to collectively enhance capacity and mobilize resources for preparedness.

Evidence of WFP's contribution to emergency preparedness through provision of common services

Finding 15. WFP's common services and on-demand services are highly appreciated both internally and externally, and are seen as a valuable contribution to collective emergency preparedness – globally and at the country level.

¹³⁶ WFP, 2024. "Evaluation Synthesis of WFP's Cooperating Partners, Synthesis Report" (WFP/EB.2/2024/6-B).

140. **WFP's common services and on-demand services were frequently cited as strong enablers of system-wide emergency preparedness.** By far the majority of internal survey respondents reported that WFP's common services and on-demand service provision at country and global levels had contributed to improved system-wide emergency preparedness.¹³⁷ At global level, the UN Humanitarian Response Depot has acted as an enabler for stronger supply chain preparedness within the international humanitarian community.¹³⁸ External stakeholders at country level provided strong positive feedback in appreciation of system-wide services provided by WFP as a form of logistical preparedness. Multiple examples of such services were shared in the deep-dive countries, including:

- i) logistical support to partners for health preparedness and response, such as in Burundi and the Central African Republic, and the provision of tents for the isolation of suspected COVID-19 cases at points of entry into Togo during the pandemic;
- ii) shared warehousing, mobile storage units and storage facilities in Zambia, the Central African Republic, Ukraine and Cuba;
- iii) infrastructure repair and upgrading of ports, airports, roads, bridges and dams in Ukraine, the Central African Republic and the Sudan; and
- iv) provision and maintenance of equipment to support common security telecommunications, transport, storage and internet connectivity services through ETC in the Central African Republic, the Sudan and Ukraine.

141. Other recent evaluations have similarly recognized the value of WFP capacity in maintaining equipment and facilities as preparedness measures for common service provision during emergencies.¹³⁹

2.2.4 To what extent have WFP's investments in emergency preparedness enabled efficient, effective and timely early actions and emergency responses by national and local governments and WFP?

Timeliness

Finding 16. WFP's investments in emergency preparedness at corporate, regional, national and subnational levels have enabled timely responses and early action, both in its own operations and by governments. Most emergency responses, however, still experience delays due to critical gaps in preparedness at one or more levels.

142. As noted in Section 2.1, WFP's investments in advance/strategic financing mechanisms, pre-positioning of assets and food stocks, pre-selection of suppliers and partners, and HR surge capacity regularly facilitate more timely responses. The following evidence of timeliness is derived largely from interviews and evidence gathered during country deep dives, complemented by global data.

143. **Strategic and advance financing have made verifiable time savings globally.** According to the 2023 report on the utilization of WFP's advance financing mechanisms – including the GCMF – advance financing to 53 countries allowed them to access funds on average 81 days before contributions for those activities were confirmed, enabling more rapid assistance to beneficiaries. Data from deep-dive countries corroborates this. As shown in Figure 8, IPL advances beginning 11 days after the start of the conflict in Ukraine allowed WFP to rapidly establish an emergency operation and deliver the first assistance to beneficiaries within 5 days, despite not having an operational presence prior to the

¹³⁷ In total, 84 percent of internal survey respondents agreed that WFP's common service provision at country and global levels had contributed to improved system-wide emergency preparedness: 57 percent agreed and 27 percent strongly agreed.

¹³⁸ See <https://unhrd.org/>.

¹³⁹ See, for example, WFP, 2020. *Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies*; WFP, 2022. *Evaluation of the WFP Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*; Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), 2024. *MOPAN Assessment Report: World Food Programme*.

conflict. The Sudan and Pakistan show similar results, where advance financing was made available within eight days of the start of their respective emergencies.¹⁴⁰

144. **The GCMF significantly reduced lead times for food procurement.** As illustrated in Figure 13: , the GCMF reduced lead times, on average, from 129 to 92 days between 2019 and 2023. The 2021 report on the utilization of WFP’s advance financing mechanisms and the GCMF notes that, by purchasing from the GCMF, countries received their food in an average of 32 days, which is 73 percent faster than the average 120 days needed for conventional procurement.
145. **In-country pre-positioning of food saved time in responses.** By utilizing pre-positioned food supplies provided to a community resilience project, WFP was able to distribute food in the first wave of floods in Quetta (Balochistan, Pakistan) in 2022, when Quetta was affected but other parts of the country were not yet severely impacted. Additional large-scale food (and cash) distributions were not made until the second wave of flooding, when the Government declared a national emergency. In the Philippines, food boxes prepared and pre-positioned in government warehouses, equipped through support from WFP, enabled the Government to deliver food more quickly to emergency-affected populations than if food parcels had to be sourced and assembled post-crisis. Further examples are presented in Section 2.2.1.

Figure 13: GCMF lead times reduction



Source: WFP. GCMF Summary 2019–2023.

146. **Pre-selection and contracting of suppliers saved time in some emergency responses.** For example, pre-selection of suppliers across Pakistan allowed WFP to expand food distributions to 95,615 people in districts not previously served and within eight days of the start of the second wave of flooding in 2022.¹⁴¹ According to interviewees, WFP lacked such contracts in the previous major flood event (2020) and had to spend time on partner and supplier vetting procedures during the response phase. Renewed agreements with financial service providers, as a preparedness measure for an anticipated influx of refugees from Afghanistan earlier in 2022 (which did not materialize), enabled the activation of cash distributions quicker than in previous flood responses.
147. **However, in most emergency responses supported or led by WFP in the studied country offices, the full potential of preparedness investments is not maximized. Gaps in preparedness at any level – corporate, national and subnational – have caused delays and negated time savings made at other levels.** Examples from the deep-dive countries are provided in Table 3 and Annex XXI, including examples of key factors discussed elsewhere in this evaluation report, such as funding, staffing and pre-positioning. Together they strongly suggest that WFP’s investments in preparedness were not adequately informed by multi-level scenario planning connecting preparedness at corporate, national and subnational levels.

¹⁴⁰ Figure 8 uses the date of the Pakistan Government’s declaration of a national state of emergency as the start date of the crisis in Pakistan, while acknowledging that the floods were ongoing for several weeks before this declaration. WFP was unable to access donor funding until the declaration was made.

¹⁴¹ WFP, 2022. *Pakistan Internal Situation Reports*.

Table 3: Selected examples of effects of preparedness measures (or lack thereof) on timeliness of responses and early action

Emergency	Corporate	National	Subnational
Ukraine (conflict, 2022)	<p>IPL advance financing enabled operations to start up and scale up before sufficient donor funds were available.</p> <p>Regional bureau/headquarters contingency planning, and advance planning mission and preparatory work on key thematic areas, e.g. social protection systems in Ukraine, enabled rapid set-up of operations after the start of the conflict.</p>	<p>Due to non-presence, there were no previous contracts with vendors, resulting in a long lead time for procurement.</p> <p>The lack of a basic agreement between WFP and the Government of Ukraine to operate in the country caused delays and bureaucratic challenges.</p>	<p>Ongoing contingency planning for the evolution of the conflict sped up WFP's response, e.g. in the blast of Kherson, where WFP took the necessary steps to respond just days after the city's liberation.</p>
The Sudan (conflict)	<p>Lack of early warning to detect signs of outbreak of conflict.</p> <p>Use of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service to evacuate WFP and other agency staff.</p>	<p>Timely action was enabled by FITTEST deployment which enabled both WFP and the wider humanitarian community response by setting up information and communications technology services.</p>	<p>Financial service providers previously used by WFP did not have the required geographic access or liquidity.</p>
Pakistan (storm)	<p>WFP Anticipatory Action Trust Fund at headquarters enabled anticipatory action investment.</p>	<p>Anticipatory action enabled immediate access to funds.</p>	<p>Pre-defined local disbursement mechanisms enabled recipients to receive aid promptly.</p>

Source: Country examples from the evaluation team's evidence base (green – enabling timeliness, orange – disabling timeliness).

148. **WFP's strong promotion of anticipatory action schemes has also started to demonstrate that such investments lead to earlier action.** In 2023, of the 36 countries with anticipatory action investments, 9 experienced activations, enabling 638,960 people to receive cash assistance to reduce the effects of predicted hazards or reduce humanitarian needs before they fully unfolded.

Efficiency

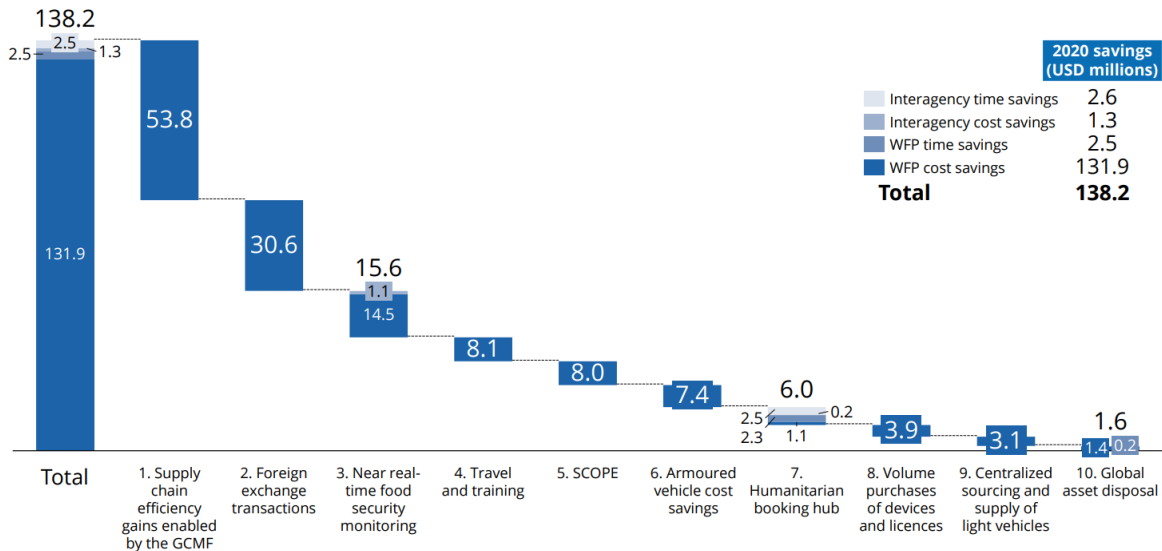
Finding 17. Evidence is in line with the findings of previous studies, further supporting the claims that preparedness investments reduce costs during subsequent emergency responses. However, limited quantitative evidence beyond the effects of the GCMF prevents clear findings on efficiency in WFP's broader work in emergency preparedness.

