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# **Evaluation of Somalia WFP Country Strategic Plan 2022–2025**

**Centralized evaluation report**

**OEV/2024/007  
January 2026**

# Acknowledgements

The evaluation team wishes to express its appreciation for guidance and support provided throughout by the Office of Evaluation (OEV): Vivien Knips, Marie-Therese El-Ajaltouni, Raffaella Muoio and Michael Carbon. Special thanks go to Muzafar Kaemdin and Abdifatah Muse (country office planning, monitoring, learning and evaluation (PMLE) unit), Ahmed Hussein (Garowe area office, PMLE unit) and Nasra Jama (Hargeisa area office, PMLE unit) for coordinating and supporting the evaluation team during the data collection mission.

The evaluation team also acknowledges and appreciates the World Food Programme (WFP) Somalia team as the country office and areas and field offices, the federal and state government officials and local authorities, WFP cooperating partners, donor community, United Nations agencies, district government officials and local leaders as well as the beneficiaries who participated in this evaluation.

## Disclaimer

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# Contents

<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Evaluation features .....	1
1.2. Context.....	1
1.3. Subject being evaluated .....	8
1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical considerations.....	14
<b>2. Evaluation findings .....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1. EQ 1: To what extent and in what ways is the country strategic plan evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity in Somalia?.....	16
2.2. EQ 2: What difference did the country strategic plan make to food and nutrition security in Somalia? .....	21
2.3. EQ 3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently? .....	51
2.4. EQ 4: Internal and external factors that explain performance and results? .....	56
<b>3. Conclusions and recommendations .....</b>	<b>61</b>
3.1. Conclusions .....	61
3.2 Recommendations .....	65

# List of figures

Figure 1: Major humanitarian disasters in Somalia from 2010 to 2023 .....	3
Figure 2: Food security trends 2019-2024.....	4
Figure 3: Nutrition situation in Somalia: Gu 2023 and Deyr 2023/2024 .....	5
Figure 4: Total number of incidents per month by access constraint type affecting all humanitarian actors in 2024.....	8
Figure 5: Timeline of significant elements of the context of ICSP and CSP .....	10
Figure 6: Somalia CSP 2022-2025 budget and expenditure by strategic outcome .....	12
Figure 7: Donors to the ICSP and CSP.....	13
Figure 8: Beneficiaries by sex .....	14
Figure 9: Beneficiaries reached under SO1 .....	27
Figure 10: Planned versus actual cash-based transfers distributed to SO1 beneficiaries, 2019-2023.....	28
Figure 11: Planned versus actual food distribution for SO1 beneficiaries, 2019-2023.....	28
Figure 12: Distribution of food and cash-based transfer by region, SO1 CSP (2022-2025).....	29
Figure 13: Geographical coverage and case load of the Safety Net for Human Capital Project as of 29 August 2022 .....	31
Figure 14: Financial resources available to WFP Somalia country office against the anticipated need for school feeding.....	33
Figure 15: Number of health centres and sites assisted.....	36
Figure 16: Percentage of targeted number of people reached through interpersonal social behavioural change and communication approaches.....	36
Figure 17: Knowledge on WFP programmes among beneficiaries, June 2024 .....	44
Figure 18: Knowledge about and use of complaints and feedback mechanism by beneficiaries by programme, June 2024.....	45

# List of tables

Table 1: Somalia CSP 2022–2025 strategic outcomes, activities and implementation modalities...	9
Table 2: CSP financial overview 2022–2024 .....	11
Table 3: Summary of planned and actual beneficiaries by age during the ICSP (2019–2021).....	13
Table 4: Summary of planned and actual beneficiaries by age during the CSP (2022–2024).....	14
Table 5: Output results of the school feeding programme .....	33



Table 6: Number and percentage of targeted children aged 6–59 months, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and ART/TB-DOT clients reached with nutritional support, 2022 and 2023.....	35
Table 7: Nutrition outcome achievements 2022.....	37
Table 8: Nutrition outcome achievements 2023.....	37
Table 9: Number of letters of understanding for country capacity strengthening projects supported by WFP Somalia country office.....	40
Table 10: WFP use of the Internal Project Lending, the Immediate Response Account and the Global Commodity Management Facility by WFP in Somalia 2019-2023 .....	52

# Executive summary

## Introduction

### Evaluation features

1. This evaluation was conducted between June 2024 and March 2025. It covers the WFP country strategic plan (CSP) for Somalia for 2022–2025, including the emergency response to prevent famine between June 2022 and May 2023, along with the interim country strategic plan (ICSP) for 2019–2021. The evaluation aimed to provide evidence to support accountability for CSP results as well as learning to inform the development of the next CSP for Somalia.
2. The evaluation assessed WFP's strategic positioning and contribution to strategic outcomes, efficiency in implementation, the sustainability of CSP results and the factors explaining CSP performance, using a mixed-methods and theory-based approach, drawing on both primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data. Data collection methods comprised document review and consultations with over 500 key informants and focus group participants.
3. Workshops and discussions were held with internal and external stakeholders to ensure ownership and deep understanding of the evaluation's findings, conclusions and recommendations.
4. The intended users of the evaluation include WFP's Somalia country office, the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, technical divisions at headquarters in Rome and the Executive Board, as well as the Federal and State Governments of Somalia, donors, cooperating partners and WFP beneficiaries.

### Context

5. Somalia has a complex humanitarian landscape shaped by continuing conflict, recurrent disasters and climate change. Despite the establishment of a federal governance system, ongoing insurgency means that state institutions are still nascent and fragmented.<sup>1</sup> Somalia's governance structure is shaped by a clan-based constitution, which can increase clan influence on government structures.
6. Somalia ranks last on the 2023 Human Development Index.<sup>2</sup> Despite gains, poverty rates and income disparity remain high.<sup>3</sup> Life expectancy, while improved, remains low.<sup>4</sup> Somalia has some of the lowest education indicators in the world, with low government spending (3 percent of total government spending), and low school enrolment (37 percent of school-age children were enrolled in 2023).<sup>5</sup>
7. With the last census conducted in 1975, Somalia's population data are outdated.<sup>6</sup> Current estimates show a young, rapidly urbanizing population of 18.1 million people.<sup>7</sup> Governance issues, conflict and climate shocks have displaced 3.86 million people, disproportionately affecting minority groups. Most

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<sup>1</sup> European Asylum Support Office. 2021. *Somalia Actors: Country of Origin Information Report*.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2023. *Human Development Report 2023/2024. Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world*.

<sup>3</sup> Somalia National Bureau of Statistics. 2024. *Somalia Poverty Report: 2023*. The share of the population living below the national poverty line fell from 69 percent in 2017 to 54 percent in 2022. The Gini index for Somalia was 35.2 in 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Life expectancy rose from 49.9 years in 2000 to 54 years in 2021. World Health Organization. 2023. *Health Emergency Programme Update – Somalia*.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Children's Fund. 2024. *Somalia End of Year Results 2023*.

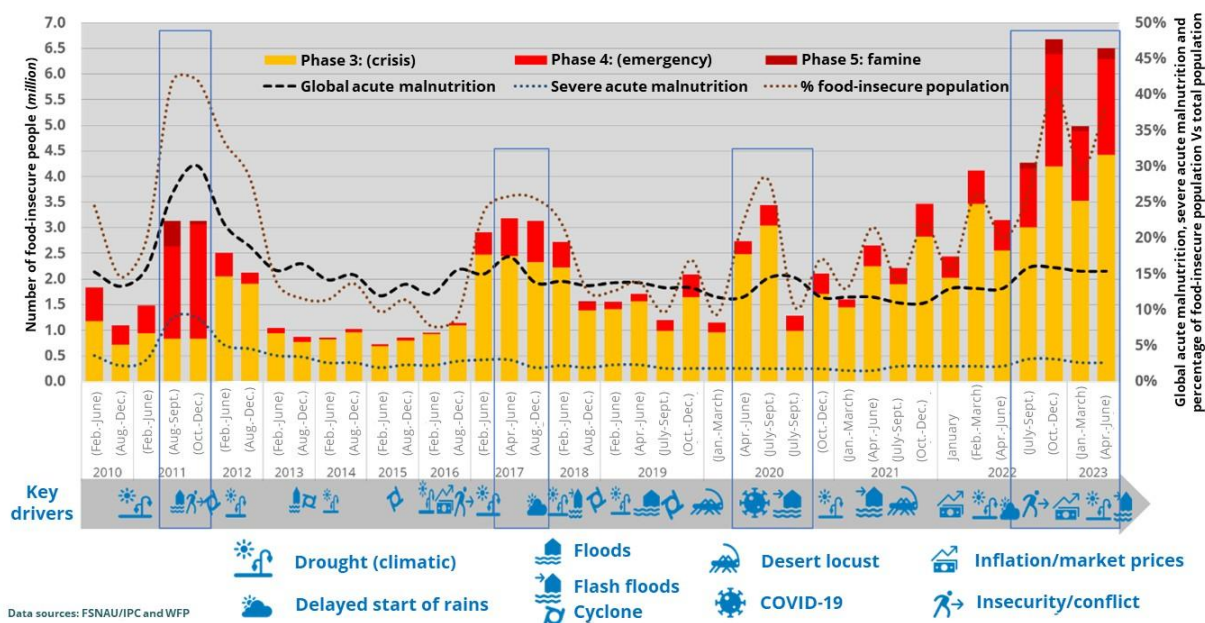
<sup>6</sup> Somalia National Bureau of Statistics. 2024. "Somalia Population and Housing Census".

<sup>7</sup> An estimated 70 percent of the population is aged under 30, and 45 percent of people live in urban areas.

of Somalia's internally displaced persons have moved to urban areas, where they often experience precarious conditions alongside thousands of returnees, refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>8, 9</sup>

8. Although agriculture and livestock generating 75 percent of its gross domestic product, Somalia produces only 30 percent of the food it needs, rendering it highly vulnerable to global shocks. It ranks 181st of 185 countries in terms of vulnerability to climate change,<sup>10</sup> having experienced severe climatic events including a record-breaking drought in 2021–2023 that pushed 6.5 million people into crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity in 2023 (see figure 1).

**Figure 1: Major humanitarian disasters in Somalia from 2010 to 2023**



9. Somalia has a gender inequality index score of 0.674, placing it the fourth lowest globally.<sup>11</sup> Restrictive social norms contribute to widespread sexual and gender-based violence and health, economic and nutritional inequality, particularly for rural, nomadic and internally displaced women and girls.<sup>12, 13</sup> Persons with disabilities, comprising 11.7 percent of adults, also face significant marginalization, experiencing lower literacy and higher unemployment rates.

10. Humanitarian access is severely constrained by military operations, clan hostilities and attacks on aid personnel. Armed groups such as Al-Shabaab control parts of the country, obstructing access to services and impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance. As a result, 23 of 74 districts were classified as hard to reach in 2024.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2024. *Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan: Somalia 2024*.

<sup>9</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 2024. *Annual results report: Somalia 2024*.

<sup>10</sup> University of Notre Dame. Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative. 2023. *ND GAIN Country Index 2023*

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2024. *Human Development Report 2023/2024. Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world*.

<sup>12</sup> World Health Organization. 2024. "International Women's Day 2024: advancing gender equality in Somalia's health workforce".

<sup>13</sup> United Nations. 2018. *UN Somalia Gender Equality Strategy 2018–2020*.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2024. *Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan: Somalia 2024*.



## Overview of WFP Somalia country strategic plans

11. The ICSP and the CSP were designed to prioritize humanitarian emergency response while aiming to consolidate, scale up and improve the link between relief and resilience, including livelihoods support, and capacity strengthening for government institutions. The ICSP had six strategic outcomes and the CSP has five (table 1).

**Table 1: Overall focus, ICSP and CSP strategic outcome alignment and transfer modalities**

Focus area	ICSP strategic outcomes	CSP strategic outcomes	Cash	Food	Capacity building	Service delivery
Crisis response	1: Food-insecure and nutrition-insecure people, in disaster-affected areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food and specialized nutritious foods that meet their basic food and nutritional needs, during and in the aftermath of shocks.					
Resilience building	2: Food-insecure people in targeted areas are better able to withstand shocks and stresses throughout the year.	2: Vulnerable people in targeted areas have improved nutrition and resilience, and benefit from inclusive access to integrated basic social services, shock-responsive safety nets, and enhanced national capacity to build human capital, all year round.				
	3: Malnourished and food-insecure children, adolescent girls, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and clients receiving antiretroviral treatment or directly observed treatment for tuberculosis in areas with persistently high rates of acute malnutrition have improved nutritional status throughout the year.					
Resilience building	4: ICSP strategic outcome 4 became CSP strategic outcome 3.	3: National institutions, private sector, smallholder farmers, and food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations in Somalia benefit from climate-smart, productive, resilient, inclusive, and nutritious food systems by 2030				

Focus area	ICSP strategic outcomes	CSP strategic outcomes	Cash	Food	Capacity building	Service delivery
Resilience building	5: National institutions have strengthened policies, capacities and systems for supporting food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations by 2021.	4: National institutions and government agencies in Somalia benefit from strengthened capacities, policies, and systems by 2025.				
Crisis response	6: ICSP strategic outcome 6 became CSP strategic outcome 5.	5: The humanitarian community in Somalia is better able to reach vulnerable people and respond to needs throughout the year.				

### ICSP and CSP budget and funding

12. The original ICSP needs-based plan (NBP) budget was USD 961 million at the design stage; this almost doubled to USD 1.98 billion following five revisions of the ICSP and its budget during implementation. The revisions sought to support an increased number of crisis-affected people, including by increasing support through the safety net programme.<sup>15</sup> The ICSP NBP was 89.2 percent funded.

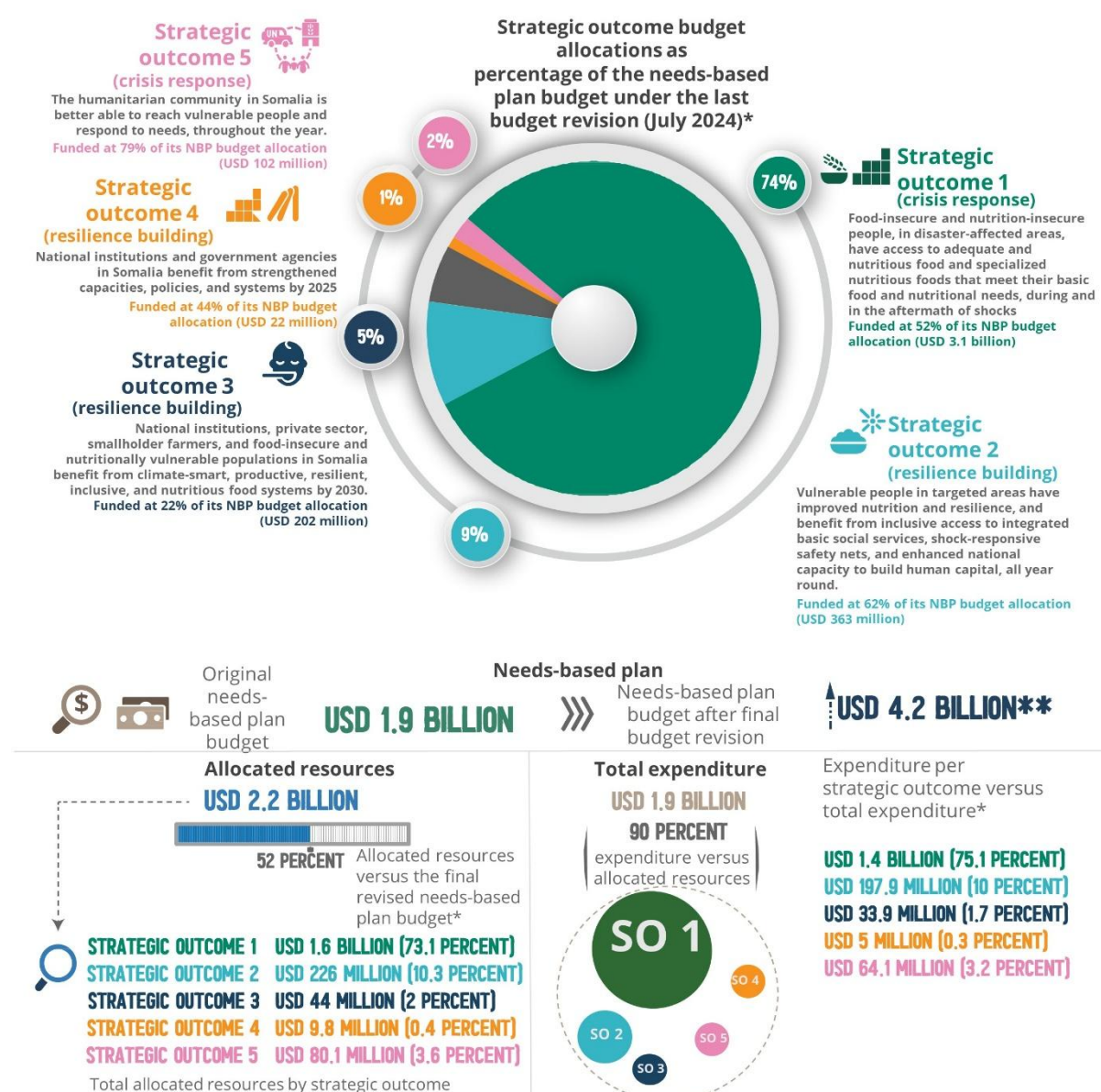
13. The CSP had an NBP budget of USD 1.9 billion at the design stage. It went through three revisions, increasing the NBP budget to 4.2. billion by the end of 2024.<sup>16</sup> The CSP NBP was 52 percent funded, with the majority of funding allocated and spent under strategic outcome 1.

14. As shown in figure 2, strategic outcome 1 was allocated 73 percent of the NBP budget to address the food and nutrition needs of vulnerable people experiencing shocks; it received 52 percent of that allocation. Strategic outcomes 2 (10 percent of the NBP budget) and 5 (4 percent of the NBP budget), were relatively well funded, receiving 62 percent and 79 percent of their NBP budget allocations respectively; strategic outcomes 3 and 4, which made up the smallest part of the CSP, were comparatively underfunded. Strategic outcome 3, allocated 2 percent of the NBP budget, received only 22 percent of that allocation, and strategic outcome 4, with less than 1 percent of the NBP budget, received 44 percent of that allocation.

<sup>15</sup> ICSP revisions, available on the [WFP website](#).

<sup>16</sup> Significant budget revisions were made in 2022 (increasing the budget by USD 2.8 billion) and 2024 (decreasing the budget by USD 532 million). Another budget revision was made in September 2025, which falls outside the period covered by this evaluation. That revision decreased the budget by USD 222 million, from USD 4.2 billion to USD 3.9 billion.

**Figure 2: Somalia country strategic plan (2022–2025) strategic outcome budget, funding and expenditure**



\* Percentages of strategic outcomes exclude direct and indirect support costs

\*\* Percentages of allocated resources and expenditures by strategic outcome do not add up to 100 percent because resources were also allocated to and spent on non-strategic outcome purposes.

Sources: Revision 3 of the Somalia CSP (2022–2025) and country portfolio budget resources overview.

Abbreviation: SO = strategic outcome.

15. At the time of the evaluation the United States of America was the primary donor to the CSP, followed by the World Bank, which provided funding through the Federal Government of Somalia for national safety net projects. Donor funding was sustained between USD 300 million and USD 450 million between 2019 and 2024, with a surge in 2022 for famine prevention.

## Key conclusions and evaluation findings

### Strategic relevance and coherence

Building on multiple studies, the CSP was designed to leverage WFP's expertise in humanitarian assistance, support government priorities and complement the work of other entities in Somalia. The CSP successfully positioned WFP to address both food security and nutrition needs, introducing links between relief, early recovery and work at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Operationalizing the CSP was challenging given the high level of need, insufficient donor funding and limited capacity for implementation.

16. **The ICSP and CSP drew on an extensive evidence base to inform WFP's choice of modalities and overall positioning in Somalia.** Building on Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) data<sup>17</sup> and a range of lessons drawn from studies and evaluations, the CSP sought to build on the ICSP by integrating humanitarian response with resilience, social protection and early recovery programming and emphasizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Table 2 sets out the differences in design between the CSP and ICSP.

**Table 2: Summary of design adaptations of the interim country strategic plan and country strategic plan**

Interim country strategic plan	Country strategic plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthening early warning systems and developing a food security strategy</li><li>• Introducing social protection support</li><li>• Integrating nutrition messages</li><li>• Enhancing resilience activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Linking food assistance to resilience and livelihoods interventions</li><li>• Scaling up rural safety nets and shifting school meals to a cash-based home-grown school feeding model (strategic outcome 2)</li><li>• Continuing value chain support with climate-smart practices and digital solutions</li><li>• Balancing support for capacity strengthening for the federal and state governments</li></ul>

17. **Both the ICSP and CSP were designed to leverage WFP's capacity and experience in Somalia and align with humanitarian, national and United Nations strategic priorities.** WFP's contribution in Somalia built on its comparative advantages in the country, especially with regard to social safety nets and institutional capacity building. The ICSP and CSP were designed to support the priorities set out in the annual humanitarian needs overviews and humanitarian response plans, outlining support for relief assistance for food-insecure populations and transport and logistics support for humanitarian actors. They were also designed to support government priorities, as described in the country's eighth and ninth national development plans, covering 2017–2019 and 2020–2024, and to contribute to the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework, complementing the work of other United Nations entities in Somalia. The CSP included a capacity strengthening component, although this was not supported by systematic analysis of the capacities of government ministries.

18. **Despite challenges and significant changes in the operating environment, the ICSP and CSP remained largely relevant over time.** The ICSP and CSP were internally coherent, designed to provide integrated programming that connected immediate relief to long-term resilience and livelihoods programming, facilitating a progression for beneficiaries from emergency support to long-term safety net and nutrition support and/or sustainable solutions under strategic outcome 3. The CSP design assumed that donor funding would be available under the various strategic outcomes, that political stability would improve and that the authorities would take ownership of the strategic outcomes. The underlying assumptions of the CSP proved largely appropriate, but the strategic outcomes were unevenly funded and WFP had to expend considerable effort to navigate political complexities and respond to emerging

<sup>17</sup> Based on IPC data for 2019–2024 analysed by WFP's Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit.

challenges during implementation. The CSP's relevance and continuity were also facilitated by the inclusion of crisis response in its design (box 1).

#### **Box 1: Key dimensions of crisis response in country strategic plan design**

- Ongoing use of vulnerability analysis and mapping assessments and IPC analysis, e.g. to predict the drought emergency
- Activation of surge capacity when needed
- Procurement procedures to support early response
- Retention of the well-established supply chain infrastructure for food assistance
- Pre-positioning of nutritious foods purchased through the Global Commodity Management Facility
- Anticipatory action to reduce the impact of flooding on affected people

#### **Targeting and prioritization**

WFP adapted the targeting of humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to its work in Somalia in order to reach the most food-insecure people. WFP took extensive measures and applied diverse methods to ensure that food and cash assistance reached the most vulnerable, taking appropriate action to mitigate access challenges, data gaps, power dynamics and resource constraints.

19. **Data challenges and population movements impeded fully accurate beneficiary targeting, but generally high community involvement and extensive measures to optimize accuracy contributed to overall satisfaction with targeting choices.** WFP appropriately targeted districts at elevated risk of food insecurity, triangulating IPC data from market, climate, nutrition and displacement surveys and its own vulnerability assessments to better understand needs and respond to requests from state governments to include areas not identified through the IPC analysis. Beneficiary selection, while largely appropriate, was affected by local power dynamics, data quality issues (e.g., gaps in household data, inadequate screening) and technical challenges with WFP's digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform (SCOPE). The limited accuracy of population data in Somalia was exacerbated by frequent population movements and displacement. To mitigate these challenges WFP is piloting an improved methodology with household vulnerability assessments and objective scorecards, aiming to ensure that eligibility decisions are data-driven and independent. The effectiveness of this new approach hinges on improved data quality and sufficient resources.

20. **Overall, prioritization decisions appropriately focused on areas and people with the highest levels of food insecurity, although implementation faced challenges.** In 2023, in the face of inadequate funding, WFP decided to increase the number of beneficiaries it reached and to reduce the duration of assistance to three months. However, the selection of vulnerable households for the three-month rotation proved difficult due to high levels of food insecurity among the population. The approach also made it more difficult to measure trends over time. WFP made progress in accessing hard-to-reach areas, engaging cooperating partners to identify beneficiaries using targeting and prioritization guidelines. However, prioritization was complicated by access and security constraints and the continuing lack of up-to-date population data. To prioritize beneficiaries for strategic outcome 3, it was challenging to balance resilience needs, increasingly hostile climatic conditions, and geographic earmarking, which meant that resilience programming and humanitarian assistance were implemented in different locations.

#### **Overall performance and key contributions to strategic outcomes**

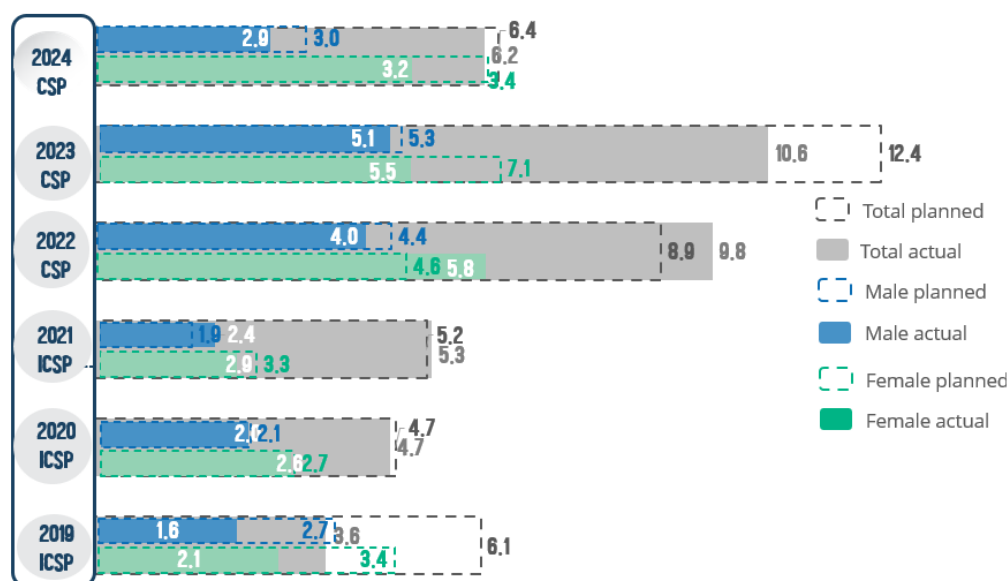
Despite a challenging operating environment in Somalia and uneven funding of strategic outcomes, WFP provided vital emergency assistance in response to the 2021–2023 droughts, supported key nutrition, livelihood and social protection programmes and strengthened government capacity at different levels. Amid conflict and climate shocks, WFP's support helped to mitigate the effects of the droughts and contributed to averting famine, although Somalia's overall food security situation improved only slightly.



21. **Overall, the CSP positioned WFP to provide relief and support resilience, but WFP's most significant contribution during the CSP period was in scaling up its efforts to prevent famine during the drought from 2021 to 2023.** WFP significantly increased food and cash assistance, surpassing planned 2022 targets by an additional 1 million people (figure 3), to respond to the drought and the threat of famine.

22. **WFP also made significant contributions to Somalia's social protection programming by strengthening government systems.** However, school feeding, nutrition and resilience programmes, although beneficial, were limited in coverage due to the concentration of funding on emergency scale-up and response. Consequently, WFP's achievements in building resilience and supporting livelihoods did not match its ambitions.

**Figure 3: Actual versus planned direct beneficiaries by sex, 2019–2024 (millions of people)**



Source: WFP annual country reports for Somalia for 2019–2024.

### Strategic outcome 1: Meeting basic food and nutrition needs for crisis-affected people

23. **WFP contributed to preventing famine and averting further deterioration of the food security situation in Somalia.** WFP significantly scaled up emergency support over the course of the CSP, providing in-kind, nutrition and cash assistance to 9.7 million people in 2022 and 10.2 million people in 2023. Populations served included internally displaced persons and those suffering the effects of the multi-year drought and localized flooding. WFP's agility was facilitated by the CSP's crisis response components and preparedness measures (see box 1 above). The extensive delivery infrastructure in place, including the supply chain for both food and cash, worked through networks of retailers and cooperating partners, and the preregistration of beneficiaries in SCOPE and decentralized planning and implementation by area and field offices also played a key role.

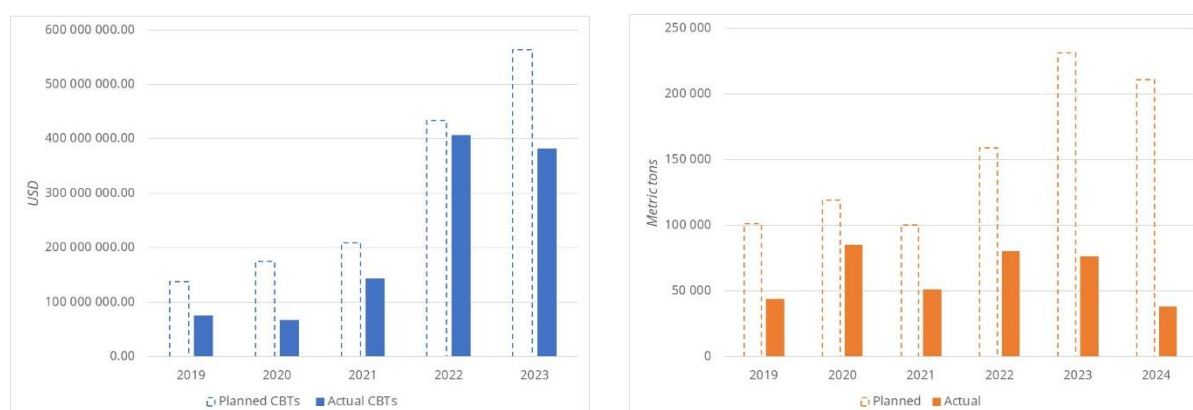
24. Despite a significant scale-up of assistance, food security indicators only showed minimal improvement, with targets largely unmet. This can be attributed to the massive impact of the drought on livelihoods and food security, the relatively short timeframe of assistance and the scale-down of assistance after the drought in 2023 and 2024.