149. Investing in preparedness saves money as well as lives and time, and reduces the need for international mobilization. Earlier studies show that supply chains account for an average of 73 percent of

humanitarian response costs.¹⁴² It has been found that careful logistics preparedness can lead to response time savings of between USD 4 and USD 7 per dollar invested.¹⁴³

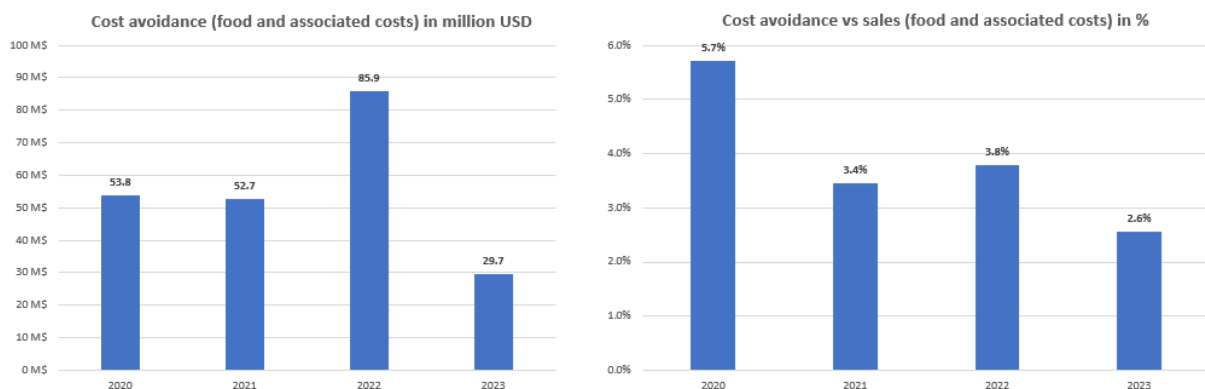
150. **Cost efficiency improvements resulting from pre-positioning and purchasing through the GCMF are well reported on.** In 2020, the GCMF was found to be the highest-scoring cost savings initiative (see Figure 14).¹⁴⁴ An internal study of the effectiveness of the GCMF found that WFP achieved significant savings (“cost avoidance”) between 2020 and 2023 (Figure 12),¹⁴⁵ peaking in 2022 at around USD 86 million (3.8 percent of annual GCMF sales) and decreasing in 2023. As shown in the right-hand panel of Figure 15, the decrease in 2023 was more modest in proportion to sales. The reduction was thus largely driven by a decrease in food procurement to replenish food stocks.

Figure 14: Total savings from top ten efficiency gains (2020)



Source: WFP, 2021. *Annual Performance Report for 2020*, Annex III C. Note: total savings comprise cost savings and time savings in full-time equivalents.

Figure 15: GCMF “cost avoidance” (food and associated costs)



Source: WFP, 2023. GCMF analysis conducted by the former Strategic Financing Unit (CPPF)

¹⁴² Studies carried out by HELP Logistics and Kuehne Logistics University, analysing the expenditures of five organizations across 23 operations between 2005 and 2018.

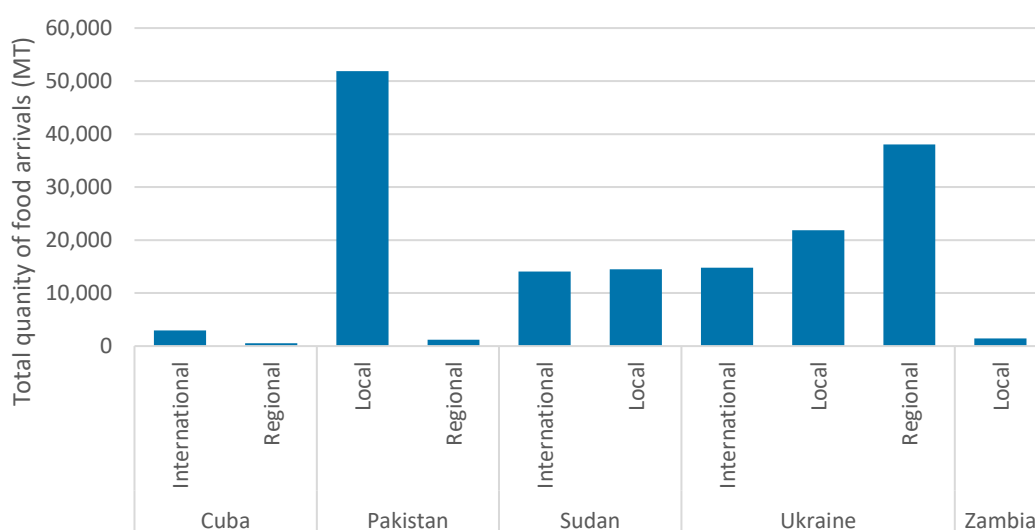
¹⁴³ Based on cooperative studies undertaken by HELP Logistics, Kuehne Logistics University, ACF France, IFRC, the Logistics Cluster, Save the Children International and UNICEF between 2017 and 2019. See <http://bit.ly/2lmazuF>.

¹⁴⁴ See also WFP, 2020. *Annual Performance Report for 2020*, Annex III C.

¹⁴⁵ Cost avoidance is an estimation of future costs WFP has been able to avoid because certain preventive measures are taken.

151. **Country offices report that cost efficiencies were also achieved through other preparedness and preparedness-oriented activities.** For instance, in the Central African Republic, relay logistics through pre-positioned stocks and trucks were reported in KIIs to have improved cost efficiency. In Ukraine, several pre-positioning initiatives, such as building up a roster of local suppliers and transporters, and early scoping of financial service providers for CBTs, were highlighted in KIIs to have reduced the cost of operations over time, particularly in-country transportation costs.
152. **Food commodity prices generally increased at the onset of an emergency response, demonstrating trade-offs between cost efficiency, timeliness and early recovery of local markets.:** Figure 16 shows that emergency responses in deep-dive countries combined international and local purchasing, the latter with greater volume. Desk reviews and interviews indicate that WFP is prioritizing a shift from international to local procurement, accepting higher prices to get the additional benefit of supporting local food systems and farmers. This is confirmed by the available data for WFP's response in Ukraine, where procurement shifted increasingly towards local procurement as the response progressed. Stakeholders suggest that preparedness measures, such as agreements with local suppliers, could allow for a more timely emergency response through local procurement.

Figure 16: Origin of food procurement¹⁴⁶



Source: DOTS data. Food procurement-type progress. Received on 5 July 2024. Note: data does not include in-kind contributions.

Effectiveness

Finding 18. There was limited empirical evidence of the effectiveness of WFP preparedness investments. However, qualitative evidence suggested the effectiveness of WFP's preparedness measures in responses to diverse types of emergencies. Recent studies on WFP's support for anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection found these to be effective preparedness interventions.

153. Emergency preparedness capacity strengthening is a long-term process and many of the countries studied had ongoing activities in government capacity strengthening and community resilience, including preparedness components that had yet to be tested by a crisis or emergency, making it difficult to assess their effectiveness. Others had experienced responses, but subsequent evaluations – including

¹⁴⁶ Cuba: shock date 27 July 2022, observed period for purchase orders (POs): 22 September 2022 to 13 February 2023; Pakistan: shock date 25 August 2022, observed period for POs: 5 September 2022 to 30 January 2023; the Sudan: shock date 4 May 2023, observed period for POs: 18 May 2023 to 31 July 2023; Ukraine: shock date 25 February 2022, observed period for POs: 27 January 2022 to 1 June 2022; Zambia: shock date 25 February 2022, observed period for POs: 7-10 May 2024; Togo: no POs were registered during the observed period of April to August 2022.

country strategic plan evaluations and other centralized evaluations – did not investigate causal linkages between preparedness efforts prior to the emergency and the effectiveness of the emergency response.

154. **In the Philippines, the Government’s investments in preparedness for Cyclone Rai, compared with Cyclone Yolanda, enhanced early warning and increased government capacity to respond.** Support from WFP to the Government contributed to alerts and evacuations being carried out in a more timely manner, enabling people to move to safer locations before the storm’s strongest impacts. The number of deaths recorded in each event were 405 and 6,300 respectively.¹⁴⁷
155. **In Togo, the “Lomé Corridor” was identified as an effective preparedness measure.** This corridor was set up to provide food commodities to the Niger and Burkina Faso. In this case, efforts to build relations with suppliers and transporters that had prior experience of cross-border operations paid off, with substantial quantities of food delivered to these countries. However, contextual factors, including insecurity and improved agricultural harvests, meant that over time there was a reduced volume of imports required due to a shift in reliance on local market procurement.
156. **In Pakistan, prior to Cyclone Biparjoy in 2023, WFP had prepared lists of vulnerable people from over 200,000 households, together with their bank account numbers, and shared this data with a financial service provider as part of preparedness measures.** When the cyclone approached, WFP transferred cash to vulnerable households, enabling them to take early actions to prepare for the storm. In addition, training on warehouse management and pre-positioning enabled rapid distribution of commodities and supplies in response to the cyclone. Similarly, the regular pre-positioning of stocks in the Sudan for the rainy season enabled WFP to pivot its response to address the outbreak of conflict.
157. In Nepal, an impact evaluation of anticipatory action for flood response using cash transfers found that anticipatory cash recipients benefited immediately from earlier cash transfers when compared with a group that received cash assistance some time after the flood damage.¹⁴⁸
158. An evaluation of WFP’s contribution to shock-responsive social protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (2023) found that WFP’s engagement has expanded coverage, including to vulnerable individuals and migrants, in response to climate-related disasters and economic or public health-related shocks. The report highlighted how integrated engagement by WFP’s EPR, social protection and climate and technology teams has enabled governments across the region to enhance normative frameworks and targeting and distribution processes, demonstrating their effectiveness in various responses including hurricanes, flooding and COVID-19. While the report did not refer to any measured results at the level of affected populations, it did find evidence of enhanced inclusiveness of government systems – better addressing the needs of marginalized groups in accessing social protection systems and services – resulting from participatory approaches.¹⁴⁹

2.2.5 To what extent are the results achieved sustainable?

Finding 19. WFP achieved mixed results in terms of institutionalization and community ownership of emergency preparedness efforts. More successful efforts combined upstream policy and strategy support with interventions in government-led initiatives. However, at times efforts were hampered by contextual factors, including the lack of dedicated government finances and recurrent turnover in government personnel in many countries.

159. **Institutionally, financial commitment to implement and continue to maintain emergency preparedness activities varied among the countries studied.** In order for preparedness to be sustainable, governments need to make funding available from national budgets to adopt or maintain preparedness mechanisms. In some instances, government commitment hinged on available resources, while in others emergency preparedness was one investment among a number of other priorities. For

¹⁴⁷ OCHA, 2022. *Philippines Super Typhoon Impact Comparison*.

¹⁴⁸ Dunsch, F.; Adusumalli, N.; Balantrapu, T; Batmunkh, O.; Christian, P; Heirman, J.; Kelley, E.; Kondylis, F.; Lane, G.; Malhotra, K.; Moreno, S. & Paulose, H. (2025). Impact Evaluation of Anticipatory Action in Nepal. WFP Office of Evaluation (forthcoming).

¹⁴⁹ WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2024. *Regional Evaluation of WFP’s Contribution to Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (2015–2022)*, https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000155989/download/?_ga=2.228800212.993167267.1721835324-420818658.1717982603.

example, while the Government of Burundi budgets for response, these funds are limited, and the Government needs to mobilize further funds. A contingency plan for 2020–2022, developed with the support of the United Nations Development Programme, suggested that structures in charge of disaster risk prevention and management in Burundi should have a special fund to develop disaster risk prevention mechanisms in order to respond in a timely manner to crises.¹⁵⁰

160. In Iraq, a middle income country, the Government has not prioritized funding for a supply chain preparedness project despite years of engagement by WFP,¹⁵¹ suggesting that there is limited commitment to such activities. In order to address this, key informants reported that WFP is working with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to develop a more comprehensive preparedness project and to seek potential support for this from international donors.
161. WFP also made efforts to hand over certain logistics facilities and equipment (such as warehouses and vehicles) to governments as a preparedness measure, as observed in Pakistan, Cuba and the Central African Republic. However, questions about the maintenance cost of old vehicles, warehouse maintenance and ownership of such resources for emergency use pose challenges for sustainability.¹⁵²
162. In contrast, in the Philippines, the GECS-MOVE project was a collaboration between WFP and the Government's Department of Information and Communications Technology. The project promoted the development and provision of mobile communications platforms to support preparedness for emergency response. The deployment of the platforms during the Typhoon Rai response was considered a success in a recent evaluation.¹⁵³ Key informants reported that all MOVE units are now government property; the Government committed the majority of the funds to the project, with WFP providing complementary resources through internal and USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance funding for training government personnel.
163. **DRR activities supported the prospective sustainability of preparedness efforts and upstream integration maximized results.** In some contexts, such as Zambia, key informants highlighted the financial and technical support provided by WFP for policy and strategy development in order to integrate social protection and DRR. This led WFP to support the development of a Disaster Management Act in 2010 and subsequent updates, as well as a Disaster Management Framework and Social Protection Policy to strengthen the national Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit's governance of DRR. This, coupled with operational capacity support to strengthen the unit to carry out vulnerability assessments, was seen as a more sustainable approach. Similarly, in Togo, WFP supported the Government in the development of an Integrated Disaster Reduction Strategy and operational contingency plan, although these are still in their early stages.
164. In Pakistan, positive engagements with village disaster risk management committees were reported. These committees continued to operate two years after the Chail Valley project's closure and had developed community preparedness plans as well as maintaining disaster risk management kits provided during the project.¹⁵⁴
165. In Cuba, WFP had also committed to strengthening the operational capacity of strategic national partners by working with them from project design through to implementation to ensure sustainability, while promoting ownership by entrusting coordination to local governments.¹⁵⁵ Key informants in Cuba reported that WFP community resilience efforts proved to be sustainable because of the integration of WFP activities with the sustainable local development strategies of the provinces and municipalities in which it operates; it also works with communities and actors such as community councils and the

¹⁵⁰ Government of Burundi (2019). National Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan for Preparedness and Emergency Response in Burundi (2020-2022).

¹⁵¹ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of Iraq Country Strategic Plan 2020-2024*.

¹⁵² According to KIIs in Pakistan and the Central African Republic.

¹⁵³ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of Philippines Country Strategic Plan 2018-2023*.

¹⁵⁴ WFP. Measuring Medium-term Benefits and Sustainability of "Improving Food Security and Strengthening of Community Based DRR in Chail Valley, District Swat" project.

¹⁵⁵ WFP *Country Strategic Plan for Cuba 2021-2024*.

Federation of Cuban Women. WFP implemented all activities in close coordination with the Cuban Civil Defence, the national authority that leads EPR.¹⁵⁶

166. A CSP evaluation in the Philippines highlighted that EPR outcomes are more likely to be sustained than those in disaster risk reduction and management owing to their higher resourcing levels and the extent of their integration into existing government structures. The evaluation also highlighted that it was unclear whether further funding could be leveraged for resilience programming.¹⁵⁷
167. **Shock-responsive social protection initiatives demonstrated potential for a sustainable approach to emergency preparedness.** In Zimbabwe, WFP supported the development of a strategy, the Zimbabwe Shock-Responsive Social Protection Road Map. In other contexts, such as the Sudan, Iraq and Zambia, WFP worked to strengthen the system design of registries to improve targeting and the digitalization of systems. In Cuba, WFP worked on developing mechanisms that integrate social protection systems, proactively responding to crises through anticipatory action plans. This approach will be linked to local food systems.
168. Another positive example of a sustainable approach was in Peru, where WFP took advantage of the opportunity to link an institutionalized mechanism with operational support. Communal pots or *Ollas*¹⁵⁸ in Peru emerged with the COVID-19 pandemic. They were created by law and recognized as social organizations on a temporary basis in emergency situations, but have since become permanent. WFP supported *Ollas* through training on nutrition and management, as well as providing kitchens and water tanks and further strengthening their capacity. WFP also supported the Ministry of Social Inclusion and Development to regulate the required normative frameworks. In Lima, WFP supported the municipality to recover food from the wholesale market and redirect it to communal pots.
169. **WFP faced a number of constraints to ensure the sustainability of preparedness investments.** Key informants noted several factors that impacted the institutionalization of emergency preparedness. In addition to a lack of government resources for investment in preparedness, in more volatile contexts (such as Iraq) changes in government often required WFP to rebuild relationships and trust, consuming resources and time and delaying progress. In the Sudan, the conflict resulted in the breakdown of law and order; lack of government authority and rule of law has rendered any engagement on preparedness challenging at this stage. Similarly, in the Sahel region, initially successful efforts to strengthen governments' emergency preparedness capacities were undermined by increasing fragility and violence. Another factor impacting sustainability is high government staff turnover, requiring recurrent relationship building and re-training of staff. This issue was highlighted in Iraq, the Philippines and Zambia.

2.2.6 To what extent have WFP emergency preparedness actions contributed to gender-transformative and inclusive results

Finding 20. WFP's Emergency Preparedness Policy calls for a gender-transformative approach to preparedness in line with the concept introduced in the 2015 Gender Policy and further developed in the 2022 Gender Policy. However, WFP has made limited efforts to systematically integrate gender into emergency preparedness. There is even more limited effort to integrate disability inclusion.

Steps taken to integrate gender in emergency preparedness

170. The Emergency Preparedness Policy lacks concrete guidance on how to operationalize a gender-transformative approach. Country office key informants pointed to the new CBT Policy as an example of operational guidance on gender-transformative approaches; this was confirmed by the evaluation team's review of the policy. Implementing a gender-transformative approach requires technical support and training. However, the Gender and Emergency Preparedness units in headquarters have had little interaction and their training includes little cross-reference. With headquarters restructuring in 2024, the Emergency Preparedness and Response Service and the Gender, Protection and Inclusion Unit are both now under the Division of Programme Policy and Guidance (PPG), which can offer opportunities for closer collaboration. At the regional level, gender regional adviser positions were established

¹⁵⁶ WFP, 2022. Cuba Partnerships.