25. **Cash transfers exceeded food transfers during CSP implementation and proved crucial for timely response, cost-efficiency, beneficiary flexibility and the stimulation of local economies.** The greater volume of cash-based transfers (CBTs) was in line with the gradual shift envisaged in the CSP. The choice of transfer modality was largely driven by market functionality, conflict-related considerations, beneficiary preference and regional variations in the minimum expenditure basket that were not reflected in initial planning (figure 4).

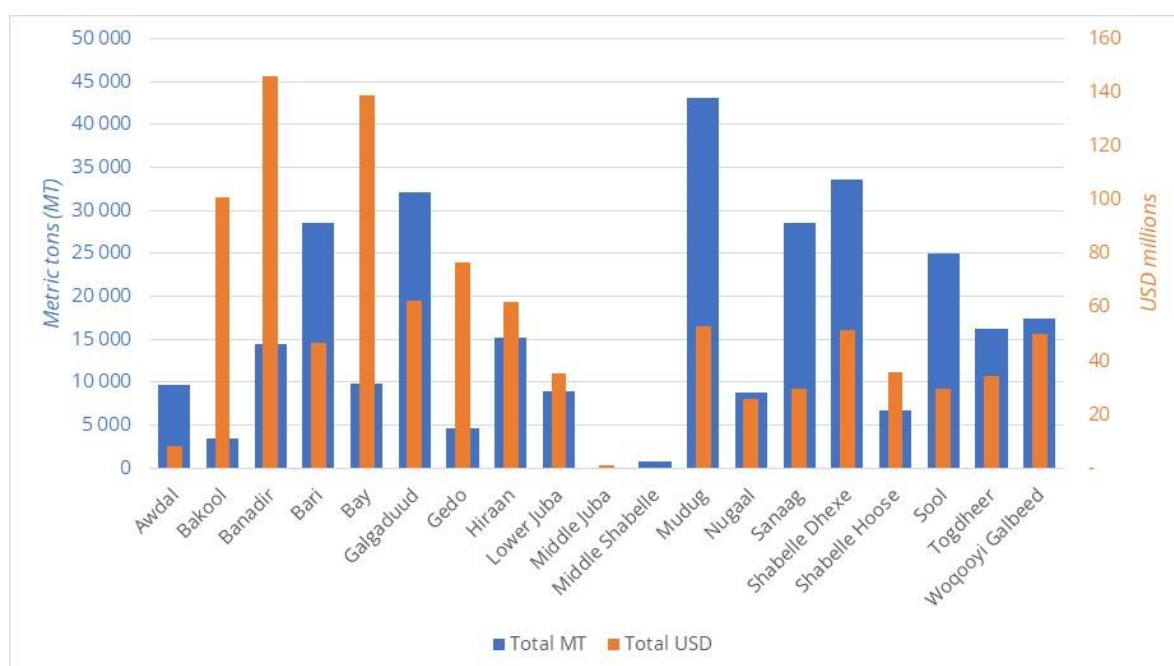
26. **Use of mobile cash transfers enabled people to purchase food locally, bypassing logistical and security risks and providing beneficiaries with the flexibility to prioritize their most urgent needs.** Beneficiaries receiving cash displayed significantly less asset depletion than those who received in-kind assistance or vouchers. Cash assistance also stimulated local economies by increasing local demand for goods and services.

27. Emergency school feeding under strategic outcome 1 was not implemented because insufficient funding was received for that activity.

**Figure 4: Planned vs actual CBTs and food distributed to strategic outcome 1 beneficiaries**



**Figure 5: Distribution of food and CBTs by region, strategic outcome 1 CSP (2022–2025)**



Source: Annual country reports for food and cash planned and distributed, 2024.

## **Strategic outcome 2: Supporting improved nutrition and resilience through integrated social services and safety nets, and enhanced national capacities**

28. **WFP successfully positioned itself as the partner of choice for the Federal Government of Somalia in the implementation of a national social protection system that successfully reached vulnerable households with shock-responsive cash transfers.** WFP was instrumental in supporting government efforts to build a social protection system in Somalia, developing the targeting methodology, facilitating cash transfers and strengthening government capacity for the World Bank funded “Shock Responsive Safety Net for Human Capital Project”, supporting direct transfers and digital literacy training

for women in vulnerable households. The programme was successfully handed over to the Federal Government in 2024. Despite these achievements, inflation, shocks and the relatively limited amount of cash transferred to beneficiaries hindered improvements in food security status.

29. **The school feeding programme reached only a small proportion of eligible children due to funding constraints and delivery challenges.** Although the school feeding programme achieved most of its planned output targets in 2022 and 2023 and approached retention rate targets in 2022 and 2023, the relative scale of the programme was small compared to the overall need – equivalent to just 6 percent of the estimated number of out-of-school children. Resources covered only 3 percent of the targeted children. Implementation was complicated by fluctuating funding, inconsistent food procurement practices and varying approaches to programme implementation in participating schools.

30. **The success of WFP programmes for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition fluctuated annually because of funding and access constraints.** When funding and access were available (notably in 2022), WFP's malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes under strategic outcome 2 achieved most planned outcomes, including in relation to recovery and reduced mortality, and non-response and default rates, although dietary diversity did not improve among those assisted. WFP demonstrated adaptability in implementation, including in its targeting of vulnerable groups in high-risk areas, where cooperating partners in nutrition education played an important role. However, programme effectiveness was limited by significant coverage gaps, particularly during years of limited funding.

### **Strategic outcome 3: Strengthening the resilience of smallholder farmers and communities**

31. **WFP's resilience programming had limited success, constrained by lack of funding, logistical challenges and insufficient post-harvest support for farmers from WFP and others.** Farmers participating in WFP food assistance for assets and food assistance for training programming reported positive changes, such as enhanced collective bargaining power and more consistent access to stable markets, including through the school feeding programme. However, funding shortages limited the number of households involved, and implementation challenges included inadequate transportation for participants, limited market access, and insufficient availability of credit for financing farming requirements. Forced population displacement driven by drought, and donor requirements that resilience programming be implemented where humanitarian programming was taking place, were also complicating factors.

### **Strategic outcome 4: Strengthening national programmes and systems**

32. **Under the CSP, WFP bolstered the capacity of national institutions and government agencies, adopting a more strategic, sector-specific approach compared to that taken under the ICSP.** WFP worked to strengthen state and federal capacity and systems by filling human and financial resource gaps at the federal and state levels, providing technical expertise, and supporting data-driven planning. This included helping ministries to develop strategic plans, establishing new units and coordination mechanisms, deploying technical experts, and training staff through workshops and mentorship. A key achievement through WFP's support was the development of a unified social registry, which serves as the backbone of the Government's social protection system. WFP also aided evidence-based planning through surveys and assessments conducted to inform policy and planning. Although WFP sought to focus its capacity strengthening efforts in specific sectors, in practice initiatives did not benefit from clear capacity assessments and often lacked clear strategies for ensuring sustainability independent of WFP support. WFP also spread its resources thinly, across multiple initiatives, hindering sustainable outcomes.

### **Cross-cutting issues**

Despite dedicated mechanisms and programming to integrate WFP's cross-cutting concerns related to protection, accountability to affected people, gender equality and women's empowerment, and disability inclusion, contextual risks and social and cultural barriers constrained the effectiveness of WFP's efforts. Notwithstanding these challenges, WFP adhered to humanitarian principles in CSP implementation.

33. **WFP took steps to consider gender, conflict sensitivity and disability in its programming by prioritizing households headed by women and consulting with communities to ensure transparency and promote a "do no harm" approach.** While WFP endeavoured to achieve gender balance in relief assistance and sought to mitigate potential conflicts through community engagement, social and cultural

barriers limited women's participation in committees. Despite efforts, the inclusion of persons with disabilities was not optimal. In addition, challenges in data collection hindered the effective targeting of displaced populations and measures taken to ensure non-discrimination across various groups.

34. **In a context of major protection challenges, the country office demonstrated commitment to addressing, mitigating and preventing protection risks.** Protection risks in Somalia persist due to conflict and climate shocks. WFP developed a country-specific protection framework, adapted from the corporate protection and accountability policy, in order to mainstream protection throughout its activities. This included training for staff and partners and working in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to roll out protection guidance, conduct protection risk assessments, improve food distribution points and ensure regular monitoring. Despite these efforts, however, instances of insecurity during food distribution were reported, particularly in internally displaced persons settings.

35. **Measures to enhance accountability to affected people were implemented but underutilized.** WFP efforts included strengthening community feedback mechanisms and expanding call centres and helpdesks to encourage feedback. However, the utilization of community feedback mechanisms was limited, and it was challenging to use feedback data to inform programme decisions.

36. **The country office enhanced capacity and reporting infrastructure in relation to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and sought to mitigate PSEA risks in programme design.** The country office established a senior-level PSEA task force and supported training for community health workers and partners to strengthen referral pathways. WFP actively participated in inter-agency work through the United Nations Somalia PSEA network, UNHCR-led protection clusters and gender-based violence clusters led by the United Nations Population Fund and the Ministry of Women for service referrals. Through its programming WFP made efforts to reduce PSEA risks (e.g., through mobile money transfers and secure distribution sites) with varying effectiveness. Despite such efforts, threats of sexual violence were reported.

37. **Although gender equality and women's empowerment strategies were successfully integrated in programming, more time was needed to yield results.** Efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and disability in programming included increasing gender analysis, ensuring that nutrition programmes were gender-responsive, prioritizing women in assistance, enhancing women's financial and digital inclusion and encouraging women's decision-making. WFP also implemented disability-inclusive practices through data collection, assessments and partnerships with disability and minority-led organizations to ensure that assistance was disability-inclusive. However, given societal dynamics and cultural barriers, particularly related to women's roles, it will take time for these efforts to bear fruit.

38. **Amid complex political dynamics and operating conditions, WFP adhered to the humanitarian principles.** The evaluation found that WFP remained committed to delivering assistance in a principled manner despite the complex operating environment by prioritizing vulnerable populations, strengthening accountability and collaborating with key stakeholders. Box 2 sets out how the humanitarian principles were addressed.

## Box 2: Consideration of humanitarian principles in the implementation of the Somalia CSP

**Humanity:** Prioritization of the most vulnerable (women, children, persons with disabilities and minorities) using targeting strategies with strong community engagement; leveraging of partners to reach hard-to-access locations; application of security assessments and safe distribution practices to ensure protection.

**Impartiality:** Distribution of assistance based on comprehensive needs assessments and vulnerability criteria; recognition and navigation of clan dynamics and local power and influence.

**Neutrality:** In the face of challenges stemming from changes in government and working in politically contested areas and in Al-Shabaab controlled areas, the avoidance of taking sides and engagement with diverse local partners in order to avoid perceptions of bias.

**Independence:** Transparent communication of cooperating partner selection criteria and process, and openness to discussing the process; clear communication of rationale for decision-making with the authorities, acting in solidarity with other partners such as the cash consortium partners; focus on the most vulnerable, guided by assessments; staff and cooperating partner training to uphold principles and apply selection criteria.

39. **Humanitarian-development linkages were constrained.** While the humanitarian-development-peace triple nexus was articulated in the CSP design, related activities and approaches during implementation were few in number and small in scale due to inadequate funding and, in particular, the earmarking of funding for specific groups and geographic locations. WFP's integrated anticipatory action in relation to resilience building and government capacity strengthening may support long-term solutions to food crises.

### Efficiency and risk

WFP prioritized cost-efficiency, and the response was largely timely. WFP demonstrated an intensified approach to risk over the CSP implementation period, including through measures under its global assurance project.

40. **The country office implemented several measures to enhance cost-consciousness and improve the cost-efficiency of its operations.** These included increasing the use of CBTs, which reduced food transport expenses, and optimizing warehouse utilization, which resulted in the closure of the Bossaso field office. WFP also consolidated the number of cooperating partners (from 100 in 2022 to 54 in 2024) and supported cooperating partner efforts to implement multiple activities and share indirect costs. Other measures included reviewing staff mission protocols and procurement practices.

41. **The response was largely timely despite pipeline challenges.** WFP strategies for preventing food assistance pipeline breaks included the use of advance funding mechanisms, globally pre-positioned goods and flexible delivery modalities. These were largely successful, with minimal reports of delays in relief assistance, although harsh weather resulted in some commodity transport delays and beneficiaries who were not pre-registered in SCOPE experienced less timely support. Nutrition and school feeding activities were mostly delivered within intended timeframes where funding was available.

42. **Amid ongoing and well-documented risks, including persistent allegations of fraud and confirmed cases of aid diversion in Somalia,<sup>18</sup> WFP strengthened existing risk management protocols and maintained a dynamic approach to anticipating and mitigating risks.** Risks related to Somalia's challenging operating environment included security and access challenges; challenges related to post-distribution aid diversion owing to fraud and corruption; and limited capacity of cooperating partners and logistical hurdles because of poor infrastructure. Due to a combination of these risks, and instances of post-distribution aid diversion in particular, WFP's operation in Somalia was identified as one of 31 high-risk WFP operations globally.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Security Council. 2023. *Situation in Somalia: Report to the Secretary-General*.



43. **WFP adopted a systematic approach to risk management for both staff and operations and adjusted to emerging issues over the course of the CSP.** Measures included creating a dedicated risk management unit and conducting extensive vetting and training of cooperating partners. In 2024, as part of WFP's global assurance project, a dedicated assurance plan to combat post-distribution aid diversion included enhanced mechanisms for unbiased household identification, increased monitoring and feedback, stronger partner management, and enhanced risk unit capacity. These measures, alongside policy engagement with the authorities to prohibit aid resale, helped to maintain donor trust and sustain funding despite ongoing challenges.

## Partnerships

WFP's strategic and operational partnerships established during the CSP were appropriate, well aligned with mandates and roles, and critical for the achievement of CSP results. However, opportunities for joint programming with other United Nations and private sector entities were not fully exploited.

44. **Partnerships with cooperating partners, predominantly local NGOs, were critical in the achievement of CSP results.** Cooperating partners enabled WFP to reach communities inaccessible to WFP staff due to United Nations security protocols. They supported beneficiary registration, aid distribution and the mainstreaming of protection and gender measures. Efficiency was facilitated by selecting partners that had existing arrangements with other key United Nations delivery partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). However, security protocols limiting WFP staff time in the field meant that WFP technical expertise was not exploited fully.

45. **WFP's partnership with federal and state ministries was strategic, aligning with CSP outcomes.** WFP's work with government entities in strategic planning, institutional strengthening and analysis and evidence generation contributed to policy reforms. It also helped to improve humanitarian coordination, supporting interministerial participation in disaster management and response. Coordination with the authorities to establish guidance, raise community awareness and conduct monitoring helped to combat aid diversion.

46. **Private sector engagement, although limited, led to successful initiatives.** Partnerships with retailers and financial service providers leveraged mobile technology and market development, boosting financial inclusion and creating market links for farmers. Collaboration with local retailers also expanded access, offering beneficiaries greater choice and fostering local economic benefits.

47. **There remains scope to maximize opportunities for joint programming with other United Nations entities.** Partnerships with UNICEF and FAO supported an integrated resilience programme, and WFP worked with the International Organization for Migration and UNHCR to deliver assistance to newly displaced persons and refugees. Despite these efforts, competition for resources and varying decision-making processes, planning cycles and implementation schedules prevented United Nations entities from fully leveraging joint programming opportunities.

## Human and financial resources

WFP's structure and human resource capacity were appropriate, well aligned with the CSP and adapted to the circumstances in Somalia. WFP mobilized adequate resources for relief and nutrition activities but fewer resources for school feeding, resilience and livelihood and capacity strengthening activities, impeding results.

48. **The adequacy of financial resources was one of the main factors determining programme performance.** Overall, adequate financial resources were mobilized for relief and air transport and logistics activities to respond to humanitarian priorities. This success stemmed from effective strategies, such as collaborating with other United Nations entities and the authorities on crisis alerts and donor advocacy, and leveraging longstanding relationships with humanitarian donors. For the safety net programme WFP was chosen as a partner for CBTs, utilizing World Bank funding secured by the Federal Government rather than raising additional funds itself. The adequacy of funding for humanitarian and safety net initiatives directly contributed to their strong performance.

49. **For school feeding, food systems and capacity strengthening initiatives, humanitarian donors, who are WFP's primary funders in Somalia, were reluctant to enter into the long-term commitments required.** Resource mobilization strategies, such as showcasing results and joint programming for these areas, proved inadequate. This funding weakness significantly affected CSP implementation, hindering links between activities, impeding programme integration and making it difficult to implement a triple nexus approach, ultimately showing that some of the initial funding assumptions for the CSP were unrealistic.

50. The country office underwent significant staffing and structural changes in an effort to enhance its operational effectiveness. Its relocation from Nairobi to Mogadishu brought senior management closer to operations and stakeholders, improving oversight and communication, and was complemented by decentralizing functions to area offices and recruiting more Somali national staff. The latter deepened cultural understanding and fostered better collaboration with local authorities.

### Monitoring systems

WFP's monitoring systems enabled it to track CSP implementation and results, and to some extent they informed decision-making, but gaps persist in some areas of performance tracking and data management and use.

51. While designed to work on various levels to provide complementary data, the utility of WFP monitoring systems in Somalia is limited. The evaluation found evidence of process monitoring by field staff frequently informing operational decisions on matters such as improving distribution points or addressing CBT delays. However, its use for broader problem solving remains limited. At the output and outcome levels, data gaps in critical areas (e.g., capacity strengthening, food systems, nutrition and gender); the use of project-specific indicators; and variable detail on the level of assistance, combined with factors arising from Somalia's complex circumstances such as beneficiary rotation and varying nutrition cohorts, make it hard to establish trends or precisely determine WFP's long-term contributions in Somalia. Overall, the system struggles with data management and consistent data use, particularly for high-level strategic adjustments.

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<b>Recommendation 1: Strengthen linkages in the implementation of relief to resilience and livelihood building and capacity strengthening to establish building blocks for a sustainable response to food crises in Somalia in line with the federal and state governments' goal of transitioning from ad hoc humanitarian response to more long-term programming.</b>	Strategic	Country office management	Programme teams; Regional office	High	June 2026
1.1 Enhance integrated programming backed by geographic analysis of which integrated service packages can be provided in which geographic areas.					
1.2 Develop a comprehensive strategy to guide the operationalization of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus informed by a realistic resilience and livelihood needs assessment considering ecological zones and capacity and resource needs to effectively translate the triple nexus into practical action and ensure potential integration with relief activities.					
1.3 Further refine the links to and role of social protection under all CSP outcomes.					
<b>Recommendation 2: Ensure that the needs-based plan for resilience, school feeding and nutrition programming is informed by realistic resourcing assumptions, based on scenario planning and backed by a realistic resource mobilization strategy.</b>	Strategic	Country office management	Country office partnerships	High	June 2026
2.1 Develop innovative resource mobilization strategies for the CSP, leveraging opportunities such as joint programming and partnerships with development-oriented actors.					
2.2 Develop a school feeding programme strategy that includes a long-term scenario-based investment plan that shows donors and the authorities where investments are needed, which resources are required and for how long.					
<b>Recommendation 3: Improve programme design and adaptation based on better integrated analysis and use of monitoring data, building on progress made in gender mainstreaming. In addition, disseminate good practices in the implementation of WFP's assurance plan and risk management.</b>	Operational	Country office programme team	Monitoring and evaluation teams	Medium	June 2026
3.1 Enhance gender mainstreaming by building on progress in capacity building, operationalizing the tools in place, reporting on gender indicators and using gender-disaggregated data.					

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
3.2 Improve the use of monitoring data through regular dissemination of internal reporting and triangulation of monitoring data from various types of monitoring (process, output, outcome, community feedback mechanisms).					
3.3 Collaborate with WFP global headquarters to share good practices in the implementation of WFP's assurance plan and risk management.					
<b>Recommendation 4: Align partnerships with the requirements of the next CSP to make clear how each partnership will influence or contribute to achievement of CSP results. This may be achieved through the following steps:</b>	Strategic	Country office programme team	Partnerships team; Regional office	High	June 2026
4.1 Develop a robust partnership strategy aligning and expanding strategic and operational partnerships within the strategic direction of the next CSP and changing circumstances in Somalia.					
4.2 Establish a systematic approach to building partnerships with the authorities, other United Nations entities, other development actors and private sector entities at the country office and area office levels in line with the partnership strategy.					
<b>Recommendation 5: Ensure that the government capacity-strengthening approach is based on clearly articulated objectives and defined targets and that the overall scope of capacity strengthening is informed by funding expectations and WFP technical capacity at the country office and field levels.</b>	Strategic	Country office programme team		High	June 2026
5.1 Enhance the use of capacity assessments to better tailor capacity strengthening initiatives.					
5.2 Focus, where relevant, on regional and state-based approaches to capacity strengthening while maintaining support and aligning at both the federal and state levels.					
5.3 Strengthen coordination of government capacity strengthening with other partners supporting similar efforts.					

# 1. Introduction

1. This evaluation of the World Food Programme (WFP) Somalia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) (2022-2025) was conducted between June 2024 and March 2025. The evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV) and conducted by Tana Copenhagen.

## 1.1. Evaluation features

2. The evaluation assesses the WFP Somalia Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019-2021) and the Country Strategic Plan (2022-2025), including the emergency response to prevent famine that took place between 1 June 2022 and May 2023. The evaluation seeks to generate evidence and learning to inform the development of the next CSP for WFP Somalia.

3. The evaluation has dual objectives: 1) to provide evaluation evidence and learning on WFP performance for country-level strategic decisions, specifically for developing the future engagement of WFP in Somalia; and 2) to provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders.

4. An independent team conducted the evaluation using mixed methods and drawing on document review, monitoring data, key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). Over 500 key informants and focus group participants were consulted. Gender and wider inclusion dimensions were integrated into the evaluation scope and methodology. The evaluation team (ET) applied ethical standards to safeguard the dignity of people involved and the confidentiality of the information shared.

5. Data were collected in October 2024, followed by initial data analysis and presentation of the preliminary findings to WFP Somalia country office on 2 December 2024. The evaluation findings and recommendations were shared with the country office and other stakeholders including the Government, cooperating partners, other United Nations (UN) agencies and donors for validation.

6. The intended users of the evaluation include the WFP Somalia country office, the Regional Bureau for East Africa (RBN), technical divisions at headquarters, the Executive Board, the federal and state governments of Somalia, donors, cooperating partners and WFP beneficiaries.

## 1.2. Context

### General overview

7. Somalia gained independence in 1960. A military coup in 1969 brought Siad Barre to power, who ruled until 1991. The country then descended into conflict, with clan-based groups and illegitimate non-state actors vying for control, leading to widespread instability. Since 2012, progress has been made toward political stabilization with the establishment of a federal governance system comprising the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS). However, the longstanding insurgency means that the Federal Government does not have full control over the territory of the country.<sup>19</sup> State institutions, at the federal level and in most states, are nascent and fragmented and their effectiveness is constrained by poor governance and lack of transparency. The clan-based constitution that is in place enhances clan influence in government structures.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the Somalia Constitution does not conclusively guide how the federal governance structure should be implemented. This leaves a gap for a contest for power and resources between the two levels of government, with both the federal and state governments developing their own policies and development plans. Given this governance structure, development partners have to navigate the complexity of aligning their support with both federal and state governments' priorities and have to work with, and seek clearance of, the state governments to access communities.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> European Asylum Support Office, 2021. Somalia Actors.

<sup>20</sup> European Asylum Support Office, 2021. Somalia Actors and European Union Agency for Asylum, 2023. "Country Guidance Somalia, 2023: The role of clans in Somalia".

<sup>21</sup> World Bank, 2023. Local governments and federalism in Somalia, pages 16-17.



8. Somalia population data are not up to date, with the last population census conducted in 1975.<sup>22</sup> Current population data are based on estimates, limiting effective programme planning. The population is estimated at 18.1 million (49.9 percent women).<sup>23</sup> The total fertility rate is 6.9 children per woman of reproductive age, with nomadic areas having the highest total fertility rate (7.3) followed by rural areas (7.1). Life expectancy at birth improved from 49.9 years in 2000 to 54 years in 2021.<sup>24</sup> Somalia is one of the youngest countries in the world, where approximately 70 percent of the population is under 30 years, and a significant portion (31.6 percent) is under 14 years.<sup>25</sup> Somalia is also among the fastest urbanizing countries in the world with an urban population growth rate of 4.23 percent between 2015 and 2020 and an estimated 45 percent of the population residing in urban areas.<sup>26</sup>

9. Somalia's real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 3.1 percent in 2023 reflecting a slow but sustained recovery from the recession linked to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.<sup>27</sup> However, Somalia ranks last in the Human Development Index (193/193)<sup>28</sup> and poverty remains a key development challenge,<sup>29</sup> despite the reduction in the population living below the national poverty line from 69 percent in 2017 to 54 percent in 2022.<sup>30</sup> The Gini index was 35.2 in 2022, demonstrating wide income disparity among the population.<sup>31</sup>

### Major disasters timeline

10. Somalia experiences chronic disasters exacerbated by conflict and climate change among other factors. Since 2010, Somalia has faced cycles of severe droughts – including the longest and most severe on record, from 2021 to 2023 that pushed the country to the brink of famine – and floods in addition to conflict, a locust invasion, the COVID-19 pandemic, and inflation (see Figure 1). These disasters occur within the context of a young government with limited capacity and longstanding insurgency. The recurring disasters make it difficult to establish resilience and put the country on the path to development.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, Somalia Population and Housing Census: <https://nbs.gov.so/somali-population-and-housing-census/>.

<sup>23</sup> World Bank open data: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.DPND?locations=SO> . Accessed on 2 August 2024.

<sup>24</sup> WHO data: <https://data.who.int/countries/706>.

<sup>25</sup> WHO Somalia population data, 2022: <https://data.who.int/countries/706>. Accessed 22 July 2024.

<sup>26</sup> UN Habitat brief on Somalia: <https://unhabitat.org/somalia> Accessed on 8 August 2024.

<sup>27</sup> World Bank data, accessed June 2024: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=SO> .

<sup>28</sup> UNDP. 2023. Human Development Report.

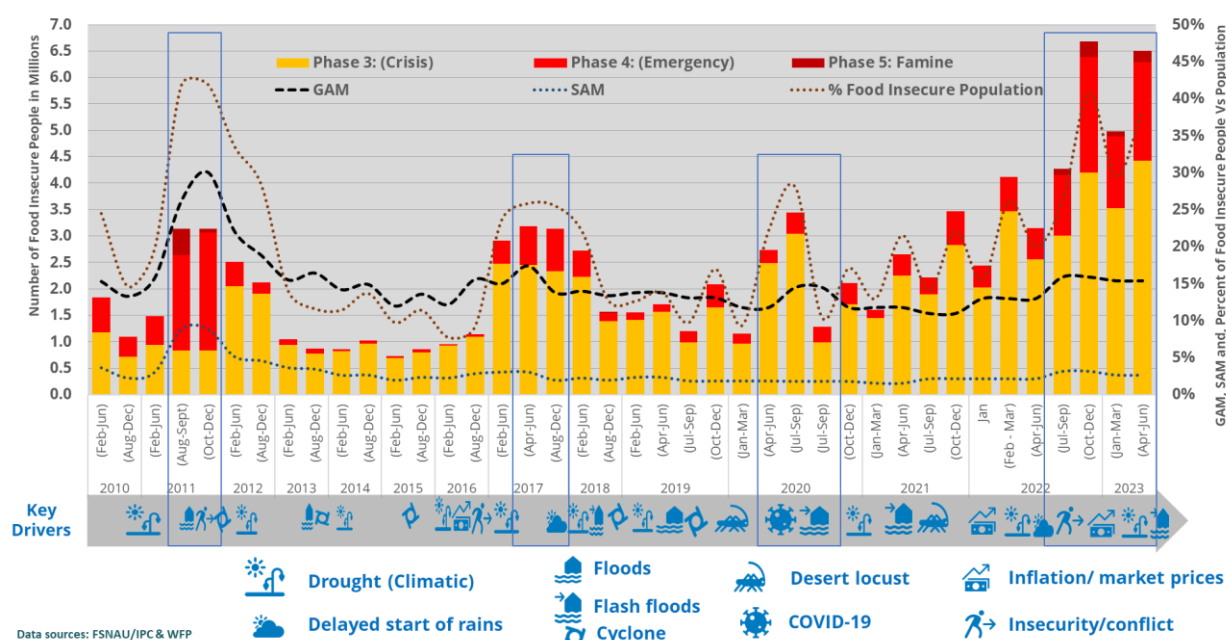
<sup>29</sup> Poverty line is USD 2.06 per day.

<sup>30</sup> World Bank. 2019. Somalia Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment Report.

<sup>31</sup> Somalia National Bureau of Statistics. 2023. Somalia Poverty Report.

<sup>32</sup> WFP Somalia analysis.

**Figure 1: Major humanitarian disasters in Somalia from 2010 to 2023**



Source: World Food Programme, Somalia country office.

### National policies and the Sustainable Development Goals

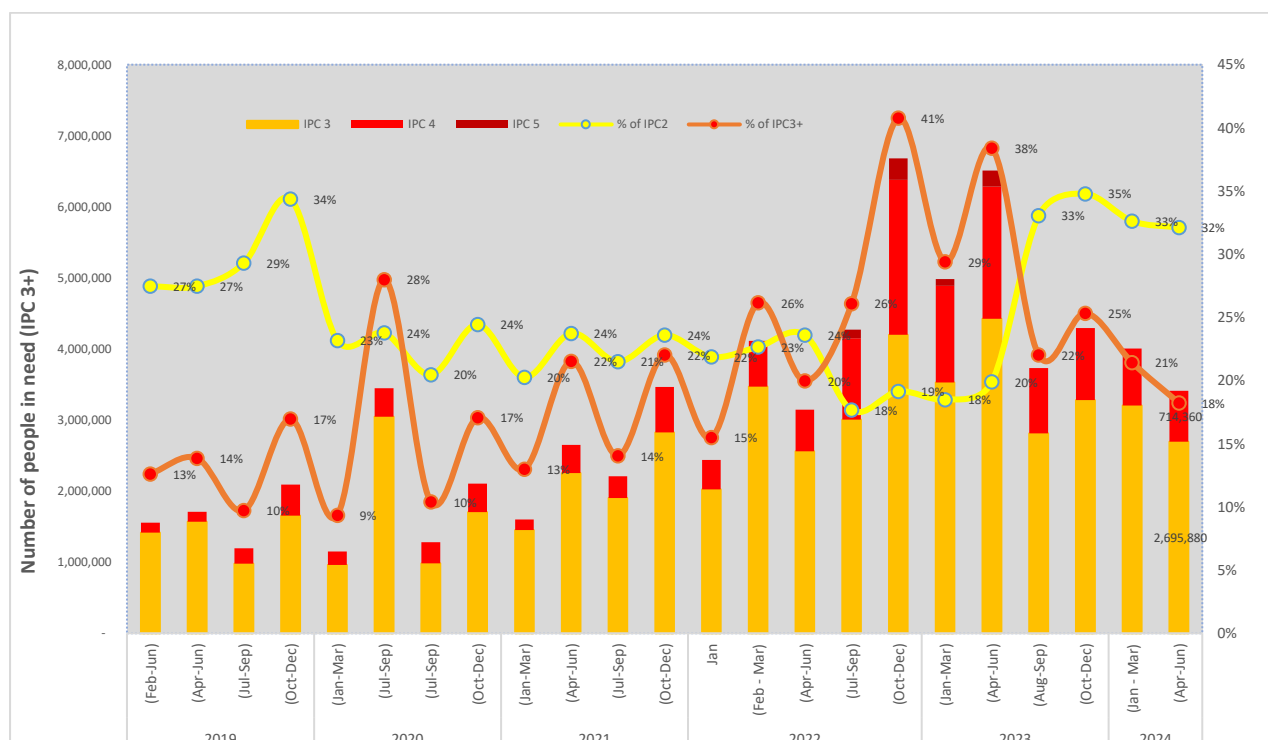
11. For the past decade, development planning in Somalia has been guided by the eighth and ninth National Development Plans, which are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The WFP interim country strategic plan (ICSP), country strategic plan and the broader United Nations cooperation framework for Somalia are aligned with the development plans. An account of the development priorities and specific sector policies and plans is provided in Annex 8.

### Food insecurity and malnutrition

12. Somalia is a food deficit country, producing on average 30 percent of its food needs, making it highly vulnerable to inflation and global economic and financial shocks. Somalia has been experiencing a high level of acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition since 2010. The drought from 2021 to 2023 led to a rapid increase in the number of people in crisis and emergency levels (Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 3 and 4) in Somalia, from 3.5 million in 2020 to a peak of 6.5 million people in 2023 (see Figure 2). Factors driving food insecurity, apart from recurring droughts and floods, include: ongoing conflict, resulting in displacement of persons and restricting the flow of goods and services; high food prices constraining household purchasing power; and dysfunctionality of the national food, social protection, health and education systems, which limit access to basic social services.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> IPC data analysed by WFP Somalia.

**Figure 2: Food security trends 2019-2024**



Source: World Food Programme, Somalia country office.

13. The nutrition situation in Somalia varies by location and by rainy season, with some areas, especially in the south and centre, remaining in “serious” or “critical” phases of acute malnutrition all year (Figure 2).<sup>34</sup> Acute malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are exacerbated by prolonged conflict, recurrent climate shocks and economic instability.<sup>35</sup> In rural areas and nomadic regions, girls are more affected by malnutrition due to cultural feeding norms.<sup>36,37</sup> For adults, about 49 percent of women aged 15-49 years are anaemic, 15 percent are underweight, 22 percent are considered overweight, while 11 percent are obese.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> WFP Somalia nutrition presentation provided to evaluation team.

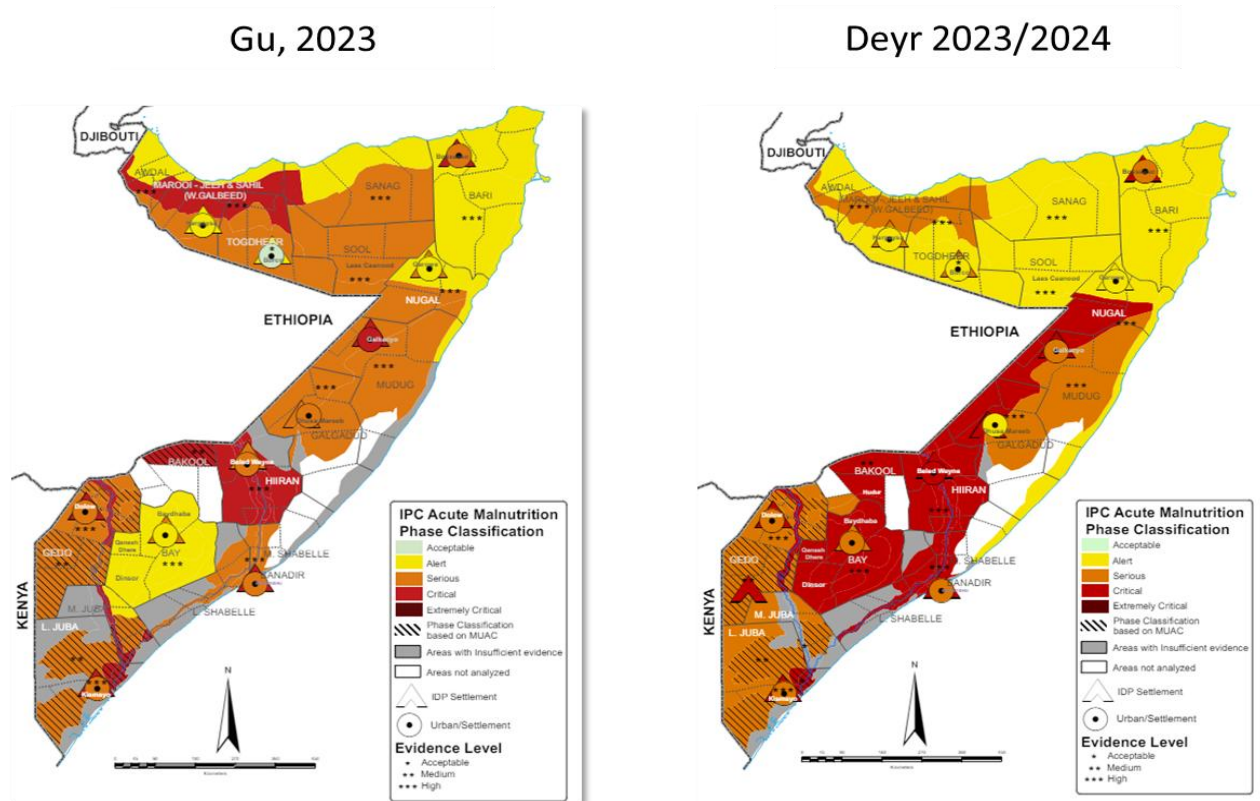
<sup>35</sup> IPC Food Security & Nutrition Snapshot March-June 2023: (<https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-ipc-food-security-nutrition-snapshot-march-june-2023-published-april-25-2023>).

<sup>36</sup> UNOCHA, Somalia Situation Report. 2024: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-17-mar-2024>.

<sup>37</sup> IPC, Somalia. IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analysis. 2024: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-ipc-acute-food-insecurity-and-acute-malnutrition-analysis-july-december-2024-published-september-23-2024>.

<sup>38</sup> Trading Economics, Somalia prevalence of anaemia among pregnant women: <https://tradingeconomics.com/somalia/prevalence-of-anemia-among-pregnant-women-percent-wb-data.html>.

**Figure 3: Nutrition situation in Somalia: Gu 2023 and Deyr 2023/2024**



Source: WFP Somalia nutrition assessment.

## Agriculture

14. Agriculture and livestock production account for around 75 percent of Somalia's GDP,<sup>39</sup> although the volume of grain production has declined by almost 60 percent from its 1989 peak of 650,000 metric tons (mt).<sup>40</sup> About 75 percent of the land is owned by smallholders, and 80 percent of the working population is employed in primary agricultural production.<sup>41</sup> Farming is concentrated in the southern part of the country, which has the most fertile land and where irrigation is possible, limiting the extent to which farming can contribute to resilience to shocks. Livestock exports – mainly to Gulf states – are a key source of income and employment, but returns have been impacted in the past by drought.<sup>42</sup>

## Climate change and vulnerability

15. Somalia ranks 178 out of the 185 countries assessed for vulnerability to climate change.<sup>43</sup> Rainfall patterns have become increasingly erratic, with more frequent extreme events (drought and floods),<sup>44</sup> and increased rainfall variability.<sup>45</sup> Climate change effects continue to threaten food security and increase conflict over scarce resources. This has put a massive strain on living conditions, impoverishing and displacing hundreds of thousands of nomadic and rural populations.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Somalia National Development Plan 2020-2024 and the World Bank.

<sup>41</sup> African Union. 2022. Dakar 2 Somalia Country Food and Agriculture Delivery Compact.

<sup>42</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Global Information and Early Warning System: <https://www.fao.org/gIEWS/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=SOM&lang=en>.

<sup>43</sup> Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative. n.d. Rankings: <https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/rankings/>. The index ranks a country's exposure, sensitivity and ability to adapt to the negative impact of climate change.

<sup>44</sup> Localized floods during the 2024 Gu rainy season affected 268,000 people and damaged livelihood assets.

<sup>45</sup> World Bank, Climate Change Portal: <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/somalia>.

<sup>46</sup> Somalia Voluntary National Review 2022.

## Education

16. Somalia has some of the lowest education indicators in the world. The national education budget stands at only 3 percent of government spending, far below the 15-20 percent international benchmark.<sup>47</sup> Out-of-school children were estimated at 3.6 to 4.9 million and nearly 2.4 million children required humanitarian assistance to enrol, return to, or remain in school in 2024.<sup>48</sup> The demand for education will continue to intensify as Somalia's population is projected to nearly double by 2050.<sup>49,50</sup>

17. The latest available data<sup>51</sup> show that the net primary school enrolment rate<sup>52</sup> was 37 percent in 2023 (up from 31 percent in 2022), with boys being six times more likely to be enrolled than girls.<sup>53</sup> The main driver of non-enrolment and school drop-out is the high cost of sending a child to school, which disproportionately affects displaced and crisis-affected communities and those in areas with political instability.<sup>54</sup> Other driving factors are the severe lack of school infrastructure and shortage of qualified teachers.<sup>55</sup>

## Gender and inclusion

18. Restrictive social and cultural norms reinforce strict gender roles that ultimately disadvantage women and girls. Somalia has a gender inequality index of 0.674, placing it the fourth lowest globally for gender equality.<sup>56</sup> Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against women and girls, female genital mutilation and cutting, rape and child marriage are widespread.<sup>57</sup> Of the reported cases, about 96 percent of survivors are women and girls of whom 76 percent are internally displaced.<sup>58</sup> A total of 17 percent of Somali girls are married before the age of 15, and 36 percent are married before the age of 18,<sup>59</sup> while boys marry at much higher ages.<sup>60</sup> The country lacks a comprehensive legal framework to protect the rights of women and girls.<sup>61</sup> Customary laws, often governed by male elders, disadvantage women by denying them equitable rights to inheritance, marriage and property ownership.<sup>62</sup>

19. Gender disparities also hinder women from accessing social services. Women have difficulties accessing healthcare due to the role men play in their health decisions;<sup>63</sup> and they have lower literacy levels

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<sup>47</sup> The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 10 November 2021: (<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-member-states-unite-increase-investment-education>) .

<sup>48</sup> Somalia Education Cluster. May 2024. Education Cluster 2024 HNRP Snapshot:

<https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/education-cluster-2024-hnrrp-snapshot-may-2024>.

<sup>49</sup> Population Pyramids of the World: <https://www.populationpyramid.net/somalia/2050/>.

<sup>50</sup> WFP presentation to ET, 2024.

<sup>51</sup> The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Somalia Country Office Annual Report 2023: <https://www.unicef.org/media/152286/file/Somalia-2023-COAR.pdf> .

<sup>52</sup> Enrolment increases during the 10 to 19-year age range, driven by many Somalis believing that school should more properly start at a later age. (Somalia National Development Plan 2020-2024).

<sup>53</sup> Gender Parity Index rose from 0.80 in 2022 to 0.84 in 2023.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Faqih A.H., 2020. 'A study analysis on challenges and opportunities for Somali education system (2016–2021)'. *Mogadishu University Journal* Issue 6, 2020.

<sup>56</sup> UNDP. Human Development Report 2023/2024.

<sup>57</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) in Somalia. 2024. International Women's Day 2024: advancing gender equality in Somalia's health workforce.

<sup>58</sup> UNSOM. 2018. Somalia Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2020.

<sup>59</sup> *Girls not Brides*. n.d. Somalia: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/somalia/>.

<sup>60</sup> Directorate of National Statistics. 2020. Somali Health Demographic Survey.

<sup>61</sup> Save the Children. 2024. Joining Forces Alliance: Somalia Advocacy on Combatting Violence Against Women and Girls in Somalia.

<sup>62</sup> The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office for Somalia, Gender in Somalia (Undated). <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/so/Gender-in-Somalia-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>63</sup> World Bank. 2022. Somalia Policy Notes for the New Government.



(28 percent) than men (54 percent) with the gap being wider in rural and displaced populations.<sup>64</sup> More than half of young women have no training and are unemployed or engage in informal enterprises.<sup>65</sup>

20. People with disabilities are marginalized in economic activities and in access to social services.<sup>66</sup> They constitute 11.7 percent of the population aged over 18 years; with more women (12.6 percent) having disabilities than men (10.5 percent). People with disabilities have lower literacy levels (34.1 percent) than those without (56.0 percent); and higher unemployment rates (20.3 percent) compared to those without (14.8 percent). Mobile phone ownership rate is also lower among people with disabilities (79.2 percent) compared to those without (92.1 percent).<sup>67</sup>

### **Migration, refugees, and internally displaced persons**

21. A combination of weak governance, conflict and violence, clan structure, high levels of poverty, lack of economic opportunities and climatic shocks has resulted in over 30 years of migration and internal displacement in Somalia.<sup>68</sup> Minorities in Somalia are most exposed to internal displacement.<sup>69</sup> In addition, a large part of the country, especially in south central Somalia is controlled by the Al Shabaab militia group and people in these areas are often forced to move to safer areas in search of humanitarian assistance.<sup>70</sup>

22. By June 2024, the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) had risen to a record 3.86 million, some of whom have been displaced multiple times by conflict and climate-related factors.<sup>71, 72</sup> Most internally displaced people move to urban areas where they can access basic services and assistance. There are an estimated 2,400 IDP sites, 85 percent of which are located on private land with unclear or precarious tenure arrangements.<sup>73</sup> Other persons of concern in the country include 95,181 returnees,<sup>74</sup> 18,599 refugees, and 20,727 asylum seekers. Most refugees and asylum seekers are from Ethiopia (65 percent) and Yemen (29 percent), while returnees are mainly from Kenya and Yemen.<sup>75</sup>

### **Humanitarian access**

23. Key constraints for humanitarian access include: military operations and hostilities between clan militias; access and movement restrictions for humanitarian personnel or goods imposed by armed groups; attacks on aid personnel and assets; and restrictions on, or obstruction of, conflict-affected people from accessing services and assistance.<sup>76, 77, 78</sup> Unexploded ordinance also disrupts humanitarian activities and

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<sup>64</sup> UNDP Country Office for Somalia, Gender in Somalia (Undated):

<https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/so/Gender-in-Somalia-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>65</sup> World Bank. 2024. Examples to accelerate gender equality in Africa abound: We could apply them to Somalia.

<sup>66</sup> Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, 2024. National Disability Report.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). 2023. Country Profile – Somalia.

<sup>69</sup> Minority clans comprising people of diverse origins, religions and occupations, suffer from historical marginalization and exclusion from mainstream economic, social and political life and are often exposed to inter-clan disagreements, which lead to violent conflicts and contribute to the displacement of people. Minority groups include: i) the Bantu (or Jareer) who are mainly farmers residing in southern Somalia; the Midgan, Tumul and Yirbo. Originally hunters, leatherworkers and blacksmiths, they are scattered throughout Somalia especially Somaliland and Puntland; ii) the Banadiri, who are of Arab origin, living in coastal cities of southern Somalia; and iii) religious minorities that include a small Christian population and minorities within Islam.

<sup>70</sup> The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2024. Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan – Somalia.

<sup>71</sup> The International Organization for Migration (IOM). 2023. Displacement in Somalia Reaches Record High 3.8 million.

<sup>72</sup> WFP. Annual country report 2023 – Somalia.

<sup>73</sup> Refugees International. 2023. No Going Back: The New Urban Face of Internal Displacement in Somalia.

<sup>74</sup> Between 2014 and 2024, UNHCR has recorded 139,078 refugee returnees, mainly from Kenya and Yemen.

<sup>75</sup> UNHCR. 2024. [UNHCR Somalia - Operational Update June 2024.pdf](#).

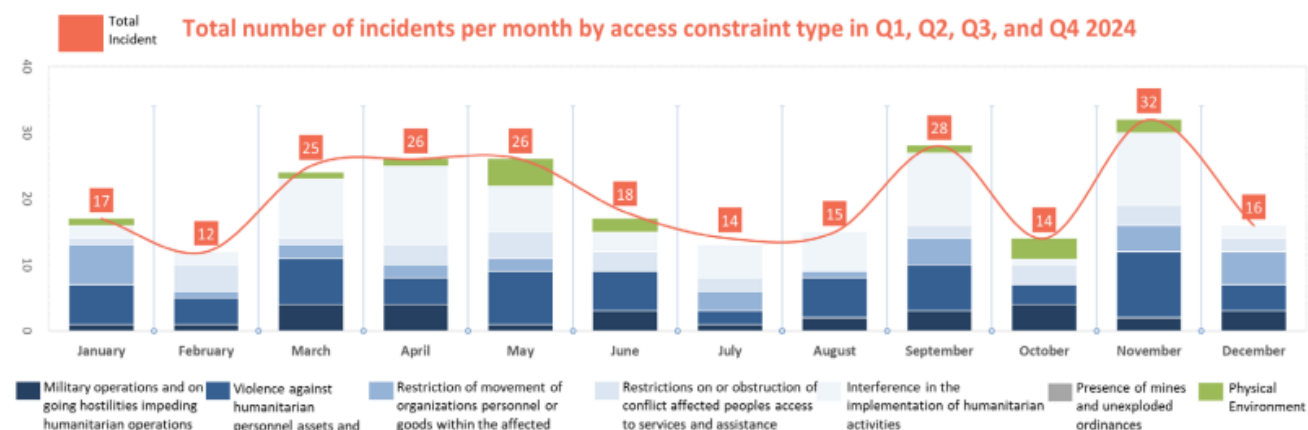
<sup>76</sup> Human Rights Watch. 2024. Events of 2023 – Somalia.

<sup>77</sup> 1,300 civilians were killed between January and September 2023. 61 humanitarian personnel were killed, injured, kidnapped or physically attacked in 2023.

<sup>78</sup> OCHA Somalia. 2023. Annual Humanitarian Access Overview.

access.<sup>79</sup> For example, in 2024, 23 out of 74 districts in Somalia were categorized as “hard-to-reach”.<sup>80</sup> A major conflict actor is that the Al-Shabaab armed group controls parts of rural central, southern and western Somalia and makes these areas inaccessible to most humanitarian actors.<sup>81</sup> Figure 4 shows the magnitude of various constraints that hindered humanitarian actors from accessing communities in need of assistance in 2024.<sup>82</sup>

**Figure 4: Total number of incidents per month by access constraint type affecting all humanitarian actors in 2024**



Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Somalia, Humanitarian Access Snapshot.

## 1.3. Subject being evaluated

### 1.3.1 Strategic focus of the ICSP and CSP

24. The subject of this evaluation is the WFP Somalia Country Strategic Plan (2022-2025) and its evolution from the Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019-2021). The ICSP was approved by the WFP Executive Board in November 2018 and had six strategic outcomes (SOs) and nine activities (Annex 9).<sup>83</sup> The Executive Board approved the CSP in November 2021 and it had five strategic outcomes and nine activities. The CSP built on the strategic orientation of the ICSP by prioritizing the response to humanitarian emergencies while aiming to consolidate and scale up resilience and livelihood-building and capacity strengthening of government institutions.

25. The CSP was designed to enhance interlinkages across all strategic outcomes. People who were food and nutrition insecure and living in disaster-affected areas supported under SO1 were to be connected to nutrition programmes and a shock-responsive safety net under SO2, and further assisted in building assets and livelihoods under SO3 to enable them to develop shock-responsive resilience. Under SO3, smallholder farmers were expected to deliver nutritious food to the market and meet demand from the home-grown school feeding (HGSF) programme. Capacity strengthening of government institutions (SO4) was integrated into all other strategic outcomes, while SO5 was to support the humanitarian community, including WFP, to deliver humanitarian assistance in a timely manner. The CSP theory of change (ToC), reconstructed for the evaluation, depicting these interlinkages and the change pathway from activities to outcomes, is presented in Annex 10. The CSP outcomes and activities are shown in Table 1 below.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> OCHA, 2024. Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan – Somalia.

<sup>81</sup> European Asylum Support Office. 2021. Somalia Actors.

<sup>82</sup> OCHA Somalia. 2024. Humanitarian access snapshot 1 October to 31 December 2024.

<sup>83</sup> WFP Somalia Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019-2021).

**Table 1: Somalia Country Strategic Plan (2022–2025) strategic outcomes, activities and implementation modalities**

Focus area	Strategic outcomes	Activities	Modality
Crisis response	SO1: Food-insecure and nutrition-insecure people, in disaster-affected areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food and specialized nutritious foods that meet their basic food and nutritional needs, during and in the aftermath of shocks.	Activity 1: Provide integrated food and nutritional assistance including school feeding in emergency as well as early recovery and emergency livelihood support to crisis-affected people such as returning refugees, IDPs and people living with HIV.	Food Cash-based transfers (CBT) Capacity strengthening
Resilience building	SO2: Vulnerable people in targeted areas have improved nutrition and resilience, and benefit from inclusive access to integrated basic social services, shock-responsive safety nets, and enhanced national capacity to build human capital, all year round.	Activity 2: Provide conditional and unconditional food or cash-based food assistance and nutrition-sensitive messaging to food-insecure people through reliable safety nets, including home-grown school feeding.  Activity 3: Provide an integrated nutrition support and malnutrition prevention and treatment package to targeted vulnerable people.	Food CBT Capacity strengthening
Resilience building	SO3: National institutions, private sector, smallholder farmers, and food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations in Somalia benefit from climate-smart, productive, resilient, inclusive, and nutritious food systems by 2030.	Activity 4: Provide an integrated package of livelihood support activities, anticipatory actions and services, skills, assets and infrastructure to households and communities to strengthen their resilience and food systems.	Food CBT Capacity strengthening
Resilience building	SO4: National institutions and government agencies in Somalia benefit from strengthened capacities, policies and systems by 2025.	Activity 5: Provide technical support to national and subnational actors that strengthens their capacities to develop and implement peacebuilding, hunger-reducing, national policies.	Capacity strengthening
Crisis response	SO5: The humanitarian community in Somalia is better able to reach vulnerable people and respond to needs throughout the year. <sup>84</sup>	Activity 6: Provide air transport services (passengers and light cargo) to the humanitarian community. Activity 7: Provide mandated logistics services to the humanitarian community through the coordination mechanism of the logistics cluster. Activity 8: Provide on-demand services to the humanitarian community. Activity 9: Provide mandated emergency telecommunications services to the humanitarian community through the coordination mechanism of the emergency telecommunications cluster (added in December 2022 through budget revision 1 (BR 01))	Service delivery

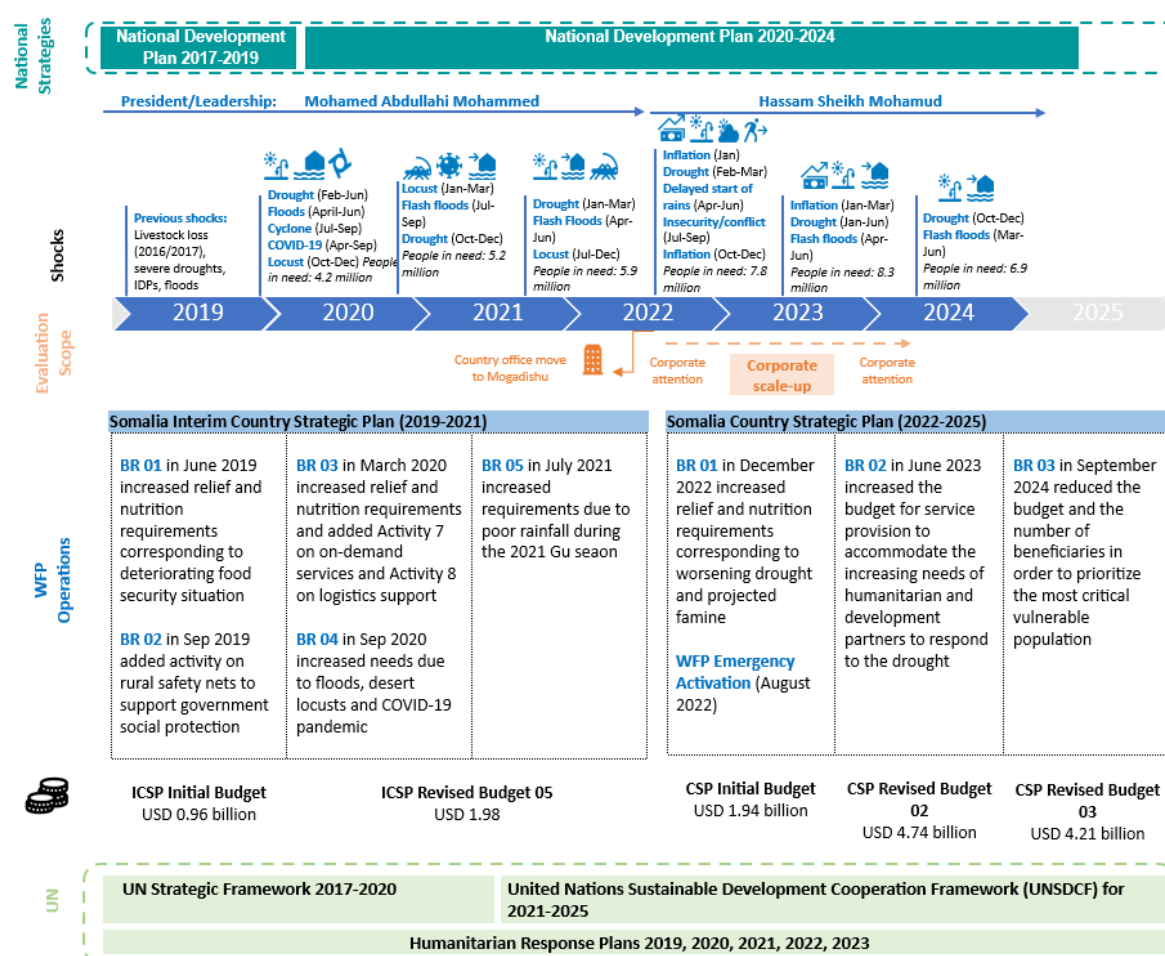
Source: Somalia CSP BR 03 Narrative 09 July 2024.

### 1.3.2 Timeline of key elements of ICSP and CSP context

Significant elements of the ICSP and CSP context (Figure 5) include: National Development Plans 8 and 9 spanning the ICSP and CSP timeframes respectively; and the transition from the first to the second Federal Government in 2021. During this period, the ICSP also underwent a process of alignment with the United Nations Strategic Framework (2017-2020) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSCDF) (2021-2025), and annual humanitarian response plans.

<sup>84</sup> See Annex 15 for detailed performance assessment of SO5.

**Figure 5: Timeline of significant elements of the context of ICSP and CSP**



Source: Evaluation team.

### 1.3.3 Overview of ICSP and CSP budget and funding

26. The ICSP had a needs-based plan (NBP) of USD 961 million at design stage, which was almost doubled to USD 1,982 million following five budget revisions (BRs) during implementation.<sup>85</sup> The budget revisions sought to respond to the increase of people affected by crisis during implementation and the need to scale up support through the safety net programme.<sup>86</sup> The ICSP needs-based plan was 89.2 percent funded (see Annex 9). The country strategic plan had a needs-based plan of USD 1.9 billion at the design stage and it was subjected to three budget revisions increasing the budget to USD 4.2. billion at the end of 2024.

<sup>85</sup> See Annex 11 for the ICSP budget revisions.

<sup>86</sup> ICSP budget revisions.