¹⁵⁷ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of Philippines Country Strategic Plan 2018–2023*.

¹⁵⁸ An initiative similar to soup kitchens.

following the evaluation of the Gender Policy 2015–2020, which observed limited previous investments in this regard. In particular, collaboration between the EPR team and the regional and country gender advisers in the Latin America and Caribbean region led to the good practice of analysing gender-responsive emergency preparedness actions in the region.

171. As per the WFP Gender Policy 2022, gender equality is a core element of all WFP work. Some country offices have dedicated gender specialists, while others rely on focal points. Yet there are limited guides or tools for integrating gender into regional and national preparedness strategies. As a result, **each country office carries out different processes of gender and inclusion analysis and different activities depending on resources (guidance for national partners, capacity training for staff)**. Key informants in all the country studies mentioned the need to continue building capacity on gender and make necessary budgetary provisions to ensure sufficient capacity to support the integration of gender in emergency preparedness activities.
172. Nevertheless, the survey shows a large degree of agreement regarding the integration of gender and inclusion in preparedness: 48 percent of the respondents agreed and 12 percent highly agreed that WFP processes, systems and tools related to emergency preparedness sufficiently incorporate gender and inclusivity. The literature review and country studies did not find evidence that this translates into systematic practices in country offices.
173. **WFP's role in EPR is valued at the institutional level and in humanitarian coordination spaces, but this position is not maximized in terms of systematically integrating gender into preparedness work.** There are limited efforts by WFP to support government counterparts in strengthening their integration of gender in preparedness (e.g. in Burundi, the Central African Republic, Cuba, Pakistan, Peru, Togo and Zambia). In Pakistan, WFP works closely with the Government and inter-agency mechanisms on gender (i.e. the Gender Transformative Group). The Government has a heavy deficit on gender balance, particularly at the district level, and hence part of the capacity strengthening is to sensitize them on the specific needs of women and girls, who are highly vulnerable in emergencies. In Peru, the Instituto Nacional de Defensa Civil is staffed mostly with men from the armed forces, but WFP is able to work technically on elements that are within the normative framework – such as a gender-sensitive review of preparedness and response tools and sensitization of public servants – although a gender-transformative approach will take time. One potential opportunity is to support the organization in generating the capacity for women to draw community risk maps and elaborate family plans for emergencies.
174. **There is even more limited evidence of efforts to systematically integrate disability inclusion, although the examples in selected country offices deserve acknowledgement and good practices require sharing.** The Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific produced guidance on disability inclusion in emergency preparedness, and in the Philippines the EPCI tool has been customized for disability inclusion. In Zambia, a technical support visit by headquarters enabled the development of a road map for disability inclusion more broadly, although it could also have a positive impact on preparedness activities. The Zambia country office received funding for improving inclusion mainstreaming in programmes, monitoring and evaluation, and government capacity building, while office renovations will accommodate persons with disabilities (warehouses already have inclusive designs).

Results

175. In countries where WFP operates, the social realities of disaster-vulnerable areas are often shaped by strict socio-cultural division of labour and caregiving responsibilities between men and women, which can be exacerbated during crises. This challenge, noted in several KIIs, often limits the participation of women and other traditionally excluded groups in decision making processes during the preparedness phase. As a result, vulnerable groups requiring special attention may be overlooked, particularly in the design of community response plans. A gender and EPR study in the Latin America and Caribbean region concluded that WFP's corporate tools to promote community participation have been effective in encouraging the involvement of women and excluded groups in consultations and preparedness activities. They were found most effective when they are: (i) well designed and adapted to the context; (ii) implemented by WFP teams and local institutions trained and sensitized in gender mainstreaming

and participatory approaches in emergency preparedness contexts; and (iii) used to inform response plans.¹⁵⁹

176. The gender and EPR study in the Latin America and Caribbean region shows that **involving women and women's organizations in WFP disaster preparedness activities acts as a catalyst for inclusive response strategies** in some countries. This happens where the strategies: (i) include groups vulnerable to disasters (adolescents, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities); (ii) address broader recovery issues; (iii) create synergies with other programmes and organizations; (iv) prioritize the common good; and (v) complement resilience strategies. Additionally, these efforts empower women and contribute to transforming gender roles. An opportunity remaining to be seized in Cuba is collaboration with the Federation of Cuban Women to maximize the potential that lies in mixed cooperatives. There, women remain mostly in administrative and supervisory roles, while they should play a more important role in hazard identification, dissemination of early warning messages, and preparedness and response actions.

2.3 WHAT HAS ENABLED OR HINDERED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS FROM THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICY AND RELATED PRACTICES? (CRITERIA: RELEVANCE, COHERENCE, EFFICIENCY)

2.3.1 What internal factors have enabled or hindered the achievement of results from the policy and related practices?

177. Internal and external factors that have already been covered in previous sections are not discussed again in the following paragraphs. Among the internal hindering and enabling factors already cited are: a missing coordinated approach to operationalization and commitments of resources, and an internal communication plan (Section 2); infrastructure, distribution systems, tools, technology and equipment for early action and emergency response (Section 2.2.1); advance financing and availability of funds for emergency response (Section 2.2.1); strategic pre-positioning of food stocks and pre-emergency agreements with local food and financial service providers (Section 2.2.1); evidence of WFP's contribution to emergency preparedness through common service provision (Section 2.2.3); and participation of women and excluded groups in consultations and response preparedness activities (Section 2.2.6). Among the external factors, Section 2.2.5 sets out several constraints to ensuring the sustainability of emergency preparedness investments, such as a lack of government resources for investment in preparedness, changes in government, the breakdown of law and order, and a lack of rule of law.

Senior management prioritization

Finding 21. Emergency preparedness has consistently featured among the strategic priorities established by senior management at headquarters, albeit with greater emphasis on improving WFP's own preparedness. However, senior management oversight and accountability for results have been weak, and evidence that WFP needs to do much more on preparedness has not yet been acted upon.

178. The two strategic plans that followed the Emergency Preparedness Policy explicitly incorporated preparedness in their objectives. In the 2017–2021 Strategic Plan, preparedness is referenced in Objective 1 in terms of supporting countries to strengthen their preparedness and response capacities and working with partners on emergency preparedness. It is also referenced in Objective 3 (and, to a lesser extent, Objective 7) in relation to resilience, climate action and DRR. In the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan, early warning and anticipatory action feature in strategic outcome (SO) 1, while emergency preparedness is explicitly mentioned in relation to SO4 and SO5, as well as being implicit in references to climate change adaptation and strengthening resilience. Management plans from 2019 to 2024 also consistently include preparedness investments (surge coordination and early warning in 2019, capacities for leadership in emergencies in 2020, and redesigning the emergency response roster and improving training in 2023/24), as well as maintaining trust funds for the ARC facility and, more recently, anticipatory action.

¹⁵⁹ WFP, 2023. *Informe final: Preparación para la respuesta y recuperación a desastres con enfoque de género.*

179. **Updates, plans and key processes for emergency preparedness have been launched every year by senior management of the headquarters former Emergency Operations Division (OSE/EME), accompanied by initiatives to provide country support and build the evidence base for preparedness.**¹⁶⁰ The plans for 2023 and beyond are coherent with identified needs, including a revised conceptual framework, tailorable support packages to country offices, mechanisms for internal coordination, stronger knowledge management, stronger partnerships and investment in advocacy. Other forms of preparedness, such as anticipatory action for climate-related emergencies, have been strongly prioritized by the former headquarters Programme and Policy Division through technical, financial and fundraising support to regional bureaux and country offices.¹⁶¹
180. **However, despite senior management prioritization of emergency preparedness in global strategic plans, CSPs and WFP management plans, corporate reporting of achievements is mixed and leadership at country office level on emergency preparedness is inconsistent.** In annual performance reports from 2020 to 2022, executive summaries have not included references to the contribution of emergency preparedness to emergency responses or achievements related to SO1, although anticipatory action achievements related to SO3 have been mentioned. The executive summary of the 2023 annual performance report does refer to country capacity strengthening achievements in preparedness under SO4, potentially marking changing awareness of preparedness results, but still does not attribute any response achievements in SO1 to preparedness. Executive Director assurance exercises indicate little improvement in self-reported country office-level preparedness and declining trends at regional bureau level. Since 2019, only 33–36 percent of country offices have reported that their coordination and monitoring of emergency preparedness and response is strong, and at regional bureau level only half reported this as strong, down from five out of six regional bureaux in 2019. Key informants in deep-dive countries highlighted the role of experienced and committed professionals at country office and regional bureau levels acting as champions for the prioritization of preparedness in some cases, but noted that this is not yet institutionalized.
181. **Conversely, regional bureau oversight and support for emergency preparedness was an important enabling factor** in supporting country offices to design and implement preparedness initiatives and to prioritize preparedness over other competing demands and needs. The role of the regional bureau was particularly critical in Ukraine, for example, given the lack of WFP presence in the country prior to the outbreak of conflict in February 2022. The regional bureau in Cairo played a strong role in assessing risks, conducting scoping work and developing contingency plans, which laid the groundwork for the scaling up of operations in Ukraine soon afterwards. Similarly, the Regional Bureau for Western Africa invested considerable time in preparing coastal countries for the expanding conflict in the Sahel region through dedicated conflict analysis and training to Togo, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire, among others.