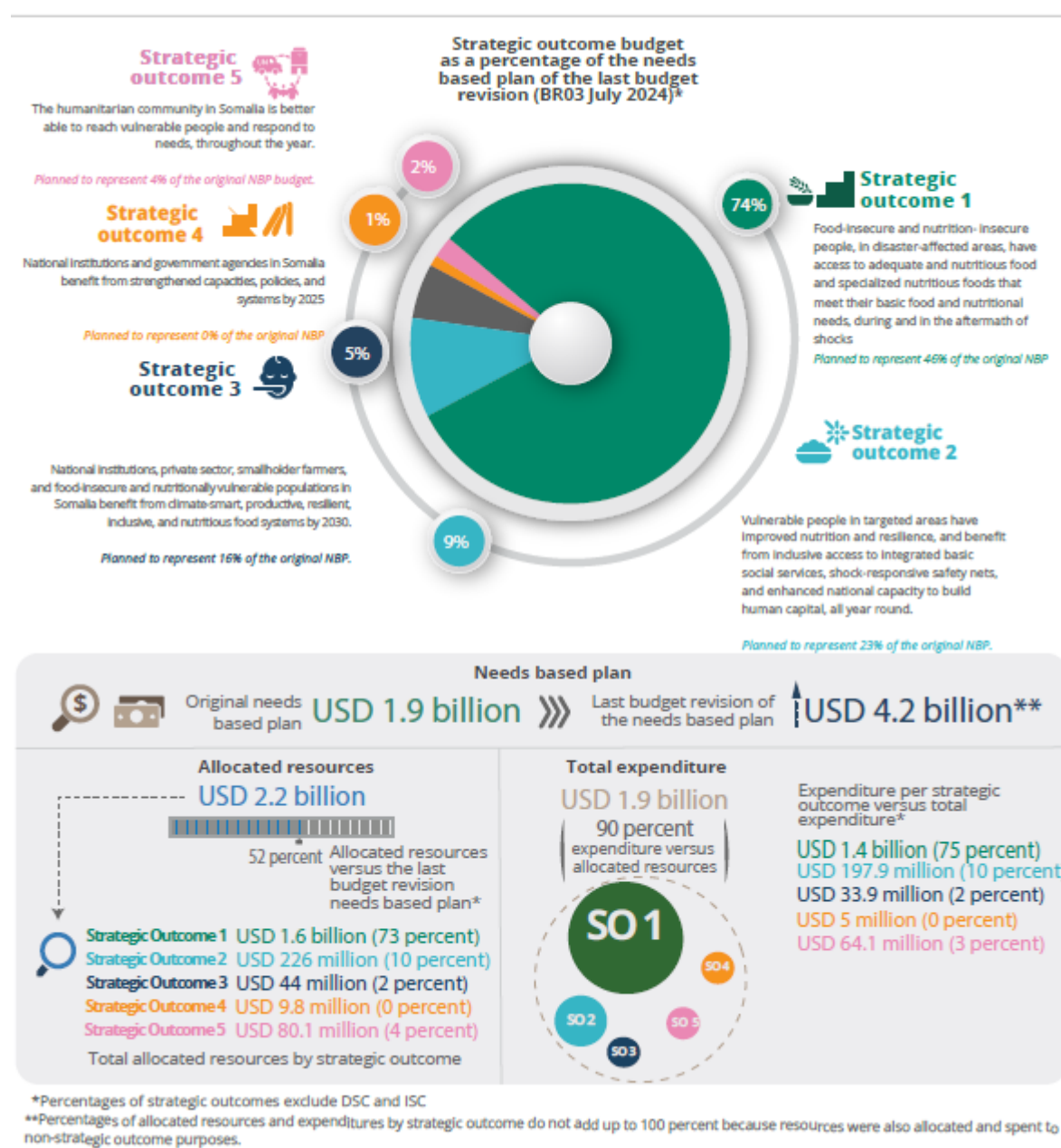
**Table 2: CSP financial overview 2022–2024**

Strategic outcome	Activity	Needs-based plan	Allocated resources	% of NBP allocated resources
SO1	1	3,098,788,282	1,611,369,523	52%
SO2	2	298,603,861	195,191,454	65%
SO2	3	64,859,747	30,814,424	48%
SO3	4	202,140,178	44,073,222	22%
SO4	5	22,424,182	9,802,118	44%
SO5	6	71,603,206	48,375,923	68%
SO5	7	21,519,104	14,332,915	67%
SO5	8	5,859,595	17,393,950	297%
SO5	9	2,712,473	-	0%
Non-activity specific			21,697,608	
Direct support		166,421,720	96,028,825	58%
Indirect support		256,672,444	115,069,592	45%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,211,604,793</b>	<b>2,204,149,552</b>	<b>52%</b>

Source: Integrated Roadmap Analytics – Annual country report (ACR)1 standard country report as of December 2024.  
Data extracted in December 2024.

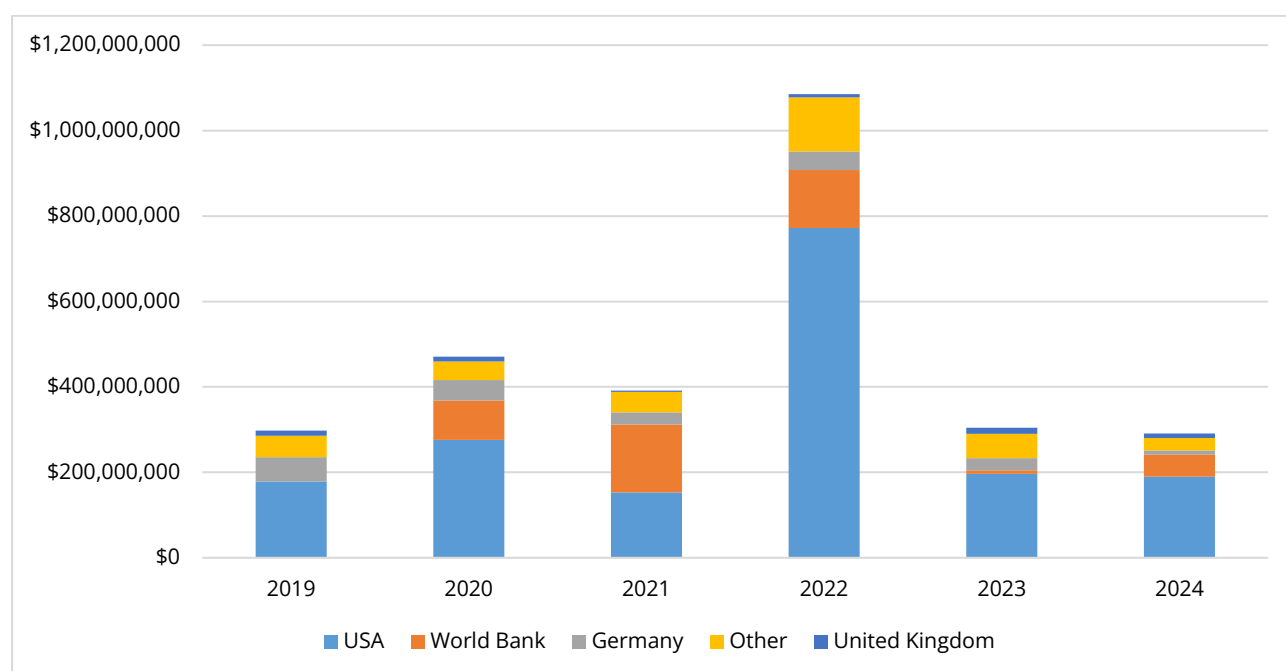
27. As shown in Table 2 and illustrated further in Figure 6, the needs-based plan was 52 percent funded as of December 2024. Strategic outcome 1 accounted for three quarters of the needs-based budget, allocations and expenditures, followed by strategic outcome 2. Strategic outcomes 3 and 4 accounted for very minor parts of the overall budget, allocations and expenditures. Overall, the funding received, and expenditures, mirrored the proportions foreseen for the different strategic outcomes in the needs-based plan.

**Figure 6: Somalia Country Strategic Plan (2022-2025) budget and expenditure by strategic outcome**



28. Donor funding for WFP Somalia remained between USD 300 million and USD 450 million annually between 2019 and 2024 except in 2022, when funding increased to over USD 1 billion due to the support for famine prevention. The United States of America (USA) is the most significant donor to the CSP (Figure 7) followed by the World Bank funding, which was channelled through the Federal Government of Somalia to WFP in order for WFP to support the implementation of a national safety net project.

**Figure 7: Donors to the ICSP and CSP**



Source: Distribution contribution and forecast stats 12.02.2024.

### Overview of CSP beneficiaries

29. The number of beneficiaries reached increased over the ICSP and CSP period with slightly more women than men being supported. In the last six years, the lowest number of planned beneficiaries was reached in 2019, while the highest performance was in 2022 when 109 percent of the planned beneficiaries was reached. There are, however, variations in the achievement of the planned beneficiary target by age and gender across the years, largely attributed to (as discussed in the findings) the availability of funding.

**Table 3: Summary of planned and actual beneficiaries by age during the ICSP (2019-2021)**

Beneficiaries	2019			2020			2021		
	Planned	Actual	%	Planned	Actual	%	Planned	Actual	%
Children (0-23 months)	665,264	530,084	79.7%	462,929	692,218	149.5%	884,614	646,111	73.0%
Children (24-59 months)	1,135,146	781,53	68.8%	766,991	871,646	113.6%	1,411,618	827,683	58.6%
Children (5-11 years)	649,352	417,697	64.3%	574,92	686,733	119.4%	208,577	800,904	384.0%
Children (12-17 years)	544,791	359,046	65.9%	482,119	559,151	116.0%	244,852	632,36	258.3%
Adults (18-59 years)	3,020,820	1,481,049	49.0%	2,380,203	1,755,226	73.7%	2,485,269	2,291,815	92.2%
Adults (60+ years)	84,893	70,213	82.7%	75,267	96,512	128.2%		120,135	
<b>Total beneficiaries</b>	<b>6,100,265</b>	<b>3,639,619</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	<b>4,742,429</b>	<b>4,661,486</b>	<b>98.3%</b>	<b>5,234,929</b>	<b>5,319,008</b>	<b>101.6%</b>

Source: CM-R001 – Annual country beneficiaries, December 2024.

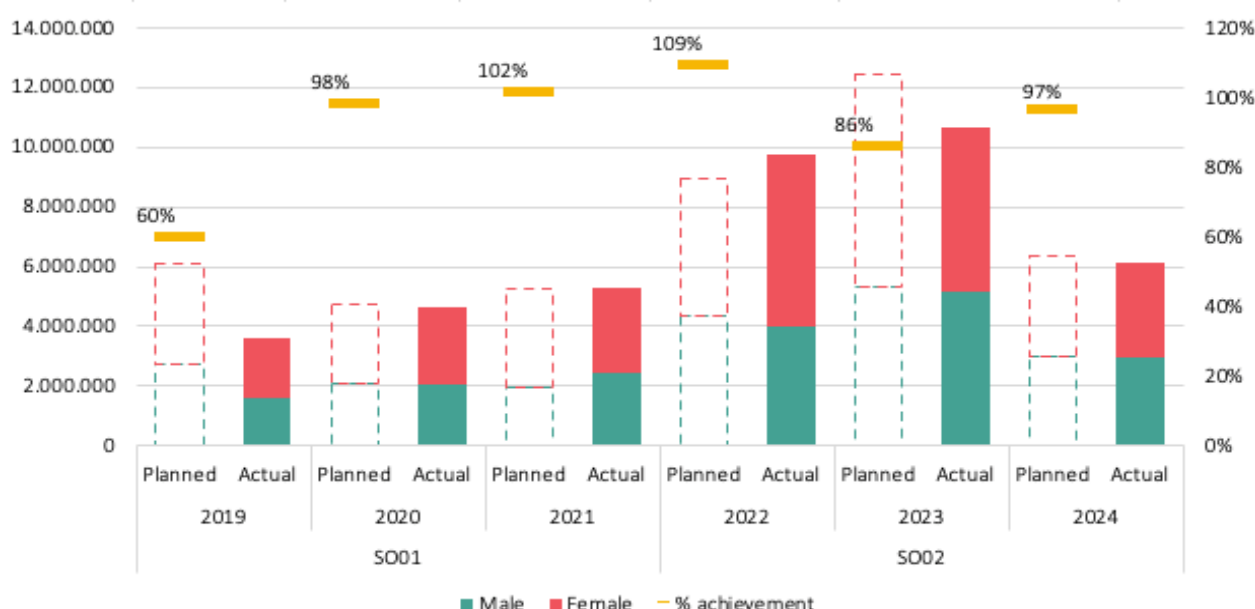


**Table 4: Summary of planned and actual beneficiaries by age during the CSP (2022-2024)<sup>87</sup>**

Beneficiaries	2022			2023			2024		
	Planned	Actual	%	Planned	Actual	%	Planned	Actual	%
Children (0-23 months)	2.043.943	1.460.278	71.4%	2.878.149	991.424	34.4%	661.901	1.120.444	169.3%
Children (24-59 months)	824.041	3.660.227	444.2%	2.010.113	1.698.665	84.5%	843.378	1.287.716	152.7%
Children (5-11 years)	1.523.060	982.149	64.5%	1.515.601	1.733.774	114.4%	964.441	810.064	84.0%
Children (12-17 years)	1.271.007	867.637	68.3%	1.258.218	1.369.175	108.8%	770.725	639.725	83.0%
Adults (18-59 years)	3.081.146	2.674.072	86.8%	4.561.724	4.591.646	100.7%	2.988.755	2.183.053	73.0%
Adults (60+ years)	201.825	111.467	55.2%	203.333	260.023	127.9%	145.400	114.235	78.6%
<b>Total beneficiaries</b>	<b>8.945.021</b>	<b>9.755.830</b>	<b>109.1%</b>	<b>12.427.138</b>	<b>10.644.707</b>	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>6.374.600</b>	<b>6.155.237</b>	<b>96.6%</b>

Source: CM-R001 – Annual country beneficiaries, December 2024.

**Figure 8: Beneficiaries by sex**



Source: CM-R001 – Annual country beneficiaries, December 2024.

## 1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical considerations

**30. Methodological approach and evaluation criteria:** The evaluation applied a theory-based approach, based on the reconstructed theory of change (Annex 10), mixed methods and an evaluation matrix (Annex 4). The theory of change informed analysis of the relevance, coherence and effectiveness of the CSP. The mixed methods approach involved the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources. The evaluation matrix set out evaluation questions and subquestions guiding data collection, analysis and reporting. The evaluation questions (detailed in Annex 4) are standardized for CSPEs and broadly cover: relevance (EQ1); effectiveness and sustainability (EQ2); efficiency (EQ3); and factors explaining the performance of WFP (EQ4).

<sup>87</sup>Note: unique beneficiaries by strategic outcome are not available for 2024.

31. **Data collection:** Data were collected from multiple sources including documents, key informants and focus group discussions. A total of 249 key informants were interviewed, selected from federal and state governments and local authorities; WFP staff at country, area and field offices; other United Nations agencies; cooperating partners; donors, civil society and the private sector. In addition, 259 people, mainly beneficiaries for activities under strategic outcomes 1, 2 and 3, participated in focus group discussions.

32. **Key limitations:** A key limitation of this evaluation was the incomplete data for some of the output and outcome indicators particularly for SO3 and the inappropriate output and outcome indicators for SO4.<sup>88</sup> SO1 and SO2 data were not disaggregated by state or region to assess whether there were any variations in the performance of the relief and nutritional programmes across the country. The evaluation team mitigated these gaps by using qualitative data to identify the results achieved, although these could not be quantified.

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<sup>88</sup> SO4 had two output indicators, which were not covering all the five capacity strengthening domains (policy development and implementation, systems strengthening, human resources capacities, best and appropriate practices, and the “whole-of-society” approach).

## 2. Evaluation findings

### 2.1. EQ 1: to what extent and in what ways is the CSP evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity in Somalia?

#### EQ 1.1 To what extent were the designs of the ICSP and CSP and their consecutive budget revisions informed by credible evidence and strategically focused on addressing the food security and nutrition situation in Somalia?

**Finding 1.1a: The design of ICSP and CSP activities and outcomes were informed by evidence drawn from evaluations of previous WFP programmes, and assessments of the food security and nutrition situation. However, the ICSP and CSP lacked a more systematic analysis to inform capacity strengthening of government ministries.**

33. The design of the ICSP and the CSP were informed by multiple assessments and evaluations. The ICSP design was informed by: the 2017 drought impact and needs assessment;<sup>89</sup> the 2017 country programme portfolio evaluation;<sup>90</sup> the 2015 mid-term operations evaluation;<sup>91</sup> and the school meals strategic review,<sup>92</sup> while the CSP was informed by: the 2020 United Nations Somalia common country analysis (CCA), the integrated context analysis (ICA) of 2020;<sup>93</sup> and lessons learned from and analysis of data for the ICSP.<sup>94</sup>

34. The assessments informed the organization's choice of modalities in Somalia and the overarching positioning of WFP in Somalia with regards to the work of other United Nations agencies to address food security and nutrition challenges.

35. Specifically, the ICSP design was adapted as follows:

- It integrated the strengthening of the early warning systems and development of food security strategy in SO1 to improve the country's response to crisis.
- Under SO2, social protection support was introduced with a focus on piloting a safety net programme to a vulnerable population in urban areas, specifically the Benadir region.
- It integrated nutrition messages (social behaviour change communication (SBCC)) into the malnutrition prevention and treatment programme and expanded the use of digital beneficiary registration under SO3. Under the same strategic outcome, the school meals programme was re-oriented to contribute to the improvement of education outcomes.
- The design of SO4 activities included post-harvest management, improvement of feeder roads, climate-smart agricultural practices, the rehabilitation of existing, and the development of new, water sources, and supporting vulnerable youth and women to engage in economic activities.
- Under SO5, capacity strengthening interventions targeting government ministries were integrated in the CSP.
- Overall, delivery modalities were diversified, encouraging the greater use of cash-based transfers.

36. The CSP was adapted to the recommendations of the relevant assessments as follows:

- The overall strategic orientation of the CSP was to support the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus in Somalia and for that HDP nexus to be delivered in an integrated way through

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<sup>89</sup> Federal Government of Somalia. 2018. Somalia Drought Impact and Needs Assessment, Volume 1 synthesis report.

<sup>90</sup> WFP Somalia. 2017. WFP Somalia Country Programme Portfolio Evaluation.

<sup>91</sup> WFP Somalia. 2015. Mid-term operation evaluation of PRRO 200844.

<sup>92</sup> WFP Somalia. 2017. Strategic review of school meals programme.

<sup>93</sup> World Food Programme. 2020. The Integrated Context Analysis for Somalia.

<sup>94</sup> Achievements, lessons learned and strategic focus for WFP through the ICSP 2019-2021.

working with the Government and other partners across all strategic outcomes based on lessons learned from the ICSP implementation.

- Under SO1, food assistance and nutrition support were maintained due to the anticipated recurrence of droughts and floods in Somalia. However, the CSP was designed to link the beneficiaries of SO1 to resilience and livelihood interventions under SO2 (safety net programmes) and SO3 (climate-smart food systems).
- Under SO2, the CSP was designed to scale up the safety net programme to cover rural areas, and the school meals programme was to be transformed to a cash-based home-grown school feeding programme fostering market links between schools, local farmers and retailers.
- WFP was to continue supporting the grain and fresh produce value chains under SO3, with improved post-harvest management solutions and climate-smart agricultural production practices, linking farmers to markets using the digital solution introduced under the ICSP (the “e-Shop”).
- Capacity strengthening (SO4) was adapted to lessons learned from the ICSP by balancing the support to the Federal Government and state governments and transitioning from supporting specific activities requested by the Government to focused capacity strengthening based on comprehensive project proposals. However, a systematic assessment of institutional capacity gaps to shape the capacity strengthening strategic outcome at the time of CSP design was not undertaken. Even though a capacity strengthening strategic framework and capacity strengthening concept notes for individual ministries were developed during the CSP implementation, these also did not fully mitigate this gap as they were not based on a comprehensive capacity assessment.<sup>95</sup>
- As a lead humanitarian agency in Somalia, WFP designed its CSP SO5 to continue its support to other humanitarian actors and the Government with air transport and to the logistics cluster to ensure timely response to crisis in Somalia.

### **EQ 1.2 To what extent and in what ways were the ICSP and CSP designed to support national priorities, the wider United Nations cooperation framework and humanitarian response plans and to what extent were they based on the WFP comparative advantage in Somalia?**

**Finding 1.2a: The ICSP and CSP designs were aligned to and leveraged WFP capacity and experience in humanitarian assistance, directly supporting the humanitarian response plan (HRP) priorities, while making significant contributions to the humanitarian response plans through support to a large proportion of the population identified for humanitarian assistance in Somalia and complementing efforts of other United Nations agencies.**

37. Both the ICSP and CSP were designed to support the priorities outlined in the humanitarian needs overview (HNOs) and humanitarian response plans by providing relief assistance to food-insecure populations (SO1) and air transport and logistics support to humanitarian actors to reach vulnerable populations in a timely manner (strategic outcomes 6 and 5 of the ICSP and CSP respectively). WFP concentrated its efforts on humanitarian response, making a significant contribution to humanitarian needs overviews and humanitarian response plans as reflected through spending the highest level of resources under the ICSP (64 percent) and CSP (77 percent) in SO1.

38. WFP also complemented the efforts and filled gaps in areas where other United Nations agencies were absent or had less capacity.<sup>96</sup> These efforts included: partnering with United Nations agencies like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support vulnerable refugees impacted by COVID-19; addressing moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) while the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) focused on severe acute malnutrition (SAM). This is in addition to co-leading the food security and

<sup>95</sup> Review of the capacity strengthening strategic framework and individual ministries capacity strengthening concept notes and interview of government officials and WFP staff.

<sup>96</sup> Annual country reports 2019-2023; KII with WFP Staff, UN agencies and donors.

nutrition clusters coordinating the efforts of humanitarian actors in Somalia to deliver humanitarian response.<sup>97</sup>

**Finding 1.2b: The CSP was well aligned with priorities set out in the National Development Plan 9 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021-2025) in economic development, institutional strengthening, social and human development, infrastructure and resilience pillars. The contribution of WFP Somalia built on and exploited its comparative advantage especially in the delivery of social safety nets and the building of institutional capacity.**

39. The ICSP supported the implementation of priorities set out in the Somalia National Development Plan 8 (NDP 8 2017-2019), particularly priorities for economic development, institutional strengthening, social and human development, infrastructure improvement and building of resilience capacity.<sup>98</sup> For instance, ICSP SO3 contributed to the social and human capital pillar through the malnutrition prevention and treatment programme. SO4 was aligned with priorities in the economic development pillar through supporting local agricultural and livestock production, and improving post-harvest management and market access for farmers.<sup>99</sup> It also supported the infrastructure pillar through rehabilitation of ports such as Kismayo and Galmudug.<sup>100</sup> SO5 was aligned with the institutional development pillar through support to the Government to strengthen policies, systems and human resource capacity, particularly in the social protection, nutrition and agriculture sectors.<sup>101</sup>

40. The CSP aimed to support the national priorities set out in the National Development Plan 9 (NDP 9 2020-2024). The economic development (pillar 4) priorities were supported through SO3 climate-smart food systems interventions, while the social development priorities were supported through the school feeding programme (SO2), malnutrition prevention and treatment programme (strategic outcomes 1 to 3) and safety nets programme (SO2).<sup>102</sup>

41. The alignment of the CSP to national priorities set by the Federal Government does not automatically translate into alignment with state-level priorities. WFP engages with the states and local authorities to align interventions to state and community needs.<sup>103</sup> In this regard, the CSP supported state priorities outlined in the state development plans for Puntland and Somaliland.<sup>104</sup> WFP also involved relevant government ministries in the programming process for: agriculture,<sup>105</sup> livestock<sup>106</sup> and fisheries;<sup>107</sup> nutrition, education and social protection;<sup>108</sup> and priorities in the identification of local needs, targeting and monitoring of its programmes.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> See Annex 13 for the detailed review of ICSP alignment to NDP 8 and NDP 9.

<sup>99</sup> ICSP 2019-2021; Achievements and Lessons Learned and Strategic Changes for the CSP.

<sup>100</sup> Annual country reports.

<sup>101</sup> ICSP 2019-2021; Achievements and Lessons Learned and Strategic Changes for the CSP.

<sup>102</sup> CSP 2022-2025; Annual country reports.

<sup>103</sup> Interviews with government officials and WFP staff.

<sup>104</sup> The Somaliland development plan 3 was completed after the CSP had been approved and WFP held discussions with government during the CSP roadshow to align the CSP to the state development plan. In Puntland, the WFP held similar discussions with Puntland State Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.

<sup>105</sup> WFP is collaborating closely with the ministries of agriculture in the states targeted for climate-smart agriculture to align its programme to local priorities including identifying viable agricultural value chains and identifying the needs of targeted farmers such as inputs, skills training and infrastructure.

<sup>106</sup> WFP is collaborating with the Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range to support the pastoralist communities adapt livestock production practices to climate change.

<sup>107</sup> Support to the fisheries sector started in 2024 in Puntland and this was designed through a participatory process involving WFP, government, the fishing community and a private micro-finance organization.

<sup>108</sup> WFP is working in partnership with state ministries of health, education and labour and social affairs respectively.

<sup>109</sup> Interviews with WFP staff at country office, area office and field offices; government staff at state and district levels.

42. Contributing to the overall efforts of the United Nations system to address barriers to Somalia's sustainable development, the CSP was aligned with strategic outcomes 3 and 4 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The CSP SO3 (food systems) contributed to the cooperation framework outcome 3.2 on improving productive sector value chains through support to smallholder farmers, rehabilitation of water sources and infrastructure and pastoral communities' adaption to climate variability. SO2 contributed to cooperation framework outcome 3.3 on strengthening human capital through interventions such as vocational training and food assistance for assets (FFA), school feeding and safety net. The CSP support to climate-smart agriculture and adaptation to climate variability by pastoral communities was designed to contribute to the cooperation framework outcome 4.2 on reducing people impacted by climate change, while the CSP support for nutrition-sensitive agricultural production and environmentally sustainable food systems contributed to the cooperation framework outcome 4.3 on improving resilience against environmental and conflict-related shocks.

### **EQ 1.3 To what extent is the CSP design internally coherent and based on a clear theory of change and realistic assumptions?**

**Finding 1.3a: The design of the CSP is coherent and is based upon complementarity and linkages between activities and across strategic outcomes, and has largely realistic underlying assumptions.**

43. The reconstructed theory of change, based on wide-ranging interviews and document review,<sup>110</sup> demonstrates a clear pathway from relief to resilience and livelihood building. The five CSP strategic outcomes are designed to be interconnected, intending to address both immediate crisis response and longer-term developmental objectives, creating a logical progression for people receiving emergency intervention under SO1 to being included in social safety nets and nutrition under SO2, and sustainable solutions under SO3.<sup>111</sup>

44. However, some of the underpinning assumptions were not realized (Annex 10). For instance, the assumption that donor funding would be sufficient to support activities under all strategic outcomes did not hold true – with activities under SO2 (school feeding programme) and SO3 (food systems) being particularly under-funded, and therefore implemented at small scale. Donor earmarking of funds for activities in certain areas also impacted the ability of WFP to deliver integrated programming. As a result of these assumptions not holding true, the linkage of beneficiaries from relief to resilience (from SO1 to SO2 and SO3) did not materialize as envisaged in the design.<sup>112</sup>

45. The assumptions – that power dynamics and political stability would not hinder CSP implementation, that stability would improve, and that the Government would demonstrate ownership of and commitment to WFP strategic outcomes – largely held true, but not without considerable effort on the part of WFP. During the CSP period, Somalia experienced a peaceful<sup>113</sup> government transition in 2022, although Al Shabaab remained in control of certain areas of the country and some tensions remained between the federal and state-level governments. These tensions mean that agreements at the federal level are not always accepted at the state level, and WFP is credited for investing time in presenting CSP plans in ways that are acceptable to the latter.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Including WFP Somalia's "Line of Sight" document.

<sup>111</sup> Beyond the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and IPC data, WFP Somalia draws on UN-led assessments (HNO, CCA), drought impact studies, community-based planning, labour market analyses, nutrition gap studies, pilot projects, and inter-agency assessments to inform programming decisions.

<sup>112</sup> Documents review; review of NBP funding and donor funding data; interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>113</sup> The United Nations praised the positive nature of the election and the peaceful transfer of power (*UN News*. 16 May 2022).

<sup>114</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, donors and government officials.

#### **EQ 1.4 To what extent has WFP strategic positioning remained relevant throughout the implementation of the CSP in view of significant contextual changes and did the CSP provide an adequate framework for the corporate scale-up response?**

**Finding 1.4a: WFP positioning remained relevant throughout the CSP implementation largely due to the anticipation of crises such as droughts and floods in the strategic plan design, which enabled WFP to respond with limited need for adaptation.**

46. The most significant contextual change that occurred during the CSP implementation period was the increased severity of the drought in 2022 followed by floods. The CSP had anticipated this risk but not its magnitude, which threatened famine. From a strategic perspective, the CSP design was not affected by this change, but the country office revised the needs-based plan to be able to respond to the increase in the number of crises-affected population by 6.8 million people, bringing the total number of targeted beneficiaries to 11 million. WFP Somalia was able to respond to the threat of famine due to its extensive emergency response infrastructure (as further elaborated in EQ 3.1).<sup>115</sup>

Adjustments under other strategic outcomes included topping-up cash transfers to 1.2 million safety net programme beneficiaries by USD 40 per person. This enabled recipients to withstand the impact of drought. Additionally, beneficiaries in nutrition and food systems programmes meeting SO1 selection criteria received humanitarian food assistance.<sup>116</sup>

**Finding 1.4b: The CSP provided sufficient flexibility to incorporate and support the corporate scale-up response as it anticipated crisis under strategic outcomes 1, 4 and 5.**

47. The CSP served as an adequate strategic framework for the corporate scale-up response in 2022-2023 and provided adequate flexibility for incorporating and supporting the corporate response in 2022. Strategic outcomes 1 and 5 were designed to respond to the recurring crisis in Somalia, while SO4 provided support to key government ministries – the Somalia Disaster Management Agency and the state ministries of humanitarian affairs and disaster management – to coordinate humanitarian response. Thus, no changes were needed to the CSP strategic outcomes to accommodate the corporate scale-up.

48. Based on in-depth data analysis during the CSP design, WFP anticipated crisis and the need for a large-scale humanitarian response. This minimized disruption and facilitated the adaptation of CSP activities to famine response under the corporate scale-up (see EQ 2.2). In addition, this anticipation contributed to the operational readiness of WFP Somalia to respond to crises of varying magnitude by continuously building WFP Somalia capacity.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Budget revision, ACRs and beneficiary data and interviews with government officials, donors, WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>116</sup> Interviews with government officials, donors, WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>117</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and synthesis of data collected from government, donors, cooperating partners and other UN agencies.



## 2.2.EQ 2: What difference did the CSP make to food and nutrition security in Somalia?

### EQ 2.1 To what extent and in what ways did targeting and prioritization of assistance ensure that the communities and individuals most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition were reached and no one was left behind, despite resource, access and other constraints?

**Finding 2.1a: Geographical targeting was enhanced through the use of multiple data sources in addition to the use of the Integrated Phase Classification and was largely appropriate for prioritizing locations with populations with highest levels of acute food insecurity for assistance. However, accurate targeting of vulnerable populations was challenged by the limited accuracy of population data in Somalia, which is further exacerbated by frequent population movements and displacement. Funding and access constraints also limited coverage of identified vulnerable populations.**

49. WFP employed various strategies for targeting and prioritization. WFP aimed to prioritize high-risk areas and vulnerable groups, including women, children, internally displaced people and marginalized communities, applying a two-pronged approach: first at a geographical level, then at a household and community level.

50. Geographical targeting prioritized districts at elevated risk of food insecurity using the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC).<sup>118</sup> Although the IPC data were appropriate in prioritizing districts and estimating the overall population in need by using livelihood zones, it had the potential to leave out some food-insecure locations.<sup>119</sup> Therefore WFP triangulated IPC analysis with data on climate, markets, displacement and nutrition sourced from surveys undertaken by the Somalia Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA), federal member states, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management (Puntland) and its own vulnerability assessments. These served to better understand vulnerabilities and respond to requests from state governments for inclusion of locations not identified through the IPC analysis.<sup>120</sup>

51. However, due to a lack of up-to-date population figures, IPC data were not always accepted by some state governments. For example, discrepancies of 2.2 million people in Somaliland between the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and government estimates of total population meant the Somaliland government viewed WFP figures for people in need of food assistance during crisis as underestimated.<sup>121</sup> The lack of updated population data across Somalia, compounded by challenges reflecting population movements, suggest systemic issues in population accuracy, which are not unique to Somaliland.

52. For nutrition-related targeting, using IPC data, areas with global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates of 15 percent and above, were prioritized, while beneficiaries for malnutrition treatment were selected based on malnutrition screening and assessment of nutritional status.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> IPC data are produced by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit managed by FAO. It provides differentiation between different levels of severity of acute food insecurity, classifying units of analysis in five distinct phases: (1) Minimal/None, (2) Stressed, (3) Crisis, (4) Emergency, (5) Catastrophe/Famine.

<sup>119</sup> Livelihood zones are often relatively static classifications, and rapid changes in population distribution and vulnerability patterns can render them less effective in identifying those most in need in a timely manner. (Source: Key informant interviews with project staff, government officials, FSNAU Updated Somalia Livelihoods Zones Map April 2015).

<sup>120</sup> Interviews with government and WFP staff, community-based targeting standard operating procedures (SOPs) 2023, scorecard targeting SOPs 2023.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

53. The Shock-Responsive Safety Net for Human Capital Project (SNHCP) under SO2 targeted beneficiaries in 21 districts using the District Distress Index<sup>123</sup> (conducted collaboratively by the World Bank and the Federal Government of Somalia.)<sup>124</sup> In geographic targeting, key criteria for selection were security, access and partner capacity to implement.

54. The school feeding programme targeted schools in areas with high food insecurity and vulnerability, including rural areas, IDP camps, host communities and pastoralist settlements.<sup>125</sup> The selection of schools considered location, vulnerability of schoolchildren to food insecurity, existing infrastructure and community support. The selection of schools involved collaboration across WFP, the Ministry of Education and local communities and, largely, schools that met the criteria were selected.<sup>126</sup> Stakeholders, however, expressed concern over limited coverage under the school feeding programme where some schools were left out and, in some instances, children left schools not covered by the programme to move to schools where they had access to school meals.<sup>127</sup>

55. Under SO3, WFP prioritized areas vulnerable to food insecurity and climate shocks<sup>128</sup> and within these areas, vulnerable populations were prioritized with a focus on newly displaced persons, youth and women in locations where farming could be practiced. However, aligning geographical targeting of resilience interventions with geographic targeting of SO1 and SO2 activities was challenging, given geographic earmarking by donors and needing to balance between resilience needs and increasingly challenging climatic conditions.<sup>129</sup>

56. At the community level, the number of beneficiaries per village was defined based on data from needs assessments and vulnerability data collected jointly by WFP, SoDMA and federal member states' project steering committees. Seasonal analysis and response planning workshops undertaken in collaboration with state, regional and district governments and cooperating partners, among other stakeholders, determined the caseloads in each of the targeted locations, while taking into consideration access and resources.<sup>130</sup> In some instances, there were gaps in data resulting in lower beneficiary numbers being identified in certain villages than the actual number of households and individuals in need of assistance.<sup>131</sup>

**Finding 2.1b: WFP Somalia's prioritization decisions, which enabled the organization to reach a higher number of beneficiaries but for a shorter period in the face of inadequate funding, were appropriate. However, the selection process of vulnerable households for the three-month rotation proved difficult due to high levels of food insecurity among the population. This approach also posed challenges in measuring the intervention's impact and trends over time**

57. To a large extent, WFP made appropriate food assistance beneficiary reprioritization decisions in the face of financial constraints. These decisions included the scale-down of geographical coverage of humanitarian assistance and rotation of beneficiaries.<sup>132</sup>

58. WFP addressed the funding shortfall for SO1 in the latter part of 2023 by prioritizing affected populations in IPC 4 and a proportion of those in IPC 3.<sup>133</sup> Due to a further funding shortfall in 2024, WFP

<sup>123</sup> This process considered the number of food-insecure households, the concentration of severe acute malnutrition and proportion of rural population districts with a high distress index.

<sup>124</sup> SNHCP; Project Operations Manual, October 2019.

<sup>125</sup> Annual Country Report, 2022.

<sup>126</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, district education officials and cooperating partners.

<sup>127</sup> KIIs with education stakeholders including principals and district-level education officials.

<sup>128</sup> Climate-Smart Food Systems Strategy (2023-2025), World Food Programme Somalia.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>130</sup> WFP Somalia. Assistance targeting strategy for the CSP 2022-2025.

<sup>131</sup> Interviews with government officials, cooperating partners, disaster management coordinators and FGDs with beneficiaries.

<sup>132</sup> Prioritization of WFP humanitarian food assistance, March 2023; and standard operating procedure for the prioritization, targeting, selection and rotation WFP relief food assistance beneficiaries, effective January 2024 and interviews with WFP staff, cooperating partners, government officials and donors.

<sup>133</sup> Annual country report 2023, WFP staff, cooperating partners, government officials and donors.

introduced a six-month rotation of beneficiaries in Quarter 1 followed by a further reduction of the beneficiary rotation to three months in Quarter 2.<sup>134</sup> Of these decisions, the most consequential was the three-month rotation because it meant that assistance stopped when beneficiaries' continued needs had not been met. Cooperating partners found it difficult to justify removal of beneficiaries from assistance when their situation had not improved<sup>135</sup> and it was challenging to identify households for the next round of rotation as most household had almost the same level of need.<sup>136</sup> In addition, the three-month rotation made it difficult to monitor the intervention's effectiveness as the three-month period was inadequate to measure real changes in the lives of beneficiaries, especially on food security-related indicators.

59. In the face of funding constraints, the beneficiaries for malnutrition prevention and treatment were reprioritized by reducing the geographical coverage based on the rate of global acute malnutrition while the beneficiaries for school feeding were reprioritized by reducing the regions covered as well as the school covered, within the selected districts based on education outcomes.<sup>137</sup>

60. Overall, WFP has limited direct access to some hard-to-reach (insecure) areas<sup>138</sup> due to insecurity and the need to constantly balance risk considerations and adhere to the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) rules. WFP took measures that enabled it to expand access, such as working with local partnerships, conducting security assessments through the access working group and working in solidarity with other humanitarian actors.<sup>139</sup>

**Finding 2.1c: WFP integrated gender, disability and conflict sensitivity considerations in beneficiary targeting and selection. However, cultural barriers affected women's participation in committees, while data constraints negatively affected the targeting of displaced populations and persons with disabilities.**

61. The selection of beneficiaries for SO1 and SO2, at household and individual levels, was led by community-based committees based on vulnerability criteria set by WFP.<sup>140</sup> To address gender in targeting, WFP staff and cooperating partners were trained on gender mainstreaming and, as a result, households headed by women with children under 5 were prioritized. Cooperating partners reported implementing this gender criterion in beneficiary selection with minimal challenges.<sup>141</sup> As shown in Figure 8, WFP reported achieving gender balance in relief assistance under SO1.<sup>142</sup>

62. Deliberate measures were taken to reach people living with disabilities, using assistance. However, WFP reported reaching only 5-6 percent of persons with disabilities among the total beneficiaries of CSP programmes in 2022 and 2023<sup>143</sup> against a disability prevalence of 11.7 percent in the adult population of Somalia, suggesting there is room for further improvement.<sup>144</sup>

63. Targeting also considered conflict sensitivity through community engagement and promoting a "do no harm" approach.<sup>145</sup> Consultation with community leaders, women's committees and village committees was crucial in addressing and resolving conflicts. When selecting communities and households for assistance, WFP considered potential negative impacts associated with targeting, particularly in fragile settings, by

<sup>134</sup> WFP 2024. Standard operating procedure for the prioritization, targeting, selection and rotation of WFP relief food assistance beneficiaries; and KIIs with WFP staff, government, cooperating partners and local leaders.

<sup>135</sup> Community leaders, government officials, WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>136</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, government, cooperating partners and local leaders.

<sup>137</sup> Annual country reports 2019-2022; KIIs with WFP staff, government officials.

<sup>138</sup> As of 2024, approximately 5-6 out of 75 districts remained inaccessible, mainly in the Al-Shabaab strongholds.

<sup>139</sup> WFP Somalia Annual Performance Plan 2024, annual country reports.

<sup>140</sup> The criteria included nutrition status, household composition and vulnerability, livelihood and economic status and displacement status.

<sup>141</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, cooperating partners and FGDs with beneficiaries.

<sup>142</sup> KIIs with government officials, WFP staff, FGD beneficiaries.

<sup>143</sup> Annual country reports 2022 and 2023.

<sup>144</sup> Somalia National Bureau of Statistics: National Disability Report, 2024.

<sup>145</sup> KIIs with WFP staff, district government officials.

aiming to ensure that the selection process was transparent and sensitive to diversity.<sup>146</sup> However, tension, especially between beneficiary and non-beneficiary groups (although limited), was acknowledged by a range of stakeholders including cooperating partners, community leaders and district and state government officials, especially during implementation of the rotation of beneficiaries and shock-responsive top-ups. Further, humanitarian actors in Somalia generally face challenges in ensuring there is no discrimination based on clans, race, religion or political affiliation, among other factors, given the lack of data and the sensitivity associated with such factors.<sup>147</sup>

64. Community participation, which took many forms at different levels, was critical in the targeting and selection of beneficiaries. This included, for example, the formation of community committees and beneficiary validation meetings. However, cultural norms impeded women's participation when men were present during committee meetings. Women's low representation risked hindering full understanding of the vulnerability and needs of women and girls during assistance.

**Finding 2.1d: Community involvement in targeting was generally high but there were challenges related to data quality and local power dynamics. An enhanced vulnerability-based targeting strategy aims to address some of the factors accounting for inclusion and exclusion errors through improved beneficiary identification processes. However, a significant investment of resources will be required to implement this strategy.**

65. Community members were directly involved in the election of the beneficiary selection committee members, with 74 percent confirming this involvement during monitoring. Communities were engaged in agreeing selection criteria and validating the selected beneficiary households. Monitoring reports showed high satisfaction levels with the final beneficiary lists.

66. There were, however, gaps in wider community participation in the selection process and this affected the awareness and validation of the process by community members. A survey conducted by WFP on the targeting process<sup>148</sup> found that only 58 percent of the community members understood the selection criteria while just 46 percent confirmed the formation of a beneficiary selection committee,<sup>149</sup> and 54 percent reported that names of selected beneficiaries were displayed for people to validate.<sup>150</sup> This indicates the need for higher community engagement.

67. Targeting at the community level was prone to elite capture, nepotism and exclusion of marginalized groups, often due to power imbalances in the social and clan networks.<sup>151</sup> Local power dynamics and clan considerations reportedly also influenced the selection process, particularly in areas where WFP staff and government officials faced access challenges.<sup>152</sup> Furthermore, concerns that clan affiliation of local WFP cooperating partners could bias the selection process were raised by donors and some WFP staff.<sup>153</sup>

68. Data quality also affected targeting during household data collection and verification processes.<sup>154</sup> There were reports of: data gaps, which resulted in leaving out vulnerable individuals; technical challenges with SCOPE, which affected updating of beneficiary information leading to errors in targeting; inadequate screening processes, for example, improper height measurements and insufficient adherence to nutrition protocols, which directly impacted the quality of data used to determine eligibility criteria based on

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<sup>146</sup> Annual country reports, 2021, 2023; Final Report to Echo June 2024; KIIs with WFP staff, government officials.

<sup>147</sup> Intersectoral analysis of protection risks in Somalia – August 2023:

<https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1180/article/intersectoral-protection-analysis-somalia-2023>.

<sup>148</sup> Target monitoring report, October 2023.

<sup>149</sup> This implies that community members were not aware of the existence of such a committee.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, KIIs with district government officials.

<sup>152</sup> Focus group discussions with beneficiaries and target monitoring report, October 2023.

<sup>153</sup> No analysis of clan affiliation of cooperating partners and their staff has been done at the time of data collection.

<sup>154</sup> ACR 2023, March 2024 Monitoring Report, SNHCP Q11 Report, 13 01 2024 Report: KIIs with district government officials, cooperating partners, UN agencies.

nutrition status; data verification challenges due to large caseloads and time constraints – where beneficiary names could not be matched to sim cards; and duplicates in registrations and payments.

69. The above challenges contributed to targeting errors. The target monitoring report of October 2023, for instance, showed that of the total beneficiaries selected, 86 percent met criteria, leaving an inclusion error of 14 percent.<sup>155</sup> Community members and local leaders interviewed were also aware of households deserving assistance that were not selected.<sup>156</sup>

70. To resolve these shortcomings, WFP is piloting an enhanced vulnerability-based targeting strategy to improve beneficiary targeting, identification, selection and registration methodology.<sup>157</sup> It includes the registration of entire households in SCOPE, a key improvement in identity management in the context of no national identification system. The new strategy is designed to reduce the influence of community leaders and gatekeepers and ensure selection decisions are based upon objectively defined indicators. Stakeholders lauded this strategy for improving inclusion of people in need of assistance but highlighted that its effectiveness hinged on data quality and reliability. However, implementation of the new strategy will require large-scale investment to develop a scorecard for targeting community and households and integrating household data into SCOPE.<sup>158</sup>

## **EQ 2.2 To what extent and in what ways did WFP activities contribute to the expected outcomes of the CSP? Were there any unintended outcomes, positive or negative?**

**Strategic outcome 1: Food-insecure and nutrition-insecure people, in disaster-affected areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food and specialized nutritious foods that meet their basic food and nutritional needs, during and in the aftermath of shocks.**

71. Under this strategic outcome, which includes Activity 1 of the CSP, WFP aimed to provide integrated food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected people through food and cash-based transfers (including emergency school feeding), social and behavioural change communication (SBCC), and capacity strengthening. Largely under SO1, a corporate scale-up was activated from August 2022 to May 2023 to respond to the threat of famine.<sup>159</sup> Although SO1 received substantial funding against its annual requirements (with 66 percent of resources carried over from 2022), emergency school feeding was not implemented due to lack of specific funding towards this activity. This meant that its potential contribution to safeguarding children in emergencies and investment in human capital development, which was acknowledged in the CSP, was not realized. WFP, acknowledging this shortfall, planned to continue advocacy for funds and working with the education cluster to initiate emergency school feeding as part of the 2024 humanitarian response plan.<sup>160</sup>

72. Food and nutrition assistance was provided to populations in crisis and emergency food insecurity phases (IPC 3 and 4). Target groups included women, men, people with disabilities, minorities, internally displaced people, newly displaced people and returning refugees.<sup>161</sup> The choice of transfer modality was driven by several factors, primarily market functionality, accessibility, cost effectiveness, beneficiary needs and preferences, and the overall strategic objectives of WFP and was mainly informed through market assessments. Cash-based transfers were the preferred modality where markets were assessed as functional – characterized by the availability of food, presence of retailers and traders and relatively stable prices. In areas where market information indicated limited food availability and increased food prices or where markets were not functional, WFP typically provided in-kind food assistance. Where markets were functional but physical access difficult, cash-based transfers through mobile money offered a more efficient

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<sup>155</sup> Focus group discussions with beneficiaries and target monitoring, report October 2023.

<sup>156</sup> KIIs with community leaders, cooperating partners and post-distribution monitoring reports.

<sup>157</sup> Documents review; WFP staff; cooperating partners and government officials.

<sup>158</sup> KIIs with district and state government officials, cooperating partners.

<sup>159</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, cooperating partners, government officials, donors and review of ACRs and programmatic data.

<sup>160</sup> Annual Country Report, 2023; SOM-APP-MYR-2023; SOM-APP-PLAN-2024.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

and effective way of reaching beneficiaries. Beneficiary needs and preferences were also taken into consideration to the extent possible.

73. In-kind food distributed included cereals (maize, rice, sorghum or millet and wheat), pulses, fortified vegetable oil and in some instances, specialized nutritious foods and fortified blended foods like Corn Soya Blend were also distributed, particularly for nutrition interventions.<sup>162</sup> WFP provided either an in-kind food basket equivalent to 2,130 Kcal per person per day or cash-based transfers based on the minimum expenditure basket,<sup>163</sup> so beneficiaries could meet their essential needs, including food and the associated caloric intake, as defined by the minimum expenditure basket. Conditional assistance under SO2 included home grown school feeding (HGSF), where meals or cash transfers were provided contingent on school attendance; conditional cash-based transfers for participation in livelihood activities and community asset creation projects aimed at resilience building; and nutrition treatment support conditional on beneficiary health status or age or condition criteria.

74. Significant support was provided to internally displaced people through first line assistance, reaching newly displaced people in hard-to-reach areas, with malnutrition treatment and prevention programmes (particularly for children and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls) and cash-based transfers, which empowered the internally displaced people to purchase food locally. Through the integrated response framework, WFP in partnership with UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), provided integrated services in IDP camps, which included nutrition, health and water, sanitation and hygiene provisions. WFP also worked with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to integrate protection measures.<sup>164</sup> Beneficiaries considered WFP assistance crucial for their access to food during crises. In some cases, they reported that it enabled them to rebuild their lives with some able to purchase assets and start small businesses. Internally displaced people also reported improved social cohesion as tensions over scarce resources reduced.<sup>165</sup>

75. WFP engaged cooperating partners to identify beneficiaries, using the WFP targeting and prioritization guidelines, register beneficiaries and distribute food. Cash-based transfers were provided in the form of vouchers or cash. Other beneficiaries received assistance in the form of cash delivered as mobile money through selected telecom companies in Somalia. Beneficiaries of the safety net programme received a top up of USD 40 to enable them to withstand the effects of crisis.

76. Other interventions under the outcome included provision of unconditional nutritious food or cash-based transfers for people in areas with high global acute malnutrition targeting children (6-59 months and 6-23 months), pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, antiretroviral therapy (ART)-tuberculosis directly observed therapy (TB-DOT) clients, and the use of SBCC to affect behaviour for improvement in nutritional status.<sup>166</sup>

**Finding 2.2.1a: WFP successfully scaled up relief assistance, which largely contributed to famine prevention while efforts in anticipatory actions contributed to reducing the impact of flooding on affected people during the CSP.**

77. Except for the first year (2019) of the ICSP, WFP continuously surpassed the planned numbers of beneficiaries provided with humanitarian food assistance between 2020 and 2024 entailing a significant scale-up in operations, as shown in Figure 9 below. The fact that WFP was able to reach up to 9.7 million and 10.2 million people in 2022 and 2023 respectively can be attributed to the extensive infrastructure in place, which included the supply chain, cooperating partners, decentralized planning and implementation by area and field offices, together with the infrastructure for cash-based transfers and emergency response mechanisms activated during the corporate scale-up. This demonstrated WFP Somalia's capacity to play a critical role in famine prevention during the historic drought in 2022, giving support to communities and

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Annual Country Report, 2020.

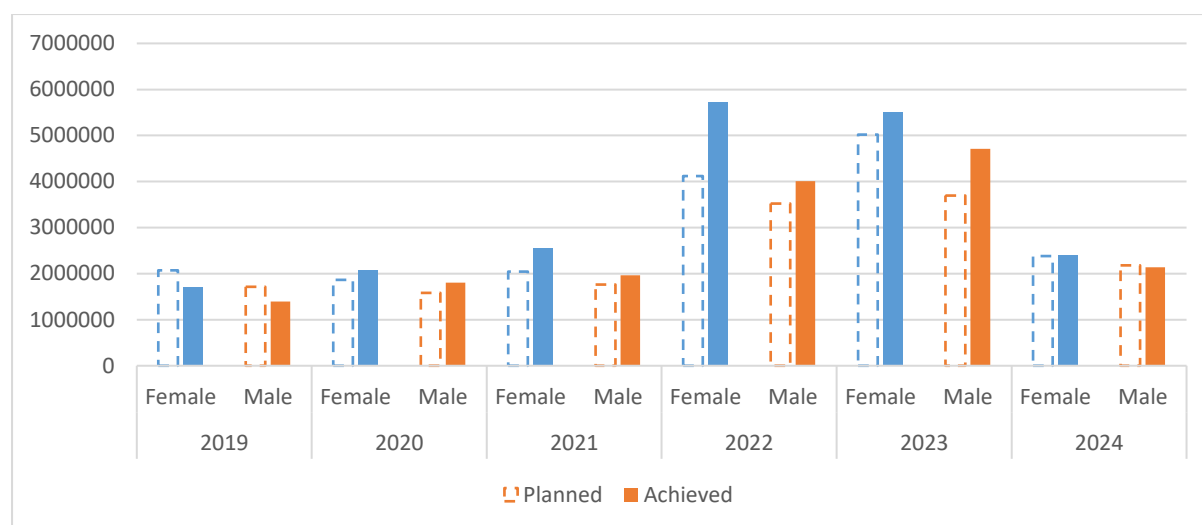
<sup>164</sup> Document reviews and interviews with IDP beneficiaries, camp coordination and camp management cluster (CCCM) coordinators, community leaders, government officials and cooperating partners.

<sup>165</sup> FGD for IDPs

<sup>166</sup> Somalia CSP Line of Sight, Somalia CSP Executive Board Approved, Somalia CSP Summary Logframe.

partners (including the Federal Government) during floods and maintaining donor confidence in a challenging context.<sup>167</sup> Through this support, the proportion of women beneficiaries reportedly reached with relief assistance surpassed the target during the CSP.<sup>168</sup>

**Figure 9: Beneficiaries reached under SO1<sup>169</sup>**



Source: CM-R020 / CM-R030 Actual Beneficiary Adjustment & CM-R020 Retrieved: February 2025.

78. In 2022, 50 percent of the planned quantity of food was delivered, 33 percent in 2023 and 18 percent in 2024 for relief activities.<sup>170</sup> Conversely, the value of cash-based transfers delivered, although below target, performed better during the CSP (94 percent in 2022 and 68 percent in 2023), in line with the envisaged gradual shift from the in-kind modality to cash-based transfers (Figure 10).<sup>171</sup> The discrepancy between the high number of planned beneficiaries reached and underperformance in the distribution of food and cash-based transfers can partly be attributed to a change in modality of assistance and regional differences in the minimum expenditure basket, which was not reflected in the planning figures, alongside the fact that the need-based plan for SO1 was not fully funded (Figure 11).<sup>172</sup>

79. Overall, the country-level output achievements under SO1 need to be interpreted with caution given that planning figures were based on funding expectations at the start of the year and achievement was largely determined by levels of available funding. Beneficiary numbers and data on assistance levels, disaggregated by region or state, were reported on a monthly basis, but yearly aggregates by state or region were not available. These limitations make it difficult to determine how much and how consistently assistance was provided in different locations, and whether there was any geographical variation in output and beneficiary achievements. This made it difficult link outputs to outcome achievements at the subnational level.

<sup>167</sup> WFP staff.

<sup>168</sup> Beneficiary data analysis.

<sup>169</sup> SO1 beneficiaries include nutrition and emergency school feeding assistance under this outcome.

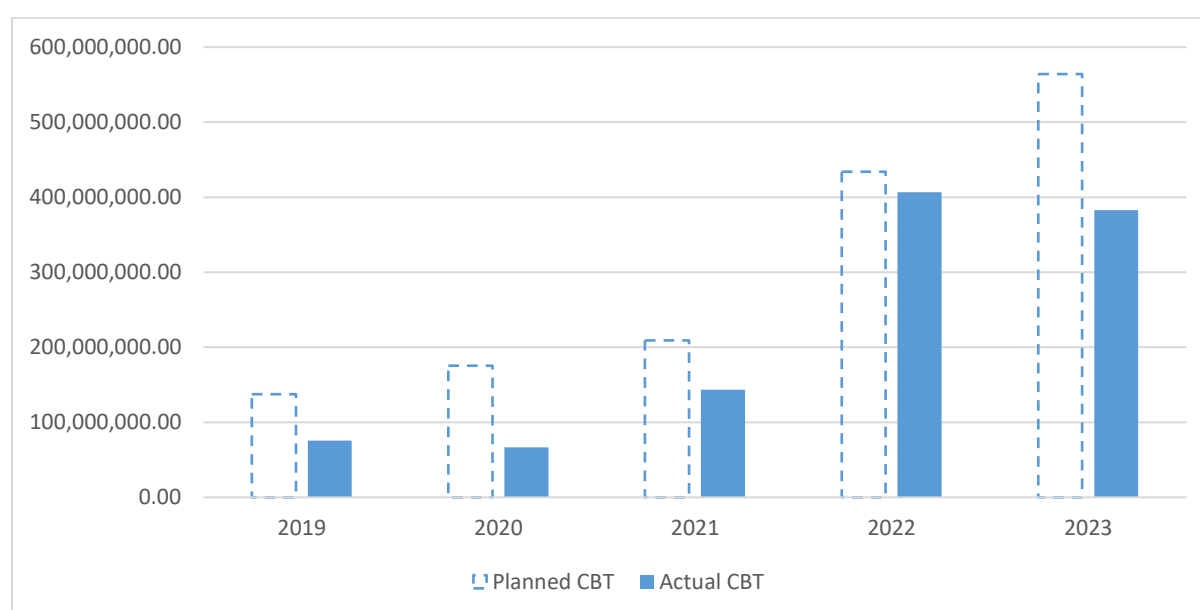
<sup>170</sup> CM R014 Food and CBT Extracted on 25 June 2024.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> WFP staff.

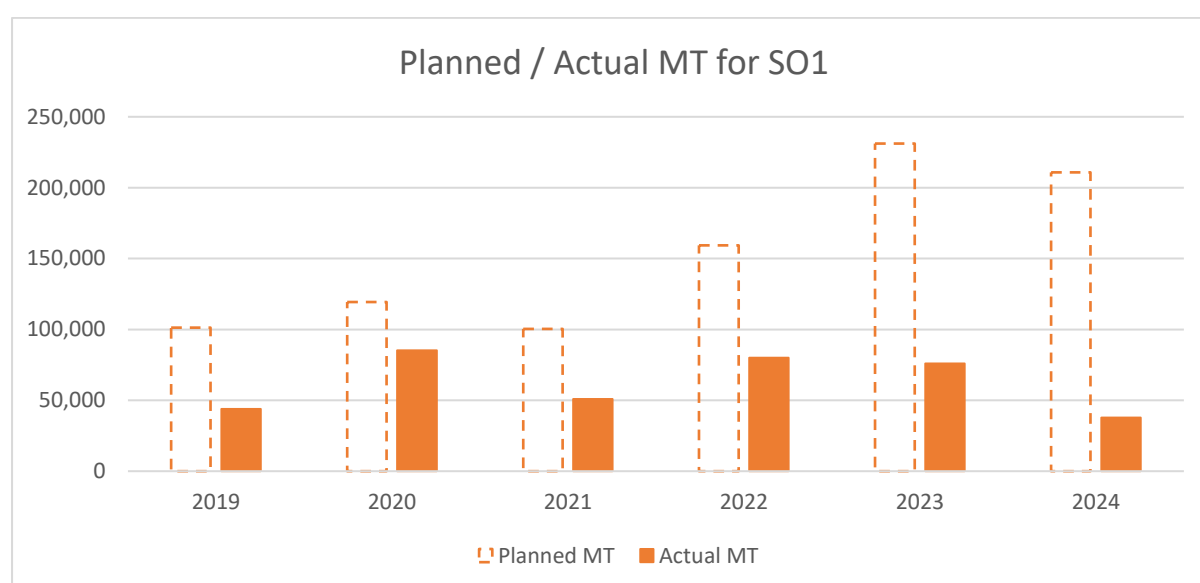


**Figure 10: Planned versus actual cash-based transfers distributed to SO1 beneficiaries, 2019-2023**



Source: ACR/CM-P006\_Monthly\_Food\_and\_CBT\_2024 planned / CM-R007\_-\_Annual Distribution\_(CSP) food CBT 2024 actuals Retrieved: 17.02. 2025.

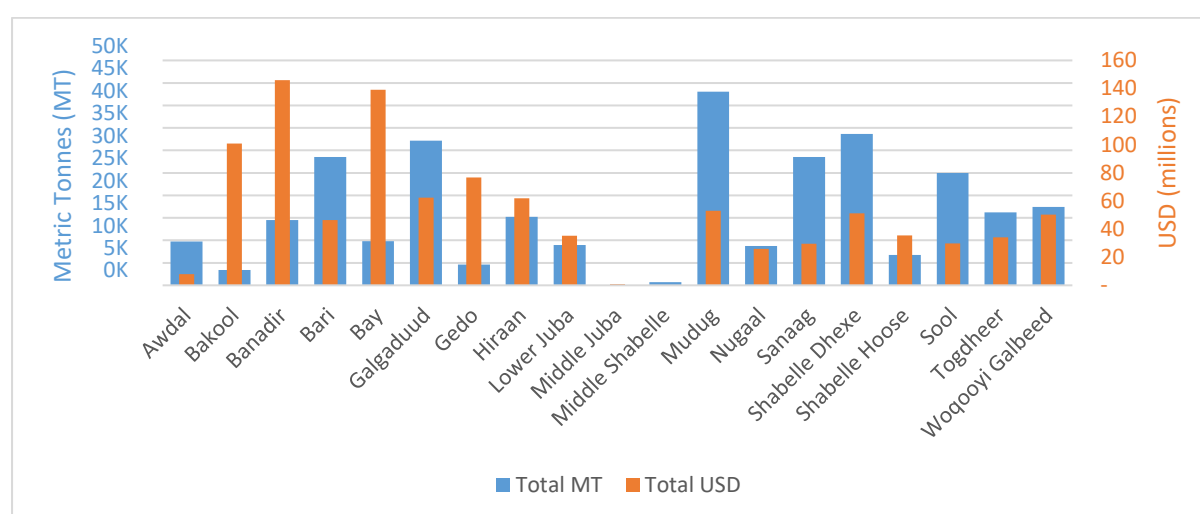
**Figure 11: Planned versus actual food distribution for SO1 beneficiaries, 2019-2023**



Source: ACR/CM-P006\_Monthly\_Food\_and\_CBT\_2024 planned / CM-R007\_-\_Annual Distribution\_(CSP) food CBT 2024 actuals Retrieved: 17.02.2025.

80. WFP provided a combination of cash-based transfers and food across all regions as shown in Figure 12 with the relative balance between the two modalities reflecting regional choices. Transfer modalities were based on market conditions, conflict and cost effectiveness. For example, Banadir's proximity to Mogadishu enabled cash-based transfers, while in Mudug, persistent conflict and poor market conditions necessitated in-kind transfers.