Organizational evolutions and changes

Finding 22. A gap in the leadership and management of WFP's emergency preparedness at headquarters, during a restructuring process between 2021 and 2023, is likely to have constrained progress in the implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Policy. Coordination in headquarters has improved since the introduction of the Preparedness Cell.

182. The evaluation found little documented or anecdotal evidence that organizational evolutions and changes directly affected implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Policy. However, **the leadership position¹⁶² of the former EME Preparedness Team was vacant between 2019 and most of 2022, which was in the middle of the evaluation period and coincided with a 2021–2023 restructuring process. This created a vacuum in which efforts were made to implement**

¹⁶⁰ For example, the 2018 Emergency Preparedness Implementation Plan; 2019 EPU Strategic Vision; 2020 Emergency Preparedness Global Workstream and OSE Prioritization; 2021 Consultative Process on Emergency Preparedness and the EPRP.

¹⁶¹ WFP, 2023. *Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Policies for DRR/M and Climate Change*.

¹⁶² WFP, 2024. *Overview of Preparedness Activities and Capacities*.

workplans despite limited staff capacity, including for internal advocacy and upward management on preparedness.

183. The following period (2022 onwards), after the leadership position of the former EME Preparedness Team was filled, has been focused on stocktaking, consultations and planning for the relaunch of key preparedness tools. At the same time, the formation and launch of the Preparedness Cell has been seen as a significant improvement in the provision of coordinated support on emergency preparedness to country offices with medium and small emergency operations. The “renewed approach to preparedness”¹⁶³ that it supports, which is “proactive, focused, data-driven and coordinated” and replaces a “compliance-based approach”, has been well received by participating divisions, regional bureaux and the country offices prioritized to date, although the model that the cell has used to sequentially provide coordinated support to specific countries has inevitably made slow progress compared with potential needs.

184. **Over the same period, leadership of WFP’s climate change team (the former PRO-C) was consistent and was strengthened by new funding sources, such as a new trust fund for climate action and DRR.** This contributed to the expansion of anticipatory action programming and communications about it. The increasing prominence of anticipatory action at a time when general emergency preparedness communications from headquarters were much less frequent caused some confusion at country office level and in other headquarters teams about the complementarity of concepts and approaches.

185. The impacts for preparedness of the current headquarters restructuring process that started in late 2023 are not yet clear. The reported reduction of the country capacity strengthening team may have negative implications for rollout of the EPCI, unless compensated by increased capacity for support at regional bureau level and in the new EPR structure. Full guidance about the distribution of responsibilities in headquarters is being developed as of September 2024. Moreover, overall shares of roles and responsibilities between headquarters and regional bureaux on emergency preparedness have not yet been defined (they are being reviewed as part of the BOOST initiative as of September 2024).¹⁶⁴

Increased evidence base on the value of emergency preparedness investments

Finding 23. WFP has contributed to the evidence base on the benefits of emergency preparedness, but not significantly. More robust evidence would strengthen the case for greater internal and external investments in emergency preparedness and early action.

186. Though not clearly defined in this evaluation, the “evidence base” includes after-action reviews, lessons learned, dedicated research, evaluations, and monitoring data that demonstrates how preparedness actions enhance WFP’s emergency response (see Section 2.3.1).

187. **WFP staff are positive about the role of emergency preparedness**, with survey participants noting that WFP had made an important contribution to the evidence base, supported by internal emergency capacity and the implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Policy and innovations. Key examples include WFP’s participation in the joint Return on Investment in Emergency Preparedness study, which provided compelling metrics on the cost savings that come from investing in preparedness.¹⁶⁵ The research is now dated, however, and there was little evidence of more recent efforts to build on it, other than limited examples from country offices and regional bureaux on anticipatory action in Nepal and shock-responsive social protection in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ WFP, 2021. *WFP Evidence Summary. Cash Based Transfers: Lessons from Evaluations.*

¹⁶⁴ WFP, 2024. *Who Does What: EPR Service and DED and COO Office.*

¹⁶⁵ OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, 2017. *Return on Investment in Emergency Preparedness. Phase 2 of a United Nations In-agency Project to Develop a Toolkit for the Humanitarian Community.*

¹⁶⁶ Dunsch, F.; Adusumalli, N.; Balantrapu, T; Batmunkh, O.; Christian, P; Heirman, J.; Kelley, E.; Kondylis, F.; Lane, G.; Malhotra, K.; Moreno, S. & Paulose, H. (2025). *Impact Evaluation of Anticipatory Action in Nepal.* WFP Office of Evaluation (forthcoming); WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2024. *Regional Evaluation of WFP’s Contribution to Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (2015–2022), Decentralized Evaluation Report.*

188. **Knowledge management systems for capturing and sharing learning across countries vary.**¹⁶⁷

After-action reviews are perceived as useful, but are only systematically conducted following corporate scale-ups,¹⁶⁸ limiting the potential to provide an evidence base on what works and the benefits of early investments in emergency preparedness, including in non-scale-up contexts. Lessons learned exercises have been conducted in some country offices to identify response gaps and obstacles that future preparedness actions should inform, such as in Pakistan, where the 2022 flood response review led to improvements in HR rosters, arrangements with the United Nations Volunteers programme, and capacity strengthening for partners.¹⁶⁹ In Zimbabwe, the lessons learned exercise after the response to Cyclone Idai informed the country office's financial and HR preparedness and response to Cyclone Freddy. A planned repository of lessons learned reports and after-action reviews has yet to be implemented.

189. Overall, WFP does not systematically assess the value of its preparedness investments or fully leverage its evidence to build a cohesive case for emergency preparedness, either internally or externally.

Other internal factors

Finding 24. Other internal factors have influenced WFP's achievement of results. Key determining factors have been WFP's expertise in specific technical areas, its in-country experience and relationships, and a strong and committed cadre of personnel.

190. A number of other internal factors have impacted on WFP's ability to implement the Emergency Preparedness Policy, including:

- **WFP's sustained relationships with governments and other key partners.** In contexts where WFP has a long-standing presence, interviewees suggested that relationships with governments, other United Nations agencies, CPs, donors and other actors tend to be more mature, and partnerships on emergency preparedness, which often take time to cultivate and strengthen, are more likely to generate results. Other evaluations have also noted that pre-existing relationships between WFP and governments have enabled effective action, such as during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁷⁰ A recent assessment also notes WFP's important role as a trusted partner of governments for the development of policies and capacities in emergency preparedness and response, though it highlights a systematic approach to developing exit strategies as a weakness.¹⁷¹
- **Weak monitoring and evaluation of emergency preparedness.** WFP's own monitoring of emergency preparedness is limited, relying on inadequate and inconsistent corporate indicators and key performance indicators, and with a general under-reporting of emergency preparedness achievements. The evaluation found more evidence of preparedness activities and results at country level than was evident from the corresponding country office monitoring data. These limitations were a challenge during data collection for this evaluation and were noted by internal stakeholders as a persistent challenge within the organization.
- **Corporate reporting of achievements is mixed and tends to under-report on emergency preparedness achievements.** CSP evaluations include questions on the timeliness of WFP's activities, but do not systematically explore the contribution of preparedness to the timeliness or effectiveness of responses implemented, thereby missing critical opportunities to build an evidence base and learn from experience.

¹⁶⁷ The 2024 MOPAN assessment of WFP highlights: "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 that is useful for decision-makers at country level." MOPAN, 2024. *MOPAN Assessment Report: World Food Programme*.

¹⁶⁸ After-action reviews are optional and carried out at the discretion of the country or regional director during the activation of a corporate scale-up or following its deactivation. See WFP, 2023. *WFP Emergency Activation Protocol (OED2023/003)*.

¹⁶⁹ WFP, 2022. *Lessons Learned – Pakistan Flood Response*.

¹⁷⁰ WFP, 2022. *Evaluation of the WFP Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

¹⁷¹ MOPAN, 2024. *MOPAN Assessment Report: World Food Programme*.

2.3.2 What external factors have enabled or hindered the achievement of results from the policy and related practices?

Financial resources

Finding 25. Both the amount and quality of financial resources for WFP and its partners have been perceived as insufficient to enable effective implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Policy. There are limited dedicated bilateral and multilateral sources of funding for preparedness, and WFP has not yet invested significant effort in mobilizing additional dedicated support. The current funding climate, with a decreasing budget for WFP, is likely to further impact on the organization's ability to mobilize additional resources for emergency preparedness.

191. The Emergency Preparedness Policy highlights funding of preparedness actions as an ongoing challenge for both WFP and governments.¹⁷² There has been some growth in the budget for emergency preparedness at headquarters level, from USD 655,000 in 2022 to USD 1.67 million in 2023.¹⁷³ At regional and country levels, data shows a significant increase in budgeting and spending on emergency preparedness since 2017 (see Figure 3).¹⁷⁴
192. **Despite this, seven years on, the lack of adequate financial resources for emergency preparedness remains one of the most significant hindering factors in implementation of the policy.** WFP informants at global, regional and particularly country levels stressed the challenges of mobilizing adequate resources for preparedness initiatives. Documents similarly and repeatedly identified lack of funding as a key challenge.¹⁷⁵
193. **The evaluation found little evidence of donors providing dedicated resources to WFP for emergency preparedness, though funding for preparedness is available within multiple existing funding sources.**¹⁷⁶ A dedicated corporate trust fund for Emergency Preparedness and Response exists, but was not referenced by key stakeholders as an important source of funding on preparedness for the organization (see Section 2.2.1).¹⁷⁷ More dedicated funding appears to be available for anticipatory action, including through a Central Emergency Response Fund anticipatory action pilot and a dedicated WFP Trust Fund for Hunger-related Climate Change, which has been WFP's main vehicle for channelling anticipatory action funding, including for some aspects of emergency preparedness, since 2015.¹⁷⁸ At the regional level, Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa set up a dedicated Regional Ebola Preparedness Trust Fund, which pooled and disbursed funding received from the Central Emergency Response Fund and internal preparedness financing from IR-PREP and the Strategic Resource Allocation Committee. This is an example of good practice, but not a source.¹⁷⁹ Investments in macro-level insurance instruments (including the ARC Replica Programme) are also an important growth area for WFP, providing vital funding for preparedness activities.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷² WFP, 2017. "Emergency Preparedness Policy" (WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1*).