**Figure 12: Distribution of food and cash-based transfers by region, SO1 CSP (2022-2025)**



Source: Comet P006 Monthly Food and CBT. Retrieved: 20.11.2024.

**Finding 2.2.1b: Increased use of cash-based transfers contributed to timely response to crises, contributed to cost efficiency, provided flexibility to beneficiaries and stimulated local economies.**

81. The use of cash-based transfers as a modality for assistance was lauded by different stakeholders for its flexibility and allowing for timely responses to crises.<sup>173</sup> Timeliness was mainly enhanced by beneficiaries being already registered with WFP (in SCOPE) and because WFP had pre-established partnerships with telecoms, which were able to rapidly execute the transfers. In areas where in-kind food delivery was challenging due to security concerns, mobile cash transfers enabled people to purchase food locally, bypassing logistical and security risks.<sup>174</sup> The gradual increase in use of cash-based transfers over the period evaluated contributed to cost efficiency (see EQ 3.3) by reducing logistical costs associated with in-kind assistance.<sup>175</sup>

82. The cash-based transfer system was found to provide beneficiaries the flexibility to choose how to use the assistance and to prioritize their most urgent needs. The majority of people used the assistance for food, debt payment and essential needs.<sup>176</sup> Relief beneficiaries receiving cash displayed significantly less asset depletion than those who received in-kind assistance or vouchers.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, cash-based transfers stimulated local economies by increasing the demand for goods and services, reportedly resulting in the expansion of businesses, particularly in the retail sector.<sup>178</sup>

**Finding 2.2.1c: Facing the threat of widespread famine, WFP assistance likely contributed to stabilizing food security. The fact that, despite a significant scale-up of assistance, food security indicators only showed minimal improvement with targets largely unmet can be attributed to the massive impact of the drought on livelihoods and the food security situation, the relatively short time frame of assistance, and the scale-down of assistance post-drought in 2023 and 2024.**

83. The multi-year drought, which led to a significant deterioration in the food security situation in Somalia (shown in figures 1 and 2) affected the extent to which WFP was able to contribute to improved food

<sup>173</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, government officials, donors, cooperating partners and FGDs with beneficiaries.

<sup>174</sup> KIIs with cooperating partners, community leaders, district officials; FGDs with beneficiaries.

<sup>175</sup> WFP Somalia 2019-2024 analysis of cost drivers.

<sup>176</sup> Outcome monitoring reports; beneficiaries, community leaders, WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>177</sup> WFP outcome monitoring.

<sup>178</sup> Interviews with retailers, government officials and WFP staff.

security outcomes for targeted households. While the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia in 2025<sup>179</sup> found that famine thresholds had not been reached and many more people would have died without assistance, most WFP food security indicator targets were not achieved despite the targeted households receiving food assistance (tables 5 and 6, and Annex 15). The low performance of food consumption scores could, in addition to the dire food security situation, be also attributed to the short period of assistance, the scaling down of the relief programme in 2023 as the drought situation eased, and the rotation of beneficiaries in 2024 (further discussed under EQ 2.1).<sup>180</sup> Further, the receipt of assistance seems to have had minimal effect on the economic capacity of households to meet essential needs as the proportion of households with economic capacity declined between 2022 and 2024. This is an indication of deteriorating economic conditions amidst dwindling livelihood opportunities occasioned by the extreme and prolonged drought.

**Strategic outcome 2: Vulnerable people in targeted areas have improved nutrition and resilience, and benefit from inclusive access to integrated basic social services, shock-responsive safety nets, and enhanced national capacity to build human capital, all year round.**

84. Under this strategic outcome, WFP delivered conditional and unconditional food and cash-based food assistance and nutrition-sensitive messaging to food-insecure people through safety nets, including home-grown school feeding (Activity 2) and an integrated nutrition support and malnutrition prevention and treatment package to targeted vulnerable people (Activity 3).

**(i) Somalia's Shock-Responsive Safety Net for Human Capital Project (SNHCP) (Activity 2)**

**Finding 2.2.2a: WFP successfully positioned itself as the partner of choice for the Federal Government of Somalia to implement a national social protection system that successfully reached targeted vulnerable households with shock responsive cash transfers, while leveraging its vertical and horizontal expansion capabilities. But the relatively limited amount of cash transferred to beneficiaries, inflation and shocks all hindered improvements in food security status.**

85. As part of WFP efforts under SO2, WFP supported the Federal Government of Somalia to roll-out the Shock-Responsive Safety Net for Human Capital Project (SNHCP). The Federal Government received funding from the World Bank in 2019 to provide unconditional cash transfers to chronically poor households vulnerable to drought and malnutrition. This support aimed to link households to complementary nutritional support programmes while establishing the building blocks of a shock-responsive safety net system, allowing for vertical (increasing transfer amounts) and horizontal (reaching more households) expansion during crises such as droughts and locust outbreaks.

86. The Federal Government sought the assistance of WFP in the roll-out of the SNHCP. WFP support included: the development of the targeting methodology; effecting cash transfers; monitoring the project; and building the Government's capacity to manage and oversee social protection interventions for its eventual transition to direct implementation. SNHCP beneficiaries who received safety net cash transfers also received an additional cash "top up", linked to relief support, to mitigate the impacts of shocks (droughts and floods) thus strengthening linkages between SO1 and SO2.

87. Key achievements included the development of robust social protection systems, including the Unified Social Registry, which serves as the backbone of the government social protection delivery system.<sup>181</sup> These systems enabled the full handover of the SNHCP implementation to the Federal Government in July 2024 and WFP Somalia transitioned from being an implementing partner to a technical partner supporting the design and development of foundational systems for social protection.

88. Through the SNHCP,<sup>182</sup> WFP provided assistance to approximately 200,000 vulnerable households (1.2 million individuals) in 21 districts, mainly in rural areas and with a high coverage in Puntland and

<sup>179</sup> Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia, March 2025.

<sup>180</sup> Outcome monitoring reports and FGDs.

<sup>181</sup> WFP staff, government officials.

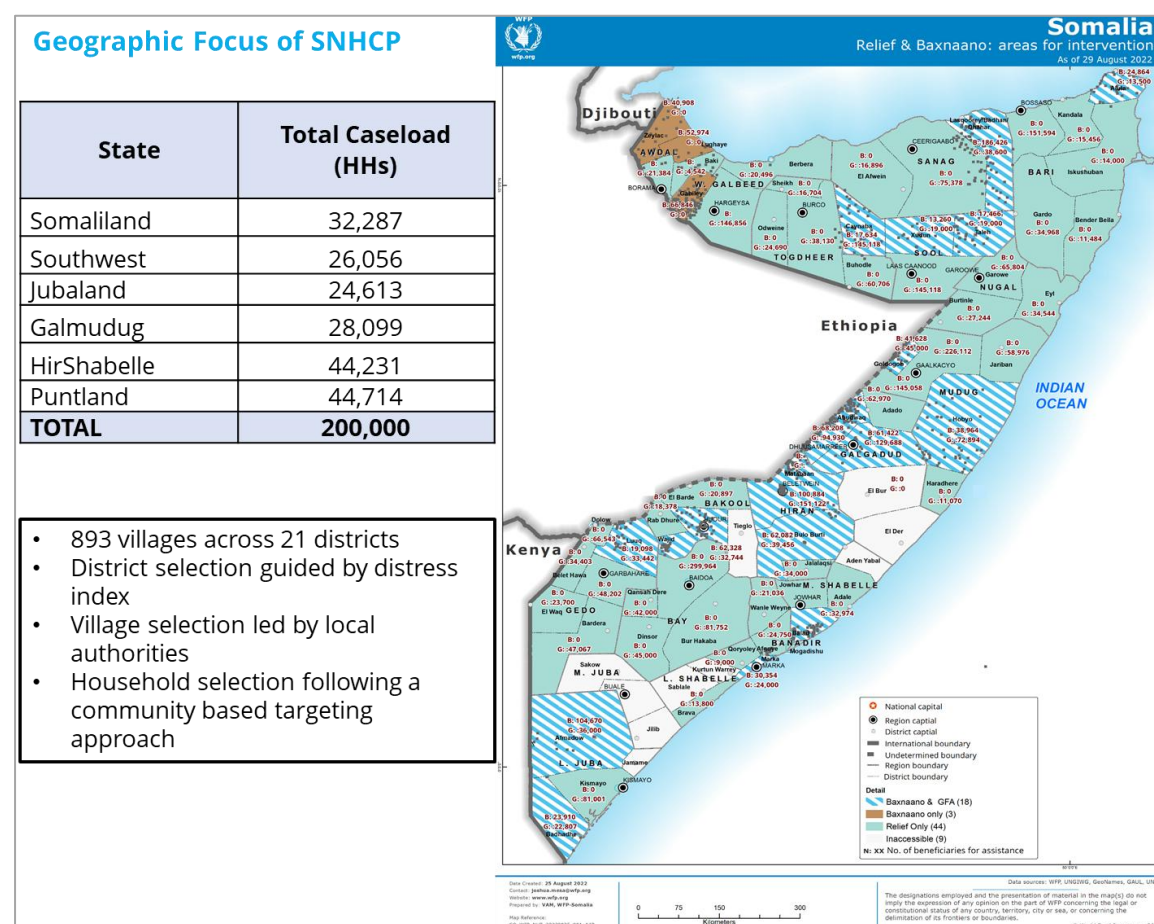
<sup>182</sup> Annual country reports 2022, 2023.

Hirshabelle and lower coverage in Jubaland (as shown in Figure 13 below) through unconditional cash transfers and it successfully reached an additional 146,000 households during the drought in 2022. Further, WFP provided technical support for development of the Unified Social Registry<sup>183</sup> and successfully leveraged the SNHCP platform to deliver anticipatory action pay-outs in 2022 and 2023.

89. The SNHCP mainly targeted women<sup>184</sup> as recipients of assistance to support women's financial inclusion and autonomy. Based upon a decision taken by the Federal Government of Somalia in discussion with the World Bank, each household received a monthly cash transfer of USD 20, which was below the threshold 60 to 100 USD (dependent on region) to cover 80 percent of the minimum expenditure basket that had been recommended by the joint Somalia cash working group and food security cluster in 2022.<sup>185</sup> This suggests that the USD 20 would cover a low proportion of the minimum expenditure basket and was therefore inadequate in meeting household food requirements.

90. To enable women to redeem the transfer, WFP, in partnership with the Global System for Mobile-Communication Association (GSMA), provided digital literacy training to women beneficiaries in the SNHCP, reportedly equipping them with the skills and confidence to use mobile phones and mobile money independently.<sup>186</sup>

**Figure 13: Geographical coverage and case load of the SNHCP as of 29 August 2022**



Source: WFP Somalia analysis.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Joint Somalia Cash Working Group and Food Security Cluster Technical Note, September 2022.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid, KIIs with WFP staff, financial service providers, government, FGDs with safety net beneficiaries.

91. WFP reached 98 percent and 99 percent of the planned number of beneficiaries in 2022 and 2023. Beneficiaries used the cash transfers for food purchases and non-food expenses such as debt repayment, medical costs, school fees and household items.<sup>187</sup>

92. Although it was challenging to capture the impact on chronic food insecurity based upon the WFP corporate results framework, according to outcome data, the indicator targets for economic capacity to meet essential needs were not met and these indicators worsened over time while the reliance on consumption-based coping strategies diminished (see Annex 16). Data on indicators measuring livelihood-based coping strategies show a mixed picture, with fewer households using crisis coping strategies while more households used emergency and stress coping strategies in some of the years. Food consumption scores showed a deterioration in food security status of households with the share of households with borderline and poor food consumption scores increasing and the share with acceptable food consumption scores decreasing.<sup>188</sup>

93. The underachievement in outcome-level results can be explained by the adverse effects of protracted drought and floods on food security and livelihoods in 2022 and 2023, as well as the inadequate amount of cash provided, which was not adjusted despite an increase in food prices (with some households also spending some of the cash on non-food items such as debt payment) and the large sizes of households.<sup>189</sup>

**(ii) School feeding programme (Activity 2)**

**Finding 2.2.2b: Despite clear ambitions, implementation of the school feeding programme was only able to deliver meals to a small proportion of eligible children due to being hindered by funding constraints, supply chain difficulties and an overall need to prioritize humanitarian programming.**

94. The school feeding programme (SFP) was part of the WFP strategy to improve human capital, together with the safety net programme, and was intended to improve education outcomes, such as enrolment, retention and completion rates. The programme design intended to build a coherent value chain across schools, communities, local retailers and farmers to implement the home-grown school feeding programme, which would be overseen and monitored by WFP and ministries of education.

95. WFP estimates the number of children enrolled in primary schools in Somalia to be about 1.9 million while about 3.55 million children were out of school. The CSP planned to reach 6 percent (200,000) of the children out of school but during implementation the resources available covered only 3 percent of the targeted children.<sup>190</sup>

96. As shown in Figure 14, the coverage of the school feeding programme fluctuated over time, with an overall downward trend in the number of children reached per month, due to declining levels of funding.<sup>191</sup>

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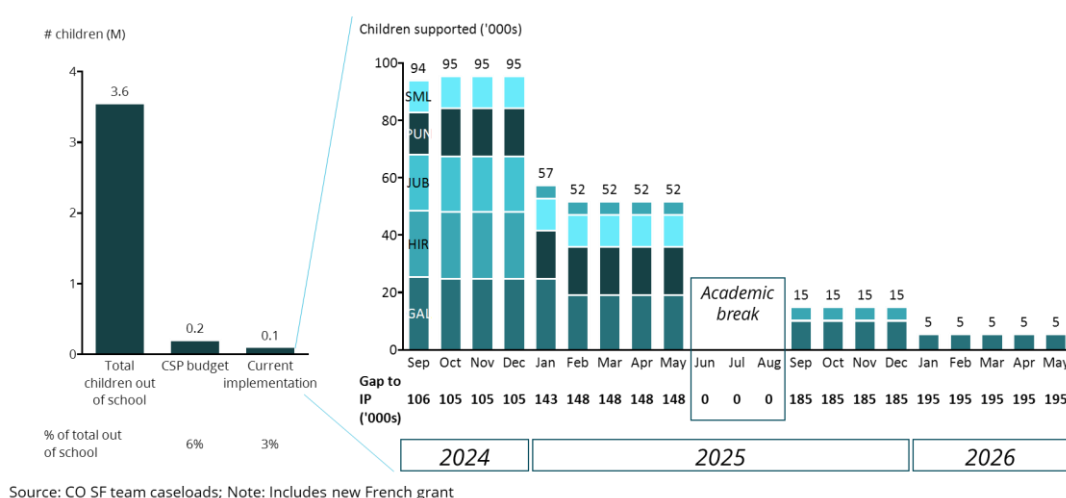
<sup>188</sup> ACR data.

<sup>189</sup> FGDs, user journey surveys, SNHCP monitoring reports and interviews with key informants.

<sup>190</sup> WFP school feeding programme data.

<sup>191</sup> WFP country office presentation on SFP.

**Figure 14: Financial resources available to WFP Somalia country office against the anticipated need for school feeding**



97. The programme achieved most of the output targets in 2022 and 2023 (Table 5). Outcome data were not complete, but it appears that the programme was close to attaining retention rate targets in 2022 and 2023 (over 97 percent). However, as mentioned, the relative scale of the school feeding programme was small against the overall need across districts. Given fluctuating funding, WFP was not able to provide continuous support to schools.

**Table 5: Output results of the school feeding programme**

Output indicator	Sub activity	2022						
		Planned			Actual			% achieved
		M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
Beneficiaries receiving capacity strengthening transfers	School feeding (on-site)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Beneficiaries receiving cash-based transfers	Students (primary schools)	66,780	81,620	148,400	85,118	104,034	189,152	127.46%
	Activity supporters	3,889	3,811	7,700	6,612	6,480	13,092	170.03%
Cash-based transfers (USD)		n.a.	n.a.	75,771,675	n.a.	n.a.	59,497,359	78.52%
Number of institutional sites assisted with HGSE	Number of schools assisted by WFP	n.a.	n.a.	369	n.a.	n.a.	595	161.25%
2023								
Beneficiaries receiving capacity strengthening transfers	School feeding (on-site)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	25,978	22,329	48,307	-
Beneficiaries receiving cash-based transfers	Students (primary schools)	78,300	95,700	174,000	103,182	93,393	196,575	112.97%
	Activity supporters	7,070	6,930	14,000	8,075	7,915	15,990	114.21%
Cash-based transfers (USD)		n.a.	n.a.	13,620,725	n.a.	n.a.	13,032,754	95.68%
Number of institutional sites assisted	Number of schools assisted by WFP	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: WFP country office data.

98. Anecdotal evidence from a range of stakeholders<sup>192</sup> indicates that the integration of nutrition-sensitive social messaging had positive effects on dietary diversity and hygiene practices among students. Furthermore, in some cases the home-grown school feeding approach created additional community benefits by connecting local agricultural production with school meal provision, although generally food was procured through vouchers that could be redeemed at local retailers, ensuring a more consistent supply than the home-grown school feeding model.

99. The school feeding programme was characterized by persistent challenges. Funding constraints proved particularly problematic, with stakeholders reporting donors' reluctance to support the initiative in the face of the massive humanitarian needs. Resources made available for the school feeding programme were sometimes exhausted before the end of the term. Delivery problems were exacerbated by inconsistent implementation at the school level, where some schools struggled with proper execution, accurate student number reporting and adherence to meal preparation schedules.<sup>193</sup> Other challenges included poor storage of food and inappropriate cooking facilities.<sup>194</sup>

100. Supply chain difficulties further affected the school feeding programme delivery. Despite intentions to source food locally, lack of food in local markets and logistical challenges occasionally disrupted supply, resulting in children not receiving meals on some days. The connection to local farmers showed mixed results, with some schools preferring to purchase from retailers. Efforts to establish school gardens were generally unsuccessful due to students' and teachers' lack of knowledge and inappropriate terrain. The monitoring systems had limitations,<sup>195</sup> with the use of paper-based records prone to errors and not consistently utilized for ensuring implementation standards.

### (iii) Malnutrition prevention and treatment programme (Activity 3)

**Finding 2.2.2c: Achievement of output targets for prevention and treatment of malnutrition varied year-on-year and were closely linked to availability of funding. Implementation success was driven by engaging cooperating partners, collaboration with ministries of health and the use of health and community systems.**

101. WFP focused on strengthening nutritional resilience through fortified food provision and diet diversification. Key activities included prevention of acute malnutrition and stunting; treatment of moderate acute malnutrition; and malnutrition treatment for patients receiving treatment for HIV and TB. The intention was to improve the nutrition status of pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, children aged 6-59 months and antiretroviral/TB clients.

102. Cooperating partners were instrumental in delivery of the nutrition support at the maternal and child health clinics (MCHCs) as they were responsible for a range of key functions. These included: ensuring healthcare workers effectively apply the criteria for beneficiary selection; informing beneficiaries about the nutrition support and available feedback mechanisms; managing the supply of nutrition commodities; and conducting outreach to communities through community health workers to raise awareness and demand for nutrition support and follow up with beneficiaries. The cooperating partners were also responsible for ensuring awareness and education was provided through SBCC and reaching targeted beneficiaries to improve feeding and water, sanitation and hygiene practices. WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, undertook regular monitoring and coordinated the response with other nutrition programmes and key actors in the health sector.

103. The number of planned beneficiaries was set based upon available funding at the time of planning. In 2022, WFP far exceeded its, initially modest, targets for prevention of stunting and treating pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and children for moderate acute malnutrition through its scaled-up moderate acute malnutrition treatment programme. This was due to additional funding triggered by the drought (see Table 6).<sup>196</sup> Achievements for the following year (2023) did not meet the targets. This

<sup>192</sup> Interviews with headteachers, education officials and government and WFP staff.

<sup>193</sup> WFP Back to office reports.

<sup>194</sup> Back to office reports prepared by WFP staff and education officials.

<sup>195</sup> As is evident from the data supplied to the evaluation team.

<sup>196</sup> ACR 2022.



fluctuation in the nutrition programme performance was attributed to reductions in funding and targets that were not aligned to available resources, especially in 2023.

**Table 6: Number and percentage of targeted children aged 6–59 months, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and ART/TB-DOT clients reached with nutritional support, 2022 and 2023**

Target beneficiary and type of support provided	2022						
	Planned			Actual			% achieved
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
Prevention of acute malnutrition - Children	64,020	67,980	132,000	13,993	14,859	28,852	21.9%
Prevention of stunting - Children	5,820	6,180	12,000	58,795	62,432	121,227	1010.2%
Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition – Children	24,750	25,251	50,001	169,149	17,256	341,716	683.4%
Prevention of acute malnutrition – PBWG	n.a	66,000	66,000	n.a	3,601	3,601	5.5%
Prevention of stunting – PBWG	n.a	14,014	14,014	n.a	87,055	87,055	621.2%
Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition - PBWG	n.a	20,001	20,001	n.a	112,221	112,221	561.1%
TB treatment clients	0	0	0	79	82	161	-
Target beneficiary and type of support provided	2023						
	Planned			Actual			% achieved
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
Prevention of acute malnutrition - Children	85,360	90,640	176,000	3,894	3,817	7,711	4.4%
Prevention of stunting	5,820	6,180	12,000	4,467	4,378	8,845	73.7%
Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition – Children	24,329	25,671	50,000	21,926	21,491	43,417	86.8%
Prevention of acute malnutrition – PBWG	n.a	88,000	88,000	n.a	14,302	14,302	16.3%
Prevention of stunting – PBWG	n.a	14,014	14,014	n.a	5,912	5,912	42.2%
Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition - PBWG	n.a	20,000	20,000	n.a	12,958	12,958	64.8%
TB treatment clients	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a

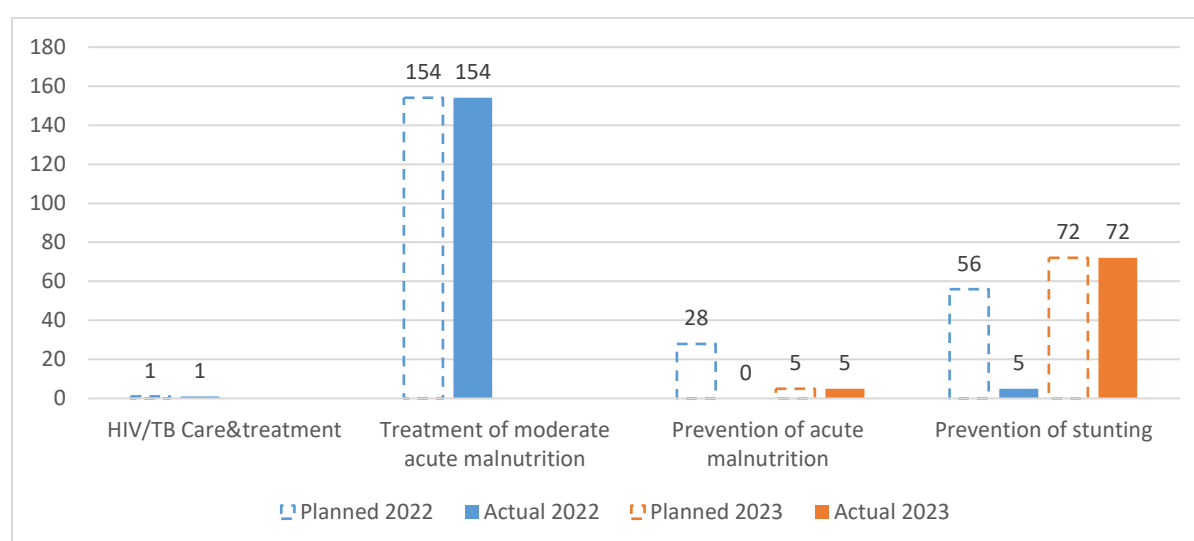
Source: Annual country report 2022-2023.

104. In 2022, WFP reached its target of assisting 154 sites that treated moderate acute malnutrition but fell short with support to sites preventing stunting despite exceeding its target for stunting beneficiaries in the same year (Figure 15). Despite the reduction in funding experienced in 2023, WFP reporting showed that WFP managed to achieve its target of supporting 72 stunting treatment sites.<sup>197</sup>

105. Moderate acute malnutrition treatment was also integrated into other initiatives and WFP demonstrated adaptability in its implementation and targeting vulnerable groups in high-risk areas. However, the appropriateness of the programme was limited by significant coverage gaps, with only 67 percent treatment coverage reported in 2023. This is primarily due to persistent funding shortfalls and access constraints, including logistical and security challenges.

<sup>197</sup> ACR data.

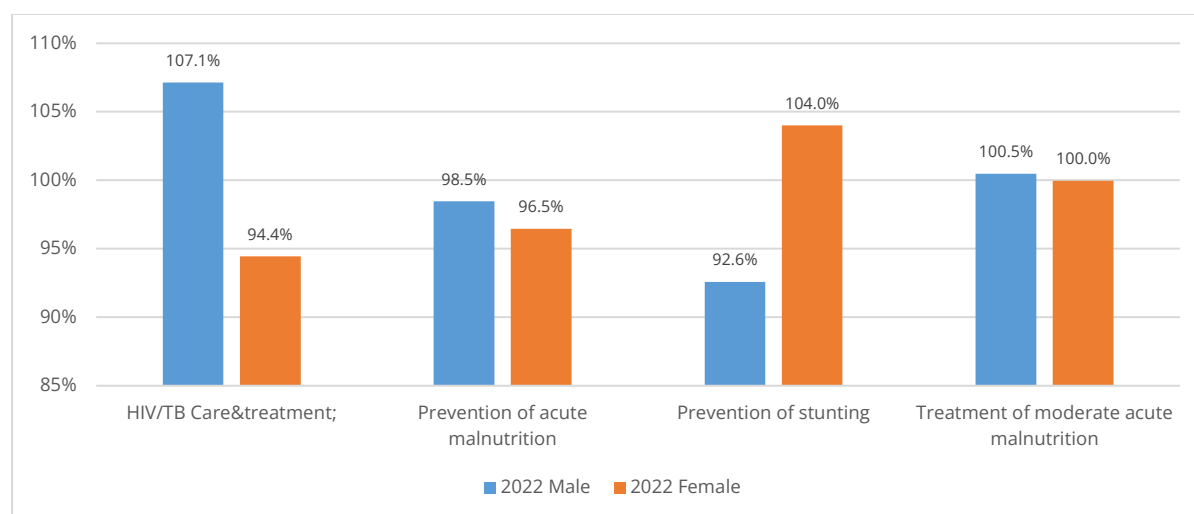
**Figure 15: Number of health centres and sites assisted**



Source: Annual country report 2022-2023/ CSP 2022-2025.

106. WFP efforts in delivering SBCC (through education messages delivered at MCHC and by community health workers and information, education and communication materials were largely successful in reaching the planned number of people in 2022 (Figure 16). Focus group discussions for nutrition programme beneficiaries show that the education provided enabled them to prepare and consume the specialized nutritional foods provided appropriately.

**Figure 16: Percentage of targeted number of people reached through interpersonal social and behavioural change communication approaches**



Source: Annual country report 2022-2023/ CSP 2022-2025.

**Finding 2.2.2d: The availability of sufficient resources, and appropriate implementation modalities, delivering support through cooperating partners, and joint WFP and government monitoring as well as consistent supply of nutritious food enabled WFP to achieve most of its moderate acute malnutrition outcomes, except the dietary diversity targets and coverage rate.**

107. The implementation of the nutrition programme through cooperating partners contributed to the achievement of programme results. Working through cooperating partners, which managed last mile supply of nutrition commodities and enlisted healthcare and community health workers, was an

appropriate choice because of their ability to work at the community level and their capacity to implement activities.

108. The CSP contributed to the achievement of most outcome targets based on the data available for 2022 (Table 7) and 2023 (Table 8),<sup>198</sup> with particular success in the area of moderate acute malnutrition treatment. The achievements included increased moderate acute malnutrition treatment recovery rate to over 90 percent and reduced moderate acute malnutrition treatment mortality, non-responsive, and default rates. These results demonstrate the improved quality of the nutrition programme and ability of beneficiaries to utilize the education messages on preparation and consumption of specialized nutritional foods, and coverage surveys conducted by WFP and partners show that targeted supplementary feeding programme coverage has exceeded SPHERE standards.<sup>199</sup> Focus group discussion data show that there were a few instances of mothers sharing the specialized nutritional foods with other children in the household and a few mentioned that they sold some of the specialized nutritional foods to purchase food for the household. These instances, however, may not have affected the overall moderate acute malnutrition recovery rates, which were at 93 percent in 2022 and 96 percent in 2023.

**Table 7: Nutrition outcome achievements 2022**

Indicators	Baseline set			2022					
	Male	Female	Overall	Year-end target			Follow-up		
				Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
Proportion of eligible population that participates in programme (coverage)	47	46	46	>94.1	>99	>96.6	71.5	70	70.8
Proportion of target population that participates in an adequate number of distributions (adherence)	95.8	96.5	96.3	≥76.3	≥83.5	≥80.2	89	100	89
Minimum dietary diversity – Women	n.a.	n.a.	39.8	n.a.	n.a.	>52.2	n.a.	n.a.	57
MAM treatment recovery rate	95.11	95.7	95.43	>75	>75	>75	91.18	95.18	93.18
MAM treatment mortality rate	0.04	0.03	0.03	<3	<3	<3	0.11	0.18	0.15
MAM treatment non-response rate	3.18	2.86	3	<15	<15	<15	3.29	7.29	5.29
MAM treatment default rate	1.67	1.41	1.53	<15	<15	<15	0.52	2.07	1.38

**Table 8: Nutrition outcome achievements 2023**

Indicator	2023					
	Year-end target			Follow-up		
	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
Percentage of households that never consumed hem iron rich food (in the last 7 days)	<100	<100	<100	81.1	71.1	79.2
Percentage of households that sometimes consumed protein-rich food (in the last 7 days)	>56	>60	>57	51.2	52.6	51.5
Percentage of households that never consumed protein-rich food (in the last 7 days)	<44	<40	<43	7.3	7.9	7.4
Percentage of households that sometimes consumed vit A rich food (in the last 7 days)	>56	>60	>53	25.6	23.7	25.2
Percentage of households that never consumed vit A rich food (in the last 7 days)	<44	<56	<47	65.2	57.9	63.9
Minimum dietary diversity for women and girls of reproductive age			≥57			34

<sup>198</sup> Those for which data are available.

<sup>199</sup> WFP country office staff reports.

TSFP						
Moderate acute malnutrition treatment default rate	<15	<15	<15	3.26	3.32	3.29
Moderate acute malnutrition treatment mortality rate	<3	<3	<3	0.01	0.01	0.01
Moderate acute malnutrition treatment non-response rate	<15	<15	<15	0.04	0.06	0.05
Moderate acute malnutrition treatment recovery rate	>75	>75	>75	96.4	96.3	96.35

Source: WFP country office Somalia data.

**Strategic Outcome 3: National institutions, private sector, smallholder farmers, and food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations in Somalia benefit from climate-smart, productive, resilient, inclusive and nutritious food systems by 2030.**

**Finding 2.2.3a: WFP resilience programming achieved limited successes through food for assets and training initiatives. Wider impact was constrained by lack of funding, logistical challenges and limitations in post-harvest support to farmers from WFP and other agencies.**

109. Strategic outcome 3, or “food systems” programming, aims to build the resilience of rural farming households in Somalia against climate change and other shocks by promoting climate-smart food systems. Key objectives include enabling national institutions, the private sector, smallholder farmers and food-insecure populations to benefit from productive, resilient, inclusive and nutritious food systems. These goals were pursued through the provision of an integrated package of livelihood support, encompassing services, skills training, assets and inputs, and infrastructure. A core component of SO3 was training for smallholder farmers on climate-smart agriculture and post-harvest loss management, support for farmer cooperatives, and attempts to create market linkages through initiatives like the “e-Shop” and “Farm2go” app.

110. Low funding levels for SO3 resulted in limited activities and engagement of much lower numbers of beneficiaries than planned: just 36 percent of a planned total of 92,400, and 25 percent of a planned total of 308,000 beneficiaries received food assistance for assets (FFA) in 2022 and 2023 respectively. Further, the percentage of planned number of people that received food assistance for training (FFT) was 16 percent of 53,900 in 2022 and 8 percent of 77,000 in 2023. The food assistance for training component needed more frequent follow-up to reinforce learning and provide additional practical demonstrations to improve understanding of new techniques.<sup>200</sup> On the other hand, the food systems programming faced several barriers including logistical challenges, especially in hard-to-access areas like the Bay and Bakool regions.<sup>201</sup>

111. WFP support brought some positive changes: according to farmers interviewed, the formation of farmer cooperatives and an enhanced collective bargaining power, and some farmers gained access to more stable markets, including the school feeding programme. They also reported that provision of equipment, such as moisture measurement devices, enabled better storage practices, which in turn enabled them to sell at more favourable times and in higher quantities. However, challenges persisted, indicating a failure to fully consider or address the full range and scale of challenges affecting farmers. Inadequate transportation remained an issue, and some farmers felt that market access strategies and understanding pricing could be further improved. Access to sufficient credit was mentioned by a range of informants as being problematic, with the savings available through Village Savings and Loan Associations established by WFP being insufficient to finance the procurement of inputs in adequate quantities. Lastly, the prolonged drought forced some farmers to move to areas where they could get food assistance, which made it difficult for WFP to deliver training, tools, inputs and post-harvest equipment – an issue exacerbated by SO3 donors’ requirement that their funds be used in specific geographical locations, which were generally not the same areas targeted for humanitarian assistance.

112. Output and outcome data have gaps and show consistent underachievement against targets. No data were available for 2022. In 2023, of the 45 output indicators for which there are data, 44 achieved less than

<sup>200</sup> Annual country reports 2022 and 2023.

<sup>201</sup> Focus group discussions with participants.

their target value.<sup>202</sup>(Examples include the number of farmers supported with training, provision of equipment, the rehabilitation of irrigation and access roads, engagement of traders and building the capacity of agricultural extension staff).

113. Outcome results also reveal limited effectiveness. In 2023, the percentage of households with borderline food consumption scores was 39.5, against a target of less than 22 percent. In the same year, over 38 percent of beneficiaries reported resorting to crisis coping strategies in 2023, against a target of less than 12.8).<sup>203</sup>Only the households with a poor food consumption score improved.<sup>204</sup> In 2022, nearly 19,000 beneficiaries were involved in constructing rainwater harvesting structures and rehabilitating critical infrastructure under food assistance for assets, with 74 percent of targeted populations reporting enhanced livelihood assets (although less than a quarter reported improved climate shock management capacity).

#### **Strategic outcome 4: National institutions and government agencies in Somalia benefit from strengthened capacities, policies and systems by 2025**

**Finding 2.2.4a: WFP contributed to capacity strengthening of government ministries but there were limited improvements to security and nutrition policy and programmes given thinly spread resources across ministries, financial constraints on the part of the Government, and weak coordination with other development partners.**

114. In the CSP, WFP made efforts to follow a more strategic and systematic approach to country capacity strengthening (CCS) as compared to in the ICSP, in which the approach to country capacity strengthening was more transactional and activity-based.<sup>205</sup> To operationalize this approach, the country office developed a country capacity strengthening strategic framework aimed at achieving six sector-specific outcomes covering: humanitarian response; logistics and supply chain; social protection; home-grown school feeding; food systems; and nutrition. Within these, WFP prioritized five capacity domains: policy and strategy; systems and tools; human resources; best and most appropriate practice sharing; and a “whole-of-society” approach. Intended forms of support to federal and state ministries included financial resources, technical support and human resources capacity.<sup>206</sup>Both WFP staff and government officials were sensitized on this framework and how to design capacity strengthening “project proposals”.<sup>207</sup>

115. The roll-out of the approach has taken time and, despite efforts in staff sensitization, the approach was not always well understood by WFP staff. Government counterpart submission of country capacity strengthening concept notes proved challenging, and their development needed several iterations. Based on the concept notes, letters of understanding were signed for one year, which did not provide adequate time to complete foreseen activities and necessitated no-cost extensions as well as addendums to fund adjustment.<sup>208</sup>

116. Based on this process, WFP ended up supporting a large number of government ministries relative to available funding, resulting in thinly spread funds. Funds were not adequate to support the capacity strengthening needs identified by government ministries and there were cases where ministries had to significantly scale down their proposals to align with available funds.<sup>209</sup> A total of 60 letters of understanding had been signed with the Government by October 2024, as shown in Table 9 below.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Number of savings associations supported.

<sup>203</sup> Annual country report 2023.

<sup>204</sup> 15.1 percent against a target of <21.1 percent.

<sup>205</sup> WFP Somalia, 2022. Country Capacity Strengthening Strategic Framework.

<sup>206</sup> WFP Somalia, 2022. Country Capacity Strengthening Strategic Framework.

<sup>207</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and government officials.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and government officials.

<sup>210</sup> WFP CCS data.

**Table 9: Number of letters of understanding for country capacity strengthening projects supported by WFP Somalia country office**

<b>Federal/Government/States</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Total</b>
Federal Government	9	9	5	<b>23</b>
Jubaland/ Southwest states	4	7	1	<b>12</b>
Hirshabelle State	1	4	3	<b>8</b>
Somaliland State	2	1	3	<b>6</b>
Puntland State	2	6	3	<b>11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>60</b>

117. WFP faced challenges in defining the anticipated results of country capacity strengthening activities and a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework was not completed. However, qualitative output results for country capacity strengthening were identified from the review of documents such as annual country reviews and interviews with government officials and WFP staff. A summary of the country capacity strengthening outputs is discussed below, and a detailed account provided in Annex 17.

118. Across the strategic priorities for country capacity strengthening, examples of capacity building activities included: support to the development of strategic plans for SoDMA, ministries of agriculture and irrigation at the federal level and for states such as Puntland; and the disaster management strategy for Puntland Ministry of Interior. The strategic planning process for the Federal Ministry of Ports and Maritime Transport is ongoing. The strategic plans enabled the ministries to set out sector priorities, which guided the alignment of support provided to the Government by WFP and other development partners. However, the Government has made limited progress in implementation of these strategic plans due to financial resource constraints and inadequate human resources capacity.<sup>211</sup>

119. WFP also supported the development of institutional structures, systems and tools: for instance, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs established a poverty analysis unit to generate evidence to inform policy advocacy at the Federal Government level and the Federal Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development established interministerial coordination mechanisms for the National Development Plan 9 implementation. This included support for the functioning of the National Development Council. However, the functioning of the coordination mechanism faced challenges in sector reporting and inadequate data to support an overall review of the National Development Plan by the National Development Council. Other coordination mechanisms strengthened include the Scale-up Nutrition (SUN) secretariat and networks aimed at enhancing advocacy for the multisectoral approach to nutrition. Other coordination mechanisms were established at project or programme levels, such as disaster management and response coordination as well as coordination for projects such as joint resilience programmes, nutrition and school feeding. However, the capacity-building component in the support for programme-specific coordination was not well defined. Without WFP financial support, such coordination mechanisms were not likely to be sustained given that they were yet to be institutionalized.<sup>212</sup> Other systems and tools developed included the development of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation structure and systems, but these need resources to operationalize.<sup>213</sup>

120. WFP support for human resources capacity development focused on deploying experts to various ministries to undertake specific functions and to advise the Government, such as the experts deployed to SoDMA and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' poverty unit, as well as those deployed to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Government ministry staff were also trained through workshops, study tours and mentorship.<sup>214</sup>

121. Further, WFP supported the generation of evidence to support reforms and planning. Evidence was generated through surveys and assessments, including: crop-type mapping and seasonal monitoring; the assessment of agricultural livelihoods recovery, led by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation; assessments informing the water sector reforms and development of water sector plans; and the

<sup>211</sup> Interviews with government ministries and WFP staff, and review of ACRs.

<sup>212</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and government officials.

<sup>213</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and government officials.

<sup>214</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and government officials.

assessment of financial inclusion among women supported under the safety net programme led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. However, there is no clear evidence on how these data were utilized.<sup>215</sup>

122. WFP has engaged the Somalia Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Consortium to build the capacity of local non-governmental organizations including cooperating partners. This initiative is at the design stage and the Somalia NGO Consortium is in the process of developing its capacity strengthening framework.<sup>216</sup>

123. The contribution of the capacity strengthening outputs to the planned outcome: “enhancing food security policies, programmes and systems components contributing to zero hunger” was limited due the federal and state governments’ financial and human resources and service delivery systems capacity constraints. This limits the sustainability of results without continued support from WFP. In view of this, either WFP filled a gap where no government programme existed or complemented government capacity to implement existing programmes by providing technical expertise and financial resources (for example, SNHCP). Government programmes, such as the agriculture sector strategies at federal and state levels, the nutrition strategy at the federal level and the school feeding programme, are at a nascent stage and WFP filled financial and technical capacity with a long-term objective of placing the Government on the path to full ownership.<sup>217</sup> Currently, government capacity is not yet sufficient to develop or take over implementation of the food security and nutrition programme.<sup>218</sup>

**A good practice case in WFP support to capacity strengthening: Establishment of government humanitarian response capacity.**

WFP has done particularly well in strengthening government capacity in emergency response both at federal and state levels. At the federal level, WFP supported the Somalia Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA) to develop its 2024-2029 strategic plan, which prioritizes integrated disaster risk management and institutionalizes disaster mainstreaming into development programmes. The strategic plan was also tailored to the needs of communities. WFP support to SoDMA enabled the agency: to conduct multi-hazard assessment and mapping; to develop human resources capacity in early warning and emergency preparedness and response; and to continue the ongoing development of the emergency response coordination mechanisms and a data management system expected to be finalized in 2025. At the state level, WFP supported the humanitarian affairs and disaster management ministries to establish coordination mechanisms, bringing together stakeholders to review emergency response activities, triangulate drought-related information and identify gaps. WFP also conducted joint monitoring of project sites with the ministries, which improved coordination, targeting and timely beneficiary identification. Through this support, the capacity of the Government to coordinate and monitor humanitarian response was improved. In Galmudug, WFP supported the State Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management to develop its strategic plan for 2023-2025 and a disaster management model. In Puntland, the WFP supported the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization to develop a disaster risk management strategy, establish a disaster risk management database and establish disaster risk management committees in two districts. The WFP support has contributed to improved coordination of humanitarian response at federal and state levels.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Document reviews, KIIs.

<sup>218</sup> Annual country report 2023, WFP staff, government officials.

### EQ 2.3 To what extent did WFP contribute to the achievement of cross-cutting aims (protection, accountability to affected populations and gender equality and women's empowerment), and adhere to humanitarian principles?

**Finding 2.3a: In a context of significant protection challenges, WFP demonstrated a strong commitment to protection through application of appropriate policies, and strong efforts to operationalize them and identify and mitigate risks.**

124. Significant protection challenges persist due to conflict and climate shocks resulting in communities in hard-to-reach areas moving to areas where they can access assistance. Humanitarian actors, including WFP, are also exposed to harm (see Section 1.3). Access and security constraints, limited resources and cultural barriers impede full mitigation of protection risks.

125. Against this backdrop, WFP Somalia has translated the WFP Corporate Protection and Accountability Policy to the Somalia context through a country-specific protection framework. The country framework incorporates protection commitments, such as prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), and protection mainstreaming across activities.<sup>219</sup> Protection guidance was rolled out through training to frontline and cooperating partner staff in partnership with UNHCR, as well as conducting area-based protection risk assessments to increase the prospects of targeted people having unhindered access to WFP programmes and receiving assistance without safety concerns and in a dignified way. The assessments also aimed to help towards training cooperating partners, establishing PSEA reporting mechanisms, improving food distribution points and providing regular monitoring. These mechanisms worked well, with minimal cases related to protection being reported.

126. WFP is also part of the protection cluster in Somalia responsible for addressing broader protection risks and solutions to humanitarian assistance in Somalia.<sup>220</sup> In collaboration with the Somalia protection cluster and United Nations partners such as UNHCR, UNICEF and OCHA, WFP Somalia developed inter-agency referral procedures.

127. The country office PSEA task force, comprising senior management and programme managers, received refresher trainings in 2022, and community-based protection efforts were strengthened through training community health workers and partners on gender-based violence prevention and response. A referral pathway (involving linking PSEA clients and survivors with partners with a mandate or programme addressing gender-based violence) was also established and the target population was sensitized on this to enable them to report gender-based violence cases.<sup>221</sup> The reporting infrastructure included confidential mechanisms for survivors, featuring hotlines and suggestion boxes at distribution sites, with a dedicated PSEA focal point in the Galkayo area office. WFP strengthened these measures through engagement with the United Nations Somalia PSEA Network, facilitating awareness-building, training, reporting, investigation and survivor assistance. Collaboration extended to protection clusters led by UNHCR and gender-based violence clusters led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Women for service referrals. WFP has a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse and a referral system was in place but there was no evidence that the mechanism was being used, which might be related to sociocultural barriers to reporting sexual exploitation and abuse.

128. The adoption of mobile money transfers<sup>222</sup> was found to reduce protection risks for women beneficiaries, who formed the bulk of safety net programme beneficiaries. This combined with the SCOPE platform's role in beneficiary and transfer management, contributed to safe and efficient aid distribution. Although initially there was a risk of intimate partner violence, cash diversion by male family members and community backlash associated with the safety net programme, WFP responded through awareness initiatives, digital literacy support and community engagement to successfully address this issue. Indeed,

<sup>219</sup> WFP. 2020. Protection and Accountability Policy.

<sup>220</sup> <https://globalprotectioncluster.org/emergencies/105/Somalia>.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Relating to some beneficiaries' lack of knowledge about the use of the technology.



post-distribution monitoring conducted in 2022 indicated that over 99 percent of beneficiaries reported assistance receipt without safety challenges.<sup>223</sup>

129. Targets for standard protection indicators were to a large extent achieved with between 90 percent and 100 percent of the beneficiaries of food assistance for assets and for training, relief assistance, nutrition and safety net programmes surveyed reported to have received assistance without safety challenges, in a dignified manner and with unhindered access in 2022 and 2023.<sup>224</sup> However, reported instances of insecurity and the threat of sexual abuse or violence during food distribution persist, particularly in IDP settings,<sup>225</sup> despite implementing measures like secure distribution sites and gender-sensitive programming. WFP data corroborate these concerns: protection needs assessment conducted in Baidoa and Marka<sup>226</sup> revealed that 21 percent of respondents faced difficulties accessing protection services, with reasons including minority clan affiliation, disability and gatekeeper refusal.<sup>227</sup>

**Finding 2.3b: WFP established community feedback mechanisms, aligned with the protection and accountability policy and community engagement strategy, but these mechanisms were underutilized due to low awareness among beneficiaries and security concerns hindering community engagement.**

130. The country office aligned its accountability to affected people (AAP) mechanisms to the WFP corporate guidance through tools such as the Accountability to Affected People Operational Guidelines and the Community Engagement Action Plan 2023-2024. The community engagement action plans were adapted to different regional contexts by area offices, articulating communication plans that identify key messages relevant to each region, and communication tips for each programme (food systems, nutrition, relief, school feeding, social protection and cross-cutting areas such as monitoring and SCOPE), and training package on community engagement. WFP staff and cooperating partners were trained to roll out accountability to affected people mechanisms and community engagement.<sup>228</sup>

131. These guidelines and the related training were expected to improve inclusion of communities in programme and activity planning. The level of community engagement, however, varied across strategic outcomes. For instance, engagement was more pronounced in Activity 4 (climate-smart food systems) where consultations were held with farmers, community leaders and local authorities during design and implementation of activities. In Activity 2, consultations were with ministries of education to select schools but there was less engagement of communities except when community education committees were involved in monitoring. Beneficiaries for relief, safety net and nutrition programmes were involved in the programme cycle to a lesser extent resulting in low awareness of these programmes among beneficiaries. For instance, there was limited time to effectively engage communities in the design of relief programmes given the urgency to respond and resources required to engage with a large number of different communities: criteria for safety net programme beneficiary selection were set by government and community engagement was limited, while nutrition programming had predetermined criteria and was implemented at maternal and child health clinics. The low engagement of communities is also partly attributed to the stringent WFP (overall United Nations Department of Safety and Security) guidelines for Somalia, which make it difficult for staff (especially international staff) to spend adequate time at the community level and thus limits the ability of WFP to involve communities in all phases of the programme cycle.<sup>229</sup>

132. WFP and its cooperating partners are expected to provide beneficiaries with information on why they were selected for assistance, the type and size of assistance they will receive, and for how long and the frequency. This enables beneficiaries to provide feedback or complaints and for the WFP to mitigate risks to

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<sup>223</sup> Annual country report 2022.

<sup>224</sup> Annual country reports 2022 and 2023.

<sup>225</sup> This is in part due to limited visibility and presence of government services in IDP camps.

<sup>226</sup> Annual country report 2023.

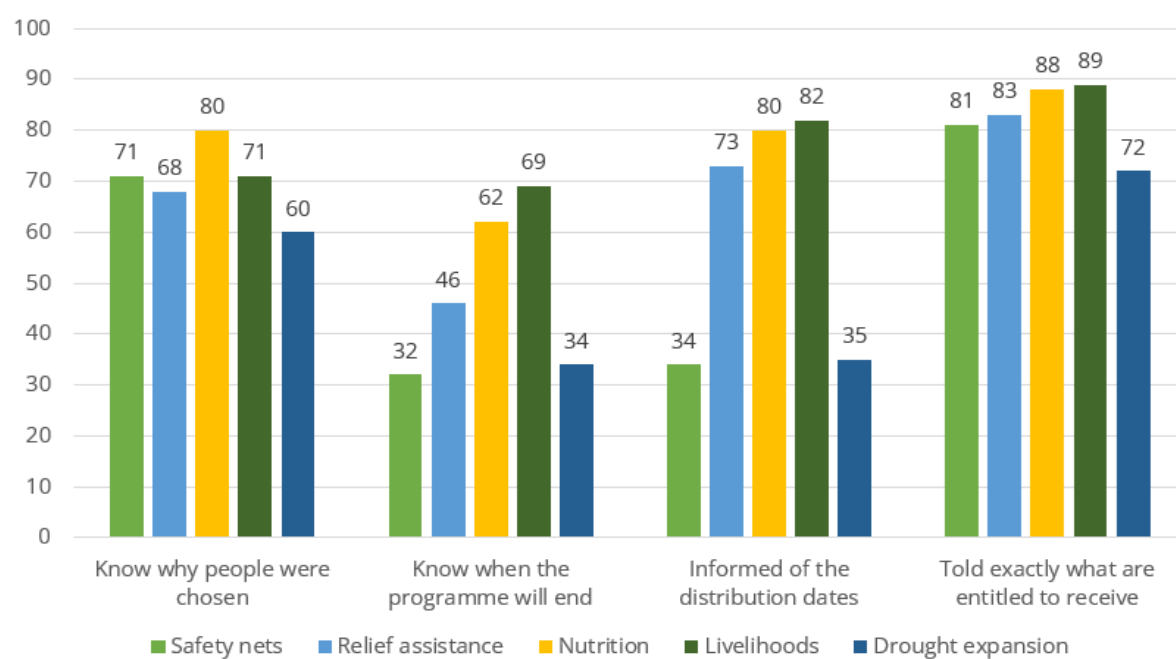
<sup>227</sup> Annual Country Report, 2023

<sup>228</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>229</sup> KIIs with WFP staff, local leaders, district government officials and beneficiary FGDs.

social cohesion. An outcome survey carried out by the country office in 2023 found that knowledge on “reasons for selection” was high among nutrition, livelihood and safety net beneficiaries and moderate among relief and drought expansion beneficiaries. Knowledge on “duration of assistance” and “distribution dates” was low among safety net and drought expansion beneficiaries (see Figure 17).<sup>230</sup> Low knowledge among relief beneficiaries was partly attributed to the rotation of beneficiaries, which did not allow adequate time to sensitize beneficiaries.<sup>231</sup>

**Figure 17: Knowledge on WFP programmes among beneficiaries, June 2024**



Data source: WFP Somalia outcome monitoring survey.

133. WFP strengthened its complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFM) during the CSP period to ensure beneficiaries had a voice. Additional staff were recruited for the call centre, a short code connected to an interactive voice response was established and the toll-free hotline was disseminated widely through printing this number on the back of SCOPE cards, displaying it at food distribution points and through use of radio broadcasts. Helpdesks were set up at registration and distribution points to enable beneficiaries to raise any concern.<sup>232</sup> The cooperating partners also had their own toll-free hotline that beneficiaries could call, and they provided monthly reports on beneficiary complaints and feedback to WFP.<sup>233</sup>

134. Despite the improvement of the community feedback mechanisms, the level of utilization of these mechanisms remained low. In 2024, less than half (41 percent) of the beneficiaries surveyed reported knowing how to use community feedback mechanisms and only 28 percent had used the mechanisms (see Figure 18).<sup>234</sup>

<sup>230</sup> WFP Somalia, June 2023. Outcome monitoring report.

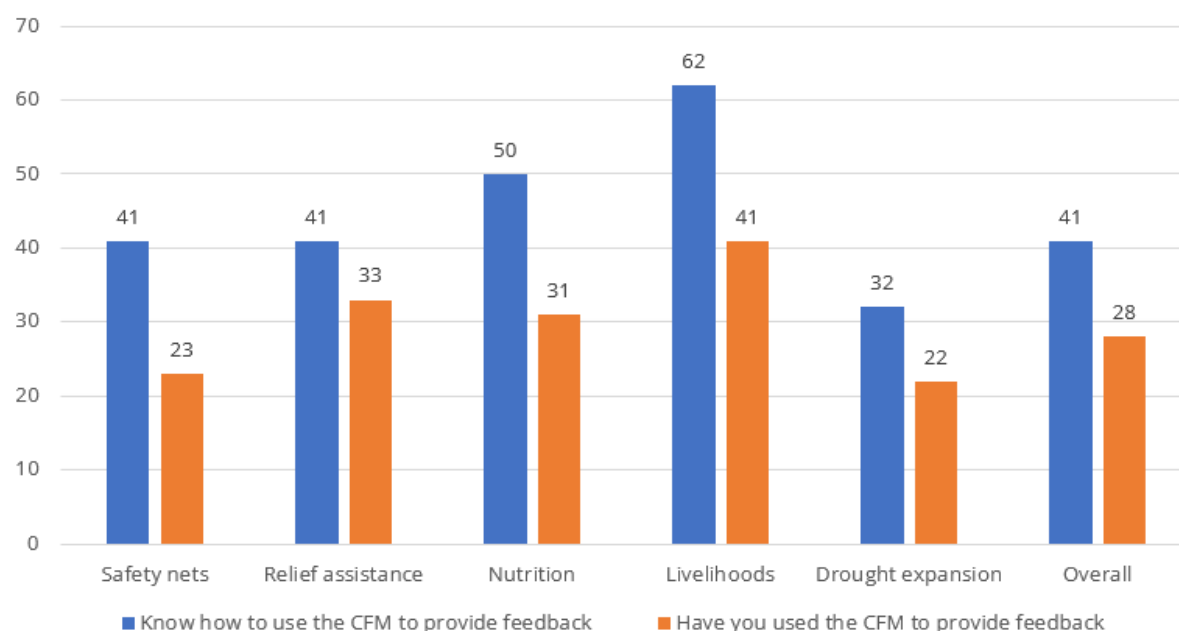
<sup>231</sup> Feedback from WFP staff, cooperating partners, government and local community leaders.

<sup>232</sup> Documents review, interviews with WFP staff, cooperating partners, government, local communities; and beneficiary FGDs.

<sup>233</sup> WFP staff and cooperating partners key informants.

<sup>234</sup> Beneficiary focus group feedback.

**Figure 18: Knowledge about and use of the complaints and feedback mechanisms by beneficiaries by programme, June 2024**



Data source: WFP Somalia: Outcome monitoring survey.

135. WFP held monthly reflection meetings at the area office level, during which they reviewed issues around accountability to affected people arising from process monitoring and identified corrective actions. These actions were then implemented by the programme staff in collaboration with cooperating partners.<sup>235</sup> Some of the corrective actions included enhancing communication and transparency around beneficiary selection, translating all communications into the Somali language and changing food distribution points and modalities to address concerns on distance to distribution points. These actions had a positive effect on implementation.<sup>236</sup> However, the large dataset of the beneficiary feedback received at the call centres is not analysed to inform the overall programming.<sup>237</sup>

**Finding 2.3c: Although gender equality and women's empowerment strategies were successfully integrated into programming, more time is needed to yield results given cultural barriers and societal dynamics illustrated by low participation of women in beneficiary selection committees.**

136. Both the ICSP and the CSP documented commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) through various strategies including gender analysis, programming to involve women in decision making, ensuring women's participation, and monitoring gender-related indicators. Similarly, there was a commitment to disability inclusion through data collection, capacity strengthening and targeting vulnerable groups. These commitments were intended to be mainstreamed across WFP activities in Somalia<sup>238</sup> and are aligned to the WFP gender policy and disability roadmap.

137. The country office took measures to implement the corporate gender policy.<sup>239</sup> Specific steps included: setting up a gender unit and recruiting gender officers at the country office and area offices; developing

<sup>235</sup> Annual country reports, WFP staff and cooperating partners interviews.

<sup>236</sup> Annual country reports, WFP staff and cooperating partners interviews.

<sup>237</sup> The evaluation did not find evidence on how the large data set of feedback received at the call centre was analysed and fed into programming and other strategic decisions.

<sup>238</sup> ICSP Narrative- Approved, ICSP Achievements and Lessons Learned, Somalia CSP- Executive Board Approved.

<sup>239</sup> Prior to 2023, there was one gender officer in the organization and limited progress had been made according to responses from WFP staff and cooperating partners.

gender mainstreaming action plans in each area office for each strategic outcome; training WFP staff and cooperating partners on gender mainstreaming; and developing gender mainstreaming and gender reporting checklists adopted by programmes and cooperating partners. A gender community of practice has also been established<sup>240</sup> reporting to the senior management level on progress.<sup>241, 242</sup>

138. Efforts to integrate GEWE into programming include:

- Integrating Gender-responsive SBCC into programming for men and women to stimulate positive behaviour change in nutrition practices to encourage men to be involved in decisions about child and household nutrition.<sup>243</sup>
- Prioritizing women as recipients of assistance and thus reaching 59 percent and 52 percent of women in 2022 and 2023 respectively to be the primary beneficiaries for the Safety Net for Human Capital Project. The women also received financial literacy training. Approximately 40 percent of the targeted 3000 smallholder farmers were women and they were provided with agricultural production inputs and labour-saving equipment under the Kobciye project<sup>244</sup>, and a further 35 percent of farmers who were trained in marketing and business skills under the supporting resilient smallholder farming system (SRSFS) project were women.<sup>245</sup>
- Promoting women's financial literacy and digital inclusion, with women beneficiaries of the safety net programme trained on mobile money usage, leading to a 50 percent increase in independent mobile money users among the women trained.<sup>246</sup>
- Women were encouraged to participate in decision making and community engagement. In 2023 between 46-50 percent of women were the major decision makers in households receiving WFP assistance under food assistance for assets, relief and safety nets.<sup>247</sup>

139. WFP is also investing in enhancing the capacity of staff and partners through training and the adaptation of gender toolkits. This includes the development of minimum standards for integrating gender and protection in field-level agreements and those standards being implemented by partners.<sup>248</sup>

140. WFP conducted studies to inform gender programming, such as the climate risk assurance gender analysis and a mapping of gender and women's rights NGOs, alongside disability NGOs, which can be partners in the future.<sup>249</sup> There is also an ongoing women in agriculture index study, focusing on the role of women in agricultural value chains, and the use of cash by women and its contribution to decision making at the household level.<sup>250</sup>

141. WFP integrated the disability component into all post-distribution outcome monitoring checklists and distribution report templates.<sup>251</sup> WFP collected sex-disaggregated disability data using the Washington Group Questions. A disability inclusion assessment was undertaken in 2021 to document risks likely to

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<sup>240</sup> Gender community of practice is led by the Deputy Head of Programmes at the country office level and by the Head of Programmes at the area office level.

<sup>241</sup> Community of practice reports to the Country Director on progress in the gender action plan implementation.

<sup>242</sup> Documents review, interviews with WFP staff at country office and area offices and cooperating partners.

<sup>243</sup> Annual country reports for 2022 and 2023; interviews with WFP staff and focus group discussions with beneficiaries of the nutrition programme.

<sup>244</sup> EU funded livelihoods project which has provided farmers in three Somali states (Puntland, Jubaland, Galmudug) farming equipment and training.

<sup>245</sup> Annual country reports for 2022 and 2023.

<sup>246</sup> Third Party Monitoring - Safety Net for Human Capital Project Post-Distribution Monitoring Report.

<sup>247</sup> Annual country reports for 2022 and 2023, and Third-Party Monitoring - Safety Net for Human Capital Project Post-Distribution Monitoring Report as well as interviews with WFP staff and beneficiary FGDs.