¹⁷³ Data provided by WFP. Data for previous years is not available. The data only includes costs related to emergency preparedness within the previously named EME (including consultants funded by the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance), and does not include costs covered by other divisions and units.

¹⁷⁴ The referred budgets for emergency preparedness activities are based on an Office of Evaluation analysis of CPB data, and go beyond looking at activities tagged exclusively as emergency preparedness.

¹⁷⁵ See, for example, WFP, 2020. *Funding Emergency Preparedness – A Review of the IR-PREP*; WFP, 2020. *Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies*; WFP, 2020. *Monsoon 2020 – Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan*.

¹⁷⁶ An internal WFP note on funding for emergency preparedness refers to a handful of donors who have given WFP dedicated funding for preparedness, but all linked to specific projects. For example, an activity to strengthen preparedness and response capacity in the Philippines had successfully mobilized multi-year funding from bilateral donors. See WFP, 2020. *Funding Emergency Preparedness – A Review of the IR-PREP*.

¹⁷⁷ WFP management plans in 2018 and 2019 referenced the corporate WFP Trust Fund for Emergency Preparedness and Response, but the evaluation was not able to find evidence of its use, its accessibility or what had been achieved with the funding from other sources.

¹⁷⁸ WFP, 2024. *Partnering with WFP to Finance Anticipatory Action*.

¹⁷⁹ WFP, Regional Bureau for East and Central Africa, 2019. *Ebola Preparedness, Achievements and Lessons Learned*.

¹⁸⁰ WFP, 2024. *WFP Macro Insurance Portfolio Annual Report: Promoting Financial Protection for Climate Shocks through Sovereign Risk Pools, 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023*.

194. Given steep reductions in overall funding for WFP, allocations for emergency preparedness are likely to continue to be under pressure.¹⁸¹ However, aside from WFP's contribution to increasing donor interest in anticipatory action through publications and networks, interviews with internal stakeholders did not reveal other strong examples of WFP successfully advocating with donors for more financial resources for emergency preparedness, either bilaterally or collectively, within the Executive Board. Reasons for a lack of advocacy to date have included a perceived confusion among donors about the difference between anticipatory action and emergency preparedness, which was seen as counter-productive for preparedness resource mobilization, and the need for more stories and evidence of the value of investing in preparedness to help make the case with donors.
195. **It is not only the amount of funding that is important for enabling emergency preparedness actions, but also the quality and type of funding, as well as the relationships with both humanitarian and non-humanitarian donors.** At the time that the policy was drafted, WFP was moving to a new model of planning through the CSPs, with hopes that multi-year CSPs would attract increased levels of flexible and more predictable multi-year funding.¹⁸² Contrary to these hopes, WFP's funding continues to be heavily earmarked, limiting the potential to internally allocate more resources to emergency preparedness.¹⁸³ Moreover, the bulk of WFP's funding remains predominantly short term – in 2022, 38 percent of grants to WFP were for less than one year and 33 percent were for one to two years – limiting opportunities for more predictable, longer-term investments in emergency preparedness.¹⁸⁴ WFP's engagement on preparedness with non-humanitarian donors is still nascent. Outside certain key areas, such as anticipatory action and climate change, the evaluation did not find strong evidence of WFP efforts to build relationships with development donors to persuasively make the case for their engagement in emergency preparedness.

Other external factors

Finding 26. Partnerships, particularly with governments, have been key to initiating and sustaining joint actions on preparedness. Co-design and cost-sharing with other United Nations agencies and other organizations have also enabled progress on preparedness.

196. Beyond financial resources, several external factors have affected WFP's ability to implement the Emergency Preparedness Policy, including contextual factors largely outside the control of WFP. Quality partnerships were frequently cited as an enabling external factor for the achievement of results on emergency preparedness.
197. **Willingness and capacity of governments to partner with WFP on preparedness are key.** Through the survey and in interviews, particularly at country level, WFP personnel highlighted the importance of the openness and willingness of government partners to jointly strengthen emergency preparedness. Some degree of existing capacity and pre-existing resources within governments were necessary for WFP to build upon. Frequent turnover of staff within government ministries or changes in government, such as in the Philippines, sometimes reversed progress. Sensitivity on the topic of disasters and emergencies among governments was highlighted as a hindering factor in some contexts, such as in Burundi and Togo, making it difficult for WFP to help build capacity for preparedness without an underlying government acknowledgement of emergency risks.
198. **Willingness of other organizations to partner with WFP has enabled progress on emergency preparedness and shared the responsibility and cost of investing in preparedness.** Deep-dive countries for this evaluation highlighted the importance of strong support from other United Nations agencies, NGOs and private sector actors, both within and beyond the clusters, to co-design/co-finance preparedness initiatives with WFP (see Section 2.2.3 for examples).

¹⁸¹ MOPAN, 2024. *MOPAN Assessment Report: World Food Programme*.

¹⁸² WFP, 2016. "Policy on Country Strategic Plans" (WFP/EB.2/2016/4-C/1/Rev.1).

¹⁸³ WFP, 2023. *Evaluation of WFP's Policy on Country Strategic Plans*.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1. Policy quality

The emergency preparedness policy is of moderately good quality and has framed and guided the development of WFP's various emergency preparedness workstreams. It is evidence-based, was widely consulted upon and is coherent with WFP's strategy and commitments as well as key international agreements. Its results, however, have been hampered by the absence of a resourced strategy for implementation and learning.

199. The Emergency Preparedness Policy's objectives and scope provided a broad framework for multiple parts of the organization to develop and continue their preparedness-related initiatives. It was built on a robust, multi-stakeholder consultation process and analysis of changes in the external environment – including increasingly frequent and complex emergencies and the impact of climate change on food insecurity – that highlighted the need for increased investment in emergency preparedness. The policy was coherent with WFP's own strategic plans, as well as Agenda 2030, Sendai and World Humanitarian Summit commitments to national and local leadership and ownership of risk management, proactive data-driven planning, early warning and early action, and gender equity and inclusion.
200. However, major gaps in provision for implementing the policy have curtailed WFP's progress. The policy was not accompanied by a strategy, nor did it include commitments to: (i) substantially increase resources for preparedness; (ii) determine how they should be applied; (iii) coordinate and synergize efforts across the organization and with others; or (iv) build evidence of impactful, equitable and inclusive approaches. While progress on early warning and risk analysis is evident, and efforts to improve and expand WFP's toolkit are acknowledged, for much of the period covered by this evaluation WFP lacked key tools for guiding and improving country-level preparedness for early action and timely responses. As observed in other organizations of similar complexity and with a mandate for emergency preparedness and response, coherent and practical guidance for stakeholders who implement preparedness policies and strategies is crucial.

Conclusion 2. Responsibilities and leadership

Responsibilities for emergency preparedness stipulated in the policy have been duly met across WFP, reflecting the cross-functional nature of emergency preparedness. However, progress has been limited by insufficient senior management leadership and accountability for emergency preparedness investments and results, and a lack of coordination and guidance has led to fragmentation.

201. Responsibilities for emergency preparedness have been duly and appropriately spread across WFP, at different levels and within different units and teams, as indicated in the Emergency Preparedness Policy. The work of a dedicated team on emergency preparedness at headquarters has helped to catalyse progress, and the Preparedness Cell has shown promise in terms of bringing together different parts of the organization in support of a limited number of country offices. Externally, WFP has continued to deliver on its responsibilities for the clusters that it leads and co-leads (Logistics, ETC and Food Security), which have included preparedness among their responsibilities to varying degrees.
202. Nevertheless, a sense of urgency is lacking in WFP's preparedness efforts to achieve preparedness outcomes, and leadership, oversight and accountability at senior management level have been insufficient. Weak monitoring has not been addressed, large funding gaps have not been resolved, and both internal leadership to ensure cross-departmental coordination and leadership within the aid sector on preparedness for early action and timely response have been limited. Furthermore, inter-agency clusters, including those under WFP's leadership, often deactivate in periods between emergencies, when important preparedness work should be led. As climate change generates more emergencies, and

crises become increasingly complex, the need for accountable leadership on preparedness in WFP will only grow.

Conclusion 3. Resources

Inadequate funding and staffing have hindered implementation of the emergency preparedness policy. Access to adequate resources for preparedness activities was identified as a challenge within the policy itself. Seven years on, despite progress, overstretched and fragmented financial and human resources have continued to limit the ability of the organization to implement the policy. Diverse mechanisms for accessing additional funding, stocks and surge personnel for emergency preparedness have enabled WFP to act quickly and flexibly but have also resulted in a lack of coherence and oversight. Insufficient evidence base for why WFP and its partners should invest in emergency preparedness perpetuates the resourcing challenge, in the context of the growing gap between resources and needs.

203. WFP has spent considerably more on preparedness since the policy was approved and has strategically pre-positioned more of its food stocks utilizing advance funding. The IRA, IPL and GCMF are strong assets for WFP. The evaluation shows that these investments have improved the timeliness and efficiency of its response. However, both the amount and quality of financial resources were reported to be insufficient, particularly at country level, and more could be done to build strategic stocks for sudden-onset emergencies and in cases of major surges in demand or supply disruption. Despite promising practice in some areas, such as fundraising for anticipatory action, the organization has struggled to mobilize enough flexible and multi-year funding to enable it to invest in strengthening capacity for emergency preparedness over time, either for itself or in support of partners. Constraints on the volume, coherence and accessibility of advance financing for emergency preparedness, including through relevant trust funds, have disincentivized and hindered countries from investing more in preparedness.
204. People are potentially WFP's biggest asset for emergency preparedness. Indeed, the organization has increased its capacity of long-term and deployable personnel for emergency response. The effectiveness of surge capacity mechanisms is mixed, however, and their diversity and flexibility need to be balanced against calls for stronger coordination and oversight of deployments. While international surge staff are not well gender balanced, with more men than women both applying for and deploying from rosters, more attention to achieving a gender balance was observed at country level. Emergency preparedness features in many of WFP's training resources but is not consistently visible as a strong corporate organizational priority, while there are no incentives for staff to prioritize their own learning in this area. While strong on relevance to WFP's different functional areas, training efforts would benefit from greater coherence, more emphasis on in-person learning, and a concerted effort to incentivize skill building in emergency preparedness.
205. Reduced funding and increased humanitarian needs are already putting a strain on existing budgets and personnel, and further pressure is to be expected. Particularly in the current climate of overstretched resources, the organization will need to make better use of its existing funding for emergency preparedness, step up its efforts to generate new resources, and improve access to different funding instruments, including its existing trust funds and non-humanitarian resource streams. This means finding compelling ways to make the case for preparedness, drawing on its existing experience and expanding the evidence base together with partners to collectively convince internal decision makers and donors of the benefits of investing early.

Conclusion 4. Country capacity strengthening

WFP has made substantial efforts to strengthen governments' and communities' capacity for emergency preparedness. Where long-term commitments are made by both parties, WFP has enabled governments to improve their emergency preparedness skills and capacity considerably, including in early warning, pre-positioning, supply chains, anticipatory action, macro risk insurance, shock-responsive social protection and other areas. Limited use of the

Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index, one of the key tools for measuring and supporting capacity strengthening in emergency preparedness designed by WFP, and a lack of consolidated information about the use of other tools with similar purposes, prevents a more complete assessment of WFP's efforts. Successes in emergency preparedness capacity strengthening at the community level exist but are often components of resilience building efforts and are not usually described in terms of preparedness. Emergency preparedness capacity at the government and community levels faces sustainability challenges.

206. Emergency preparedness is a long-term endeavour requiring long-term commitments on the part of WFP and partners to build partnerships and trust to generate results over time, particularly with governments. In line with the emphasis in the Emergency Preparedness Policy on national ownership and leadership of preparedness, WFP has made substantial efforts in some countries to strengthen government and community capacity for emergency preparedness, although it sometimes does not explicitly conceptualize it as such. More successful investments combined upstream policy support with downstream government-led initiatives such as shock-responsive social protection.
207. However, the success of WFP efforts in emergency preparedness country capacity strengthening is heavily reliant on government prioritization and commitment, both in terms of time and resources and across various government departments. Governments have sometimes met challenges in sustaining their commitment or capacity to resource emergency preparedness, rendering WFP efforts unsustainable. Instability and conflict also take their toll, with initially successful efforts to strengthen governments' emergency preparedness capacities being undermined by increasing fragility and violence. In middle income countries with increasing capacity for disaster risk management, WFP has adapted its role to provide specific technical inputs as needed and ensure back-up for large emergencies, but with varied challenges and mixed results. There was some evidence of successful community-level emergency preparedness in the form of early warning and parts of resilience programmes, often implemented by cooperating partners.
208. CSPs have allowed WFP to make the shift from short- to medium- and longer-term planning, and some of WFP's tools and processes recognize the need for sustained commitments to strengthen in-country capacity over time. However, the level and timing of resourcing – both internal and external – have hindered predictable, long-term engagement, both of which are prerequisites for emergency preparedness sustainability.

Conclusion 5. WFP comparative advantage

WFP's demonstrated achievements in emergency preparedness are the result of deep knowledge and experience of the infrastructure, distribution systems and technology required for responding to emergencies; understanding of contextual risks and potential emergency scenarios; trusting and trusted partners; solution-driven staff focused on enhancing the capacity of others; and dedicated flexible funding.¹⁸⁵ To scale up emergency preparedness, WFP needs to expand all these components, with more dedicated flexible funding and stronger internal prioritization of emergency preparedness across the organization at all levels.

209. The diversity of WFP interventions in emergency preparedness is both an added advantage and a burden. It is an added advantage as it allows WFP to tailor emergency preparedness interventions to needs based on context, and a burden because it does not allow the organization to focus where it excels. At a support services level, WFP has a clear added advantage in two areas of emergency preparedness engagement. These are its recognized expertise and capacity in supply chain management, and common service provision, which are appreciated by governments and partners alike.
210. Whether WFP's added advantage in emergency preparedness lies at community level is unclear as these efforts are relatively small-scale and inconsistent.

¹⁸⁵ See Conclusions 3 and 4.

211. WFP efforts at the intersection between government and community preparedness, such as shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action – where it has demonstrated success – may provide an opportunity to focus, reach scale, garner greater donor support and build a more strategic approach to emergency preparedness based on WFP’s recognized added advantage in early warning, vulnerability analysis and operational capacity. In addition, such an approach would more clearly demonstrate WFP’s contribution to the Humanitarian–Development–Peace nexus.

Conclusion 6. Efficiency and effectiveness

Preparedness has contributed to more efficient responses and early action by WFP, but disjointed efforts, funding gaps and delays and a weak evidence base have prevented the organization from achieving more.

212. Preparedness investments in advance financing and strategic pre-positioning have reduced the cost of WFP’s response to emergencies. The evidence generated by this evaluation indicates that the investments WFP has made in emergency preparedness have also resulted in more timely responses. Furthermore, where WFP has invested in anticipatory action and conditions for payout have been triggered, time savings have avoided further deterioration of affected people’s food security, health and livelihoods.
213. Nevertheless, there is still ample room for improvement. Time saved by good preparedness at corporate level was often counteracted by gaps in preparedness at national or subnational levels. Similarly, preparedness at national and subnational levels was sometimes squandered by the absence or tardiness of donor resources and corporate-level advance financing. Failures to secure funds in time for anticipatory action call into question the value of investing in early warning systems if they are not adequately heeded. Early warning systems for conflict have been less effective than those for natural hazards.
214. Trade-offs between time and cost efficiency and other effects have been made but are not sufficiently well analysed or shared for WFP to make informed decisions. For example, preparedness for local procurement has reduced lead times through supplier agreements, avoided delays related to customs clearance, helped the local economy and contributed to early recovery. However, it also requires consideration of other criteria such as quantity and quality. Non-GCMF pre-positioning at national or subnational levels has also saved time but must involve consideration of storage conditions, expiration dates and security.
215. Overall, in WFP’s narratives about preparedness, the link between preparedness, efficiency and effectiveness is assumed rather than analysed or validated. APRs, evaluations and other forms of internal and external reporting rarely highlight the contribution of preparedness in any of its forms to protecting food security or nutrition. Even locating and generating the data required to examine effectiveness and efficiency for this evaluation was time-consuming and challenging. Until WFP establishes systems to generate and communicate compelling evidence to convince its own staff, leadership, donors and partners to invest in preparedness, including in collaboration with other organizations and groups (e.g. IASC groups focused on preparedness), doubts about effectiveness and efficiency will remain, and the resourcing challenge will be perpetuated.

Conclusion 7. Gender equality and inclusion

While the evaluation identified some good practices in relation to the integration of gender and disability inclusion into emergency preparedness, there is limited evidence of systematic and coordinated efforts and results in those areas.

216. Key challenges include: (i) in many territories that are prone to conflict or disasters, women and girls (as well as persons with disabilities) are rendered less visible by barriers that prevent participation in EPR processes; (ii) national emergency preparedness policies and programmes are rarely gender sensitive and government counterparts often lack gender expertise in this area; (iii) there are limited operational guidance and tools to integrate gender and inclusion into regional and national

preparedness strategies; and (iv) EPR teams are not always gender balanced, nor do they have the skills and expertise to integrate gender and inclusion in their work.

217. Nevertheless, good practices and operational guides have been supported and documented by headquarters and regional offices and show that, where women and women's organizations are engaged in preparedness activities, this has proven to be catalytic and has contributed to the design of inclusive response strategies. They also show that disability-inclusive early warning increases the likelihood that persons with disabilities can take preventative action, evacuate and make risk-informed decisions.
218. For WFP to fully integrate a gender-sensitive approach and disability inclusion in preparedness work, a better understanding of the underlying inequalities that make certain groups more vulnerable to disaster and conflict-related emergencies is required, as well as strengthening partnerships with women's organizations.

Conclusion 8. Partnerships

Partnerships are central to WFP's approach to emergency preparedness, and the organization has made considerable contributions to collective preparedness efforts, particularly through partnerships with national governments and through the work of global clusters. However, partnerships have often been disparate and opportunistic, with partnerships aimed at strengthening preparedness with private sector entities, cooperating partners and development actors lacking any clear direction or rationale.

219. Partnership is one of the overarching principles of the Emergency Preparedness Policy, demonstrating WFP's commitment to combining forces with others and building on its strengths alongside other key partners to build preparedness capacity. National governments are primarily responsible for preparing for and responding to emergencies and WFP has demonstrated its willingness to support governments in their lead role, with a flexible approach depending on the level of existing government capacity, albeit with questions in some contexts about ownership and sustainability.
220. Local-level partnerships to strengthen community-level preparedness, including within WFP's extensive network of local cooperating partners, have received less strategic attention at headquarters level. Similarly, partnerships with private sector entities have not been systematically prioritized, beyond the initiatives of some global clusters.
221. Within the humanitarian clusters that WFP leads or co-leads (particularly the Logistics and ETC clusters), WFP has played a key role in encouraging emergency preparedness. These clusters have dedicated significant resources to preparedness, designed adaptable preparedness tools, and delivered strong outputs. There are still gaps, however, and the work of the clusters is hindered by overstretched resources, the stop and start nature of cluster activation in some cases, and inconsistent prioritization of preparedness, both at global and country levels.
222. Where WFP has engaged in building stronger collective capacity on early warning and emergency preparedness – through the clusters and other inter-agency coordination mechanisms, and in partnership with other organizations and initiatives – it has made contributions that have demonstrated its strengths and complemented the work of others. Partnerships were often disparate, country-driven and opportunistic, however, and there was no clear underlying corporate strategy or rationale for why some partnership initiatives were prioritized over others, making it difficult to draw conclusions on their effectiveness. This same lack of clarity may have hindered WFP's proactivity in seeking out new partnerships to jointly strengthen preparedness capacity, including with development donors and organizations.

3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>Recommendation 1: Policy revision and implementation Conduct a participatory policy revision process, with the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, to update the policy and produce a strategy for implementing it, including with partners. Include a theory of change, develop a comprehensive toolkit and a plan to establish an evidence base and assign clear organization-wide responsibilities for emergency preparedness.</p>	Strategic Short-term	Programme Policy and Guidance Division (PPG)	Analysis, Planning and Performance Division (APP), Supply Chain and Delivery Division (SCD), Programme Operations Department (PO), Emergency Coordination Service (COOE), Human Resources Division (HRM), regional bureaux		
<p>1.1 Update the WFP emergency preparedness policy on the basis of a thorough consultative process with external and internal stakeholders to reflect recent contextual changes and evolutions in thinking, practice and evidence in the area of emergency preparedness, including financing and partnerships approaches. As an integral part of the process, refine the definition of emergency preparedness, develop an emergency preparedness theory of change that incorporates conflict-sensitivity and links to resilience strengthening, gender-sensitive and inclusive approaches and other cross-cutting issues.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD, COOE, HRM, regional bureaux	High	2026

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>1.2 Consolidate a coherent package of tools for emergency preparedness encompassing key approaches such as the preparedness of WFP, sustainable capacity strengthening of governments and other partners, early warning, anticipatory action, shock-responsive social protection and insurance. Include guidance on conceptual and operational connections and differences between preparedness and other areas of work (e.g. resilience, climate change, disaster risk reduction, business continuity management, shock-responsive social protection, insurance) and how to integrate them. Incorporate practical operational guidance and share good practices on integrating conflict-sensitivity, gender and disability inclusion across the wide range of emergency preparedness work.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD	High	2026
<p>1.3 Among the priorities of the updated emergency preparedness policy, include the development of a compelling evidence base for all elements of WFP's emergency preparedness portfolio to inform advocacy for donor, government and other stakeholder investment in emergency preparedness.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD	High	2026
<p>1.4 Ensure that the updated policy is supported by an implementation strategy, with mechanisms for monitoring and reporting, that establishes clear responsibilities and accountability for emergency preparedness, especially at the senior management level but also at other levels and across functions. A mechanism for ensuring interdepartmental coordination led by senior management (at the Deputy Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director level) should be explored.</p>		PPG	APP, SCD, PO, COOE, regional bureaux	High	2026

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 2: Financial resources Maximize available financial resources in order to increase overall access to funding and supplies for emergency preparedness.	Strategic Short-term	PPG	APP, SCD, COOE		
2.1 Develop a multi-year strategy that prioritizes access to multi-year, flexible, unearmarked funding as well as strategic stocks, striking a balance between proactive and coordinated resourcing for preparedness and acceptable levels of financial risk for the organization. This should be supported by a communication campaign aimed at improving country office understanding of available financial opportunities and related obligations and accompanied by better tracking of preparedness investments, including through existing trust funds, to ensure full visibility of WFP's funding for preparedness.		PPG	APP, SCD, COOE	High	2026
2.2 Review IR-PREP and revisit criteria for accessing IR-PREP funding to make it more accessible to country offices that require advance financing.		APP	PPG, SCD, COOE	High	2026
Recommendation 3: Staffing Optimize emergency staffing by enhancing existing surge mechanisms and addressing the need for sustainable capacity development for staff in relation to emergency preparedness. ¹⁸⁶	Operational Medium-term	COOE	Staffing Coordination and Capacity Service, HRM, PPG, APP, SCD, regional bureaux, other concerned headquarters divisions		

¹⁸⁶ An internal WFP audit on staffing in emergencies included high priority agreed actions to address emergency preparedness staffing gaps. This recommendation aligns with those actions.

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>3.1 Review emergency preparedness and response training models, systems and resources to ensure that emergency preparedness is a clear priority and that all staff (international and national) have incentives to pursue it; that the scope of emergency preparedness training reflects the scope of the updated emergency preparedness policy; that training reflects WFP commitments to people-centred and high quality programming; , and that in-person and virtual training opportunities are available. Develop additional emergency preparedness training resources and opportunities as necessary. Consider involving inter-agency and external partners in simulation exercises and training.</p>		Staffing Coordination and Capacity Service	HRM, PPG, APP, SCD, regional bureaux, other concerned headquarters divisions	Medium	2027
<p>3.2 Take steps to improve the gender balance of emergency surge deployments at the global level, underpinned by an analysis of the factors behind women’s lower applications for and deployments from emergency rosters.</p>		COOE	PPG, HRM, regional bureaux	High	2027
<p>3.3 Review, strengthen and clarify the process, responsibilities, tools and mechanisms related to emergency surge deployments. Once clarified, develop and maintain a tracking system for all surge requests and deployments, consolidating various mechanisms (formal and informal) to improve the understanding, oversight and management of WFP’s emergency preparedness staffing needs while retaining the flexibility of informal surge channels.</p>		COOE	PPG, HRM, regional bureaux	High	2026
<p>Recommendation 4: Country capacity strengthening and support Support regional bureaux and country offices in strengthening government and national stakeholder capacity for emergency preparedness through effective engagement with key entities, increasing the potential for sustainability by leveraging</p>	Operational Long-term	PPG	Regional bureaux, PO		

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
partnerships and combining downstream and upstream interventions and appropriate transition strategies.					
4.1 Support regional bureaux and the country offices they prioritize in efforts to develop, implement, test and improve models of engagement that support and promote coordination between government entities across all relevant thematic areas (including those responsible for climate information, analysis and early warning, emergency preparedness and response, food security, social protection, gender equality and disability inclusion, and finance) and with other partners.		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	High	2027
4.2 Support regional bureaux and the country offices they prioritize in efforts to pilot advocacy strategies to obtain the commitment of governments to long-term capacity strengthening through the allocation of their resources (monetary and in kind) to joint efforts, leveraging partnerships and supporting the institutionalization of funding resources for governments wherever possible.		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	Medium	2028
4.3 Support regional bureaux and the country offices they prioritize in efforts to expand emergency preparedness country capacity-strengthening work at the intersection between government and community interventions, specifically shock-responsive social protection and anticipatory action, building on the use of relevant emergency preparedness country capacity-strengthening tools and leveraging relationships with cooperating partners.		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	High	2028
4.4 Support regional bureaux and country offices in middle income countries with high risk of emergencies prioritized by regional bureaux in efforts to develop models of engagement and transition that focus on strategic partnership with governments on emergency		PPG	Regional bureaux, PO	Medium	2028

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
preparedness, while maintaining the rapid response capacity of WFP for specific emergency scenarios.					
Recommendation 5: Increase effectiveness through learning Continue to apply WFP’s strengths and comparative advantages to emergency preparedness, seeking out and maximizing opportunities for learning, identifying and addressing gaps in the evidence base, generating new evidence and increasing effectiveness.	Operational Medium-term	PPG	APP, SCD, CFO, Office of Evaluation (OEV), regional bureaux		
5.1 Revise emergency preparedness monitoring indicators to align them with the theory of change and ensure that they can be tailored to context, enabling WFP to track key metrics for emergency preparedness and its contribution to achieving WFP’s objectives.		PPG	APP	High	2027
5.2 Promote the use of simulations, after-action reviews, lessons learned exercises, evaluations and return on investment studies to increase understanding of how emergency preparedness affects the effectiveness and efficiency of responses, including in partnership with other organizations and Inter-Agency Standing Committee groups. Explore missed opportunities for early action, including the benefits that it would have yielded and what would have made early action possible.		PPG	APP, SCD, Chief Financial Officer Division, OEV, regional bureaux	High	2027
5.3 Ensure that the results of and learning on emergency preparedness are systematized and disseminated internally and externally, including through Inter-Agency Standing Committee working groups, with a focus on strengthening joint preparedness. Create and manage a repository of evidence and learning on emergency preparedness.		PPG	APP, OEV, regional bureaux	High	2027

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