<sup>248</sup> Documents review, interviews with WFP staff at country office and area offices and cooperating partners.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

impact the lives of the people whom WFP assists and WFP programmatic outcomes.<sup>252</sup> In 2022, WFP took steps towards operationalizing recommendations from the assessment. WFP worked with organizations of people with disabilities, minority-led organizations, and other protection actors to ensure that those affected by the drought crisis were reached with lifesaving humanitarian assistance.<sup>253</sup>

**Finding 2.3d: Deliberate efforts by WFP to respect the humanitarian principles had a positive impact on CSP performance and partnerships. By prioritizing vulnerable populations, strengthening accountability and collaborating with key stakeholders, WFP demonstrated a commitment to delivering aid in a principled and effective manner, even in a complex and challenging operational context.**

142. WFP humanitarian work is guided by the core humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence. These tenets aim to ensure that its lifesaving assistance gets to those who need it most, regardless of gender, class, race, political opinions, status or location.<sup>254</sup>

### **Principle of humanity**

143. WFP prioritized the most vulnerable populations including women, children, persons with disabilities and minority groups when providing humanitarian assistance.<sup>255</sup> There were, however, funding limitations that challenged coverage of identified needs for school feeding and nutrition interventions. This meant that the needs of schoolchildren in crisis-affected locations were not met and significantly that potentially vulnerable groups that required nutrition interventions were left out.

144. To maintain coverage amidst limited funding, WFP implemented strategies such as reducing the number of months for cash-based transfer rotation to three, prioritizing vulnerable people under IPC 4 and 5, and employing various targeting mechanisms, including vulnerability assessments, community-based selection and geographical targeting to identify the most vulnerable. Targeting and prioritization, while aiming to reach the most vulnerable with limited resources, inevitably led to some level of exclusion. The ability of WFP to reach vulnerable populations was also affected by security and access constraints arising from ongoing conflict, political fragmentation and the presence of non-state armed groups. For example, WFP faced challenges reaching people in Al Shabaab-controlled areas due to security reasons, which forced some of these communities to move to areas where assistance was being offered.<sup>256</sup>

145. WFP commitment to protection was evident in its efforts to mitigate risks during assistance delivery. This included security assessments, safe-distribution practices and coordination with partners. However, security constraints and limited resources could hinder the full realization of protection aims.<sup>257</sup>

146. WFP also leveraged its partners' established presence and networks to reach beneficiaries in hard-to-reach areas. For instance, in expanding nutrition treatment services, WFP worked with field-level partners and leveraged UNICEF's operational presence to provide specialized nutritious foods to vulnerable populations. This collaboration was successful in accessing 15 hard-to-reach locations that had previously not been reached with assistance.<sup>258</sup>

### **Principle of impartiality**

147. WFP aimed to adhere to the principle of impartiality by distributing assistance based on needs assessments<sup>259</sup> and vulnerability criteria.<sup>260</sup> This ensured that aid was provided fairly and without

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/stories/world-food-programme-values-drive-us>.

<sup>255</sup> Annual country report 2023.

<sup>256</sup> KIs with cooperating partners, WFP staff, district government officials and donors.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Annual country reports 2022, 2023.

<sup>259</sup> Annual country report 2020.

<sup>260</sup> ICSP Executive Board Narrative.

discrimination. The depth and coverage of the needs assessments are broad and cover various population groups, employing a range of methodologies to understand their specific vulnerabilities. This includes using IPC analysis enhanced with diverse data such as climate, displacement and nutrition, alongside multisectoral needs assessments for a holistic view. Vulnerability assessments are regularly conducted to identify the most at-risk based on factors like food insecurity, malnutrition, displacement and disability. For specific sectors, such as nutrition, active and passive screening at community and health facility levels were utilized. Moreover, WFP leverages the humanitarian needs overview for broader planning and increasingly adopts data-driven approaches like IDP site verification and vulnerability-based targeting, which often incorporate biometric data for enhanced accuracy. These multifaceted assessments aim to capture the diverse needs of various population groups, including internally displaced people, refugees, women, children, marginalized communities (including minority clans), and persons with disabilities.<sup>261</sup>

148. However, targeting efforts proved unable to overcome all aspects of clan dynamics and some leaders' self-interests, in some instances this led to the reported exclusion of eligible households.<sup>262</sup> While efforts were made to incorporate gender and disability considerations, challenges in data collection, cultural norms and the influence of local power dynamics had the potential to affect impartiality of assistance.<sup>263</sup>

### **Neutrality**

149. The perceived neutrality of WFP in Somalia is influenced by several interconnected factors. These include: the complex political and clan dynamics that can shape perceptions of aid distribution fairness; the necessity of engaging with government entities and partners, which carries a risk of perceived bias; and security and access limitations that can lead to uneven distribution and feelings of neglect in certain areas.<sup>264</sup> Furthermore, issues of aid diversion and the influence of gatekeepers, especially in IDP settings, can undermine trust, while the effectiveness of WFP communication and transparency regarding targeting and delivery mechanisms plays a crucial role in either reinforcing or challenging its neutrality.

150. WFP emphasizes neutrality by avoiding taking sides and making independent decisions based on humanitarian needs. The organization strives to maintain transparency and accountability and engages with diverse local partners to ensure it is perceived as neutral.<sup>265</sup> Maintaining a neutral position was especially challenging in situations of intense political debate, particularly during the 2022 elections. WFP was able to respond to the needs of displaced persons, even in politically contested areas, by maintaining a neutral position during the conflict between Khatumo and Somaliland. On the other hand, the fact that WFP did not negotiate with non-state actors (mainly Al Shabaab) to access areas under their control but implemented operations in government-controlled areas led some stakeholders, including government officials, to suggest that they perceived WFP as being aligned with the Government. In Somaliland, a perception by state government officials that WFP decisions are influenced by the Federal Government, resulting in less financial resources allocation to Somaliland, persists.<sup>266</sup>

### **Operational independence**

151. While WFP strives to maintain a non-political stance, its operations are influenced by the necessity of partnering with government entities and numerous local and international organizations for implementation and access, which can introduce dependencies and the risk that WFP is perceived as aligning with political objectives of these actors. Funding limitations, coupled with the unpredictability and specific conditions of donor contributions, constrain the ability of WFP to plan and respond flexibly.

152. In addition, WFP focuses on people with the most need, based on vulnerability assessments as previously discussed<sup>267</sup> and its staff are trained to understand and uphold humanitarian principles and are empowered to push back against external pressure. In instances, when WFP faced pressure for the

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<sup>261</sup> SOP on Targeting and Rotation of Beneficiaries; KIIs with WFP staff, cooperating partners and government officials

<sup>262</sup> KIIs with community leaders, WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> KIIs with WFP staff, government officials and cooperating partners.

<sup>265</sup> Annual country reports.

<sup>266</sup> WFP staff and government key informants.

<sup>267</sup> Annual country reports 2020 and 2021.

selection of specific NGOs as cooperating partners, this was mitigated through a transparent communication of selection criteria and process and openness to discuss the process, while at the same time rejecting the questioning of results.<sup>268</sup> In Somaliland, WFP faced pressure to transmit cash-based transfers through the central bank and in the local currency. WFP addressed these challenges through clear communication of the criteria and process for its decision making with the Government, and acting in solidarity with other partners such as the cash consortium partners.<sup>269</sup>

## **EQ 2.4 To what extent did the CSP facilitate strategic linkages between humanitarian action, development cooperation and contributions to peace as far as feasible in Somalia, and foster sustainability of achievements, including leveraging more permanent solutions to recurrent food crises in Somalia?**

**Finding 2.4a: While the humanitarian-development-peace nexus was articulated in the CSP design, during the implementation, activities and approaches that promoted humanitarian and development linkages and contributions to peace were few and small-scale due to inadequate funding.**

153. The CSP foresees a logical link from humanitarian action to longer-term development objectives – in other words, graduating people from relief to self-sufficiency through integrated programming. This logic is also articulated in WFP Somalia Climate-Smart Food Systems Strategy (2023-2025) and in the early recovery intervention introduced in the third budget revision.

154. During the CSP implementation, some of the activities and implementation approaches promoted humanitarian-development linkages. These include inter-agency coordination of the joint resilience projects<sup>270</sup> by WFP, UNICEF and FAO, which integrated nutrition, education, water and sanitation, livelihood and food security interventions delivered in the same geographical location and targeting the same community. This represents a shift from pure humanitarian assistance to longer-term development work through collaboration with other partners, which is aligned with government priorities.<sup>271</sup> Through budget revision 3 in 2024, WFP sought to target a selected number of beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance with early recovery interventions. Beneficiaries of the safety net programme were also provided with top-up cash to enable them to withstand shock during the time of crisis.<sup>272</sup>

155. However, the activities promoting humanitarian and development linkages have largely been small-scale and not always integrated due to uneven allocation of resources and resource mobilization limitations with donors earmarking their funds to specific activities and geographical locations. For example, while SO1 activities are implemented nationwide, SO2 (safety net and nutrition) and SO3 (food systems) are much smaller scale or geographically limited, making beneficiary graduation or referral from SO1 to resilience and livelihood programmes challenging.<sup>273</sup>

156. Beyond its key role in food assistance,<sup>274</sup> there is limited evidence of programmatic efforts made by WFP to contribute to peace. For instance, the Federal Government of Somalia encouraged WFP to provide assistance in “newly liberated” areas and foster peace through addressing urgent food security and nutrition needs. WFP responded to such requests through its expansion of access framework. WFP also conducted assessments to ensure that unintended negative consequences, such as intra-community conflict, are minimized. But these appear to be the limits of any direct peacebuilding work and WFP has not established linkages to organizations working in this area.

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<sup>268</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and government officials.

<sup>269</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, cooperating partners and government.

<sup>270</sup> Resilient smallholder farming systems (SRSFS) and KS.

<sup>271</sup> Government officials, WFP staff, cooperating partners, donors and other UN agencies.

<sup>272</sup> WFP staff, government officials, donors, and beneficiary FGDs.

<sup>273</sup> WFP staff, government officials, cooperating partners, other UN agencies.

<sup>274</sup> WFP Evaluation of Policy on WFP's Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings (2023)

**Finding 2.4b: WFP Somalia leveraged permanent solutions to the recurring food crises in Somalia to a small extent given the large scale of the crises and challenges in operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. However, WFP integrated anticipatory action resilience building and government capacity strengthening that can potentially be permanent solutions to the food crises in the long run.**

157. Over the course of the CSP, WFP attempted to leverage permanent solutions to recurrent food crises, with a key strategy being strengthening climate-smart food systems to protect and restore livelihoods and build resilience against future shocks and using the government social protection system to respond to shocks as a way of strengthening national systems for future response as detailed in EQ 2.2.<sup>275</sup>

158. However, the SO3 activities have remained at a small scale while WFP remains the lead humanitarian agency in Somalia for responding to recurring food crises. In the Somalia context, where a huge number of people (over 50 percent of the population in 2022) are affected by crisis, it is not envisaged that WFP could successfully link such a large cohort from relief to resilience and livelihood programmes.<sup>276</sup> On the other hand, the strengthening of the social protection system has shown promise, as the delivery of the safety net programme has successfully transitioned to the Government, with WFP playing a technical partner role.

159. WFP Somalia acknowledges this limitation and is taking measures to promote programme integration by introducing a linkage between relief and early recovery. Specifically, budget revision 3 is targeting locations where such linkages are feasible. WFP also introduced the integration of anticipatory action in resilience building to avoid food security becoming acute when crisis hits. This approach was tested in responding to floods in Hirshabelle and Lower Juba regions, where communities were sensitized on the likelihood of floods occurring and provided with support to enhance their resilience ahead of the crisis, with positive results. Despite the anticipatory action being implemented at a small scale, WFP demonstrated its ability to successfully pioneer the implementation of flood-specific anticipatory action in Somalia.<sup>277</sup> WFP also strengthened government capacity in emergency preparedness and response through the support to the Somalia Disaster Management Agency and the ministries of humanitarian affairs and disaster management at the state level in early warning, multi-hazard assessment and establishment of mechanisms, humanitarian response coordination and monitoring. However, these institutions have inadequate staff and financial resources, and it will take time to establish sufficient emergency preparedness and response capacity.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> CSP document.

<sup>276</sup> WFP staff, donors, government officials and other UN agencies.

<sup>277</sup> WFP. 2024. Anticipatory Action Evidence Generation Report (March-May 2024).

<sup>278</sup> Donors, WFP staff, and other UN agencies.



## 2.3. EQ 3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently?

### EQ 3.1 How well prepared was WFP to respond to the threat of famine and other crises in Somalia?

**Finding 3.1a: The preparedness of WFP to respond to the threat of famine and other crises in Somalia was appropriate and sufficient, mainly due to its investment over time in human resources capacity, systems, supply chains and processes, but there were challenges in timely identification and registration of beneficiaries.**

160. WFP demonstrated its preparedness to respond to crisis, especially during the 2022 drought.<sup>279</sup> Key components included: 1) the early warning system comprising its vulnerability and mapping (VAM) assessments coupled with IPC analysis, which enabled WFP to anticipate the drought emergency;<sup>280</sup> 2) human resources policies and procedures that were used to activate the “surge capacity” to support the corporate scale-up; 3) procurement procedures tailored to support early response to crisis including the revision of field-level agreements (FLAs) to increase caseloads covered by cooperating partners and activating long-term agreements for suppliers and service providers;<sup>281</sup> 4) well-established supply chain infrastructure that delivered in-kind food assistance in a timely manner, as well as partnerships with telecommunication companies that delivered cash-based transfers supported by a large network of retailers; and 5) pre-positioning of nutritious foods purchased through the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) reducing the procurement lead time by two months.

161. However, some aspects of preparedness did not work well. The deployment of the surge capacity was delayed due to the bureaucratic process in getting the “temporary deployment of staff” into the country.<sup>282</sup> The SCOPE system was also found not to support quick response to emergencies as it took time to identify and register new beneficiaries. As mentioned, this system worked well in situations where beneficiaries were already registered in the systems, such as those receiving safety net cash-based transfers and nutrition support.<sup>283</sup>

### EQ 3.2 To what extent were the CSP outputs delivered within the intended timeframe, in particular in response to successive humanitarian emergencies?

**Finding 3.2a: WFP strategies to prevent upstream and downstream food assistance pipeline breaks, which included the use of advance funding mechanisms, accessing globally prepositioned goods and flexible delivery modalities, were largely successful with minimal reports of delays in provision of assistance for relief beneficiaries. However, challenges experienced with the SCOPE system and harsh weather affected commodity transportation contributing to instances of delay in delivery.**

162. WFP had systems in place to ensure food assistance was timely, leading to minimal delays in provision of assistance.<sup>284</sup> Challenges were, however, cited with the SCOPE system due to frequent version updates which would, in some instances, lead to beneficiaries missing their entitlements. Furthermore, the persistent risk of aid diversion that necessitates stringent controls and monitoring mechanisms impacted operational procedures and posed challenges to delivering assistance on time. Other challenges included: harsh weather affecting commodity transportation; poor road infrastructure; long supply chains when moving commodities between ports; and short shelf-life of nutrition commodities.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> WFP. 2017. Emergency and Preparedness Policy.

<sup>280</sup> KIIs, annual country reports.

<sup>281</sup> WFP staff interviews.

<sup>282</sup> Interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>283</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>284</sup> Some internally displaced people beneficiaries reported noting that the processes were more organized and faster compared to previous times they had received assistance.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

163. WFP increasingly relied on internal advance financing mechanisms to initiate early spending based on projected donor contributions (see Table 10 on WFP use of Internal Project Lending (IPL)), the Immediate Response Account (IRA) and the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF<sup>286</sup>). This helped bridge funding gaps and ensured a more consistent flow of resources for commodity procurement and distribution. All immediate response allocations (2019 to 2023) were directed towards unconditional resource transfers to support access to food.<sup>287</sup> The WFP Finance Committee reports show long lead time gains of between 57 and 81 percent for Somalia operations as a result of the GCMF purchases to cater for humanitarian food needs.

**Table 10: WFP use of the Internal Project Lending, the Immediate Response Account and the Global Commodity Management Facility by WFP in Somalia 2019-2023**

Year	Internal Project Lending advances (USD Millions)	Immediate Response Account allocation (USD millions)	GCMF purchases (USD millions, food value only)	Lead time gain (%) <sup>288</sup>
2019	60.1	1.4	27.7	68
2020	47	-	33.2	57
2021	64.6	0.2	18.1	81
2022	82.6	98.8	63.2	61
2023	101.3	9.5	21.6	57

Source: WFP Finance Committee: Report on the utilization of WFP advance financing mechanisms, 2019-2023.

164. WFP leveraged its global procurement network and strategically pre-positioned food stocks in key locations to anticipate and respond to potential needs rapidly for Somalia. This proactive approach helped deliver assistance in a timely manner during crises such as during the floods in 2023.

165. WFP prioritized cash-based transfers, which can be disbursed more quickly than in-kind food assistance, reducing the need for complex logistics and increasing efficiency. In 2023, WFP delivered USD 453.7 million through cash-based transfers, highlighting its commitment to this modality. While recognizing the advantages of cash-based transfers, WFP maintained the capacity for in-kind food distribution, particularly in areas where markets are dysfunctional or where specific nutritional needs require specialized food commodities.<sup>289</sup>

**Finding 3.2b: WFP leveraged predictable funding and its networks and technology to successfully deliver cash transfers for beneficiaries of the SNHCP. Nutrition and school feeding programme activities were mostly delivered within intended timeframes, although the school feeding programme was affected by significant funding shortfalls and, in some cases, logistical challenges.**

<sup>286</sup> IPL is a mechanism that provides country offices with advance financing for a programme before a contribution to that programme has been confirmed, with the forecast contribution serving as collateral for the advance. The IRA enables WFP to provide immediate assistance through the allocation of flexible, replenishable, revolving multilateral funds to critical life-saving activities in the absence of forecast contributions. GCMF is a strategic financing mechanism through which WFP purchases food in anticipation of country office operational needs and confirmed contributions, with the objective of reducing lead times for food deliveries (especially in emergencies), (Source: WFP Finance Committee: Report on the utilization of WFP's advance financing mechanisms (1 January-31 December 2019).

<sup>287</sup> Report on the utilization of WFP's advance funding mechanisms (2019).

<sup>288</sup> Lead time gains refer to the reduction in the time it takes to purchase food from the GCMF compared to conventional purchases. The percentage indicates the number of days the country office was able to receive food through GCMF against the number of days it would have taken through conventional purchases.

<sup>289</sup> Document reviews, KIIs with WFP staff, government officials and cooperating partners.

166. WFP successfully scaled up the safety net programme, utilizing its established operational network to enrol participants and its partnership with the telecom companies to make mobile money transfers.<sup>290</sup> In 2023, it transitioned to a fixed, predictable disbursement schedule for the programme. However, beneficiaries reported experiencing delays in receiving their financial support, often stemming from logistical challenges, data management issues and complexities in the payment delivery process. A few beneficiaries (38 percent) reported delays of two months or longer in receiving their cash transfers under the safety net for locust response.<sup>291</sup>

167. Under most circumstances, school feeding activities were implemented on time. The school feeding programme voucher card system operated efficiently in locations like Dollow, Baidoa and Beletweyne, with regular weekly top-ups enabling consistent and regular food procurement from authorized retailers.<sup>292</sup> Nevertheless, the school feeding programme was disrupted due to inconsistent funding and reliance on ad hoc contributions. This created an unpredictable “stop-and-go” approach that affected programme continuity. Other issues included administrative challenges that created disruptions within affected schools, such as delays in voucher distribution when a headteacher left a school and another one was employed.

168. The SCOPE system posed problems for nutrition partners, whose staff found that the fingerprint reader devices did not work,<sup>293</sup> or that the system could not issue SCOPE cards, especially during the scale-up period. This resulted in communities receiving their entitlements late. Supply chain issues, such as effective forecasting and quantification of specialized nutritional foods commodities required, manifested in stockouts of nutritious foods at health facilities, while transportation difficulties in remote areas, particularly during rainy seasons, impacted delivery timeliness. The impact of these delays was increased because of the short shelf life of some of the nutrition commodities – particularly Corn Soya Blend, a significant quantity of which had to be disposed of over the course of the CSP because of spoilage.

### **EQ 3.3 To what extent was the CSP delivered in a cost-efficient manner and how well were limited resources optimized?**

**Finding 3.3a: WFP Somalia demonstrated cost consciousness in its operations and CSP implementation approaches especially in delivery of humanitarian assistance.**

169. The improvement of cost efficiency has been one of the annual priorities of WFP in Somalia since 2022. WFP Somalia has demonstrated cost consciousness by undertaking cost-saving measures that were responsive to Somalia’s operating context.

170. To improve cost efficiency, WFP has increased use of cash-based transfers (Figure 12). This reduced food transport expenditure<sup>294</sup>, as well as mitigating supply chain risks such as poor road networks and break down of trucks. Cash-based transfers also provided households with flexibility to use in line with their own priorities, which was generally preferred.<sup>295</sup> Cash transfers have also benefited retailers by increasing the number of consumers with purchasing power. In addition, the local retailers purchase food from local farmers, which creates a reliable market for their harvests and helps generate income for the farmers.<sup>296</sup>

171. For in-kind food assistance, which requires investment in supply chain and logistics such as warehousing, inland transport using private sector, inland storage facilities for cooperating partners and the related risk management and monitoring activities to ensure food insecure populations in remote areas of Somalia are assisted, WFP has identified cost efficiency measures. These included the optimization of warehouse utilization, which led to the closure of Bossaso field office.

<sup>290</sup> KIIs with WFP staff and FGDs.

<sup>291</sup> MoLSA Third Party Monitoring Draft Report\_22012023; FGDs with beneficiaries.

<sup>292</sup> Headteachers, education officials and WFP staff.

<sup>293</sup> Unable to read fingerprints, no network, problems with updating the software.

<sup>294</sup> COMET report CM-R014.

<sup>295</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, government officials and beneficiary focus group discussions.

<sup>296</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and retailers.

172. WFP established area offices and field offices for closer engagement with state and local governments, as well as communities for programme development and implementation at the regional level. WFP area and field offices have the requisite security and logistics required to manage the risk facing staff and to support programme implementation in the Somalia context, which makes direct support costs a major cost driver

173. There were further cost-conscious measures taken by WFP Somalia. include: (1) consolidation of the number of cooperating partners from 100 in 2022 to 53 in 2024, by having cooperating partners implement multiple activities. This enables cooperating partners to optimize their costs through multi-tasking of staff and sharing indirect costs. However, the food transfer costs related to cooperating partners marginally increased from 27 percent in 2022 to 32 percent in 2023, which reflects increased food transfer costs by cooperating partners, which in turn is partly associated with the scale-up of the emergency response.<sup>297</sup> (2) WFP Somalia improved its area and field offices. Although actual cost saved through this measure has not been quantified, qualitative data show the one-off investment has had a positive effect on risk mitigation and will accrue benefits long term.<sup>298</sup> (3) WFP Somalia has undertaken an ongoing rationalization of warehouses, a review of international and national staff field mission protocols and optimization of procurement of goods and services. These cost saving measures point to more efficiency in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.<sup>299</sup>

### **EQ 3.4 How effectively did WFP anticipate and manage risks to staff and operations?**

**Finding 3.4a: WFP has established and strengthened existing risk management protocols focusing on security and maintained a dynamic approach to anticipating and mitigating risks. Weaknesses remain relating to low information sharing with beneficiaries and the use of SCOPE for tracking nutrition support.**

174. Somalia's challenging operating context is one of frequently disrupted operations and exacerbated food insecurity. Security and access challenges hampered last-mile implementation, and the risk of post-distribution aid diversion (PDAD) due to fraud and corruption was significant. Limited capacity of cooperating partners, logistical hurdles due to poor infrastructure, and the constant threat of gender-based violence posed additional challenges. Financial risks were dominated by funding shortfalls and unpredictability, inflation and market volatility hindering long-term planning, required frequent resource reallocations and impacted the effectiveness of assistance. Due to a combination of these risks, and PDAD in particular, WFP Somalia was identified as one of 31 high-risk WFP operations in May 2023.

175. WFP has a systematic approach to risk management for both staff and operations and has adjusted to emergent issues over the course of the CSP. The risk management architecture included a dedicated risk management unit deployed to proactively identify and monitor risks. WFP adhered to United Nations security protocols that restricted operations in areas deemed unsafe by the Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). Recognizing the inherent risks of operating through cooperating partners, all partners underwent a thorough vetting process<sup>300</sup> before field-level agreements were signed. The trade-off in adhering to the WFP and UNDSS security protocols was limited direct access of WFP staff to communities, which was mitigated by working through cooperating partners.

176. Staff safety received particular attention through security and emergency response procedure training, and regular risk assessments prior to movement in coordination with UNDSS. Some risk to staff was "outsourced" by the use of third-party monitors – a process guided by the access expansion framework.

177. WFP significantly focused on operational risk management, implementing various control mechanisms. Shifting from in-kind assistance to cash-based transfers in high-risk areas, and the use of biometric authentication technology and SCOPE at registration points helped prevent duplicate beneficiary

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<sup>297</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and cooperating partners.

<sup>298</sup> Interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>299</sup> Synthesis of evaluation data.

<sup>300</sup> Examining internal controls, policies, and financial management practices of potential collaborators.

registrations (although the platform was not particularly well suited to preventing multiple registrations of the same child for nutrition support). However, the transition to cash-based transfers, while offering benefits mentioned earlier, introduced new vulnerabilities related to market price fluctuations. Other measures mitigating operational risks included: the training of cooperating partners and raising awareness of community members and government staff on the humanitarian assistance provided; ink coding of packaging; vehicle tracking; and the use of the last-mile mobile application. However, several systemic weaknesses remained, including limited use of the logistics services market assessment due to the low adoption of it by cooperating partners,<sup>301</sup> and the low levels of programme information sharing with beneficiaries, as revealed in 2023 post-distribution monitoring.

178. Post-delivery aid diversion (PDAD) emerged as probably the primary risk concern in WFP operations, prompting institutional recognition and response through the assurance plan. Risks were associated with the use of community-based targeting: there were opportunities for resources to be diverted after reaching initial distribution points; there was the influence of gatekeepers, including landlords, requiring a share of the assistance given to internally displaced people; and beneficiaries themselves could trade the food provided in markets in order to purchase their preferred foods, among other risks.

179. WFP developed an enhanced Somalia Assurance Plan under the Global Assurance Framework and started its implementation in January 2024 to address PDAD and other operational risks in a more comprehensive approach. The assurance plan addressed the following key areas:

- i. Vulnerability-based targeting approach: WFP piloted a vulnerability-based targeting scorecard for unbiased household identification and to reduce gatekeeper influence (for example, in Baidoa, Mogadishu and Dolow). This is being integrated into the WFP targeting strategy.
- ii. Identity management: WFP introduced full household registration to minimize beneficiary duplication and reduce assistance lead times.
- iii. Supply chain management: WFP used enhanced warehouse and in-transit stock controls, and augmented cooperating partner controls.
- iv. Monitoring and feedback: WFP introduced process monitoring, reflection meeting, and strengthening of call centre for feedback response.
- v. Improved cooperating partner management: WFP revised the partnership strategy, partnered with the Somalia NGO Consortium for civil society organizations' capacity and launched the Partner Connect platform for digitized reporting and risk-based oversight.
- vi. Risk management: WFP restructured the risk management unit for better human resources, developed an incident management and reporting system, and engaged the Government on fraud management, including PDAD.<sup>302</sup>

180. The assurance measures, including those addressing PDAD, to a large extent contributed to maintaining and enhancing donor trust in WFP Somalia to provide humanitarian assistance leading to sustained donor funding.<sup>303</sup>

181. WFP contributed to efforts addressing PDAD by conducting a political economy study and supporting the development of a joint strategy and action plan with the humanitarian country team. It also helped federal and state authorities establish policies and laws banning the sale of humanitarian food aid and monitored markets for compliance. In 2023, WFP and IOM initiated data sharing for deduplication and identifying households attempting multiple registrations. However, broader data governance challenges, which are beyond the scope of this evaluation, continue to hinder coordinated targeting and deduplication.

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<sup>301</sup> In 2022, only 42 percent of waybills were processed using logistics services market assessment.

<sup>302</sup> WFP Somalia Global Assurance Plan and budget quarter 4 2024 report.

<sup>303</sup> Interviews with donors and WFP staff.

## **EQ 4 What are the critical internal and external factors that explain performance and results?<sup>304</sup>**

### **EQ 4.1 To what extent has WFP been able to mobilize adequate, timely, predictable and flexible resources to finance the CSP?**

**Finding 4.1a: WFP mobilized adequate resources for relief and nutrition activities but less for school feeding, resilience and livelihood and capacity strengthening activities. Consequently, WFP was able to achieve results in the areas where funding was available.**

182. The adequacy of financial resources was one of the factors that determined programme performance. To a large extent, adequate financial resources were mobilized for relief and air transport and logistics activities to respond to humanitarian priorities. About half of the financial resources needed for nutrition and capacity strengthening activities were mobilized, while funds mobilized for school feeding (SO2) and food systems (SO4) were inadequate.<sup>305</sup>

183. Resource mobilization strategies for humanitarian assistance, especially during the protracted drought period, were adequate. These included collaborating with other United Nations agencies and the Federal Government of Somalia to send out crisis alerts, advocacy with specific donors and leveraging the long-standing relationships with humanitarian donors at national, regional and global levels.<sup>306</sup> An example is the use by WFP of the OCHA Cost of Inaction study,<sup>307</sup> which was shared with donors to show the cost of not responding.<sup>308</sup> For the SNHCP, the Federal Government and WFP mobilized resources from the World Bank. Resource mobilization strategies for other programmes (school feeding, food systems, capacity strengthening) proved inadequate to raise the necessary levels of funding.<sup>309</sup>

184. Lack of interest from humanitarian donors (which are the major funders of WFP work in Somalia) for the school feeding programme explains the limited funds mobilized due, in part, to the need for a longer-term commitment. Some donors view Somalia as too unstable to engage in a longer-term school feeding programme.<sup>310</sup>

185. Success in resource mobilization for each activity was primarily linked to the ability of WFP to demonstrate a comparative advantage alongside the emergent contextual challenges during the CSP period. This resulted in WFP Somalia as a partner of choice for humanitarian assistance donors but not for resilience and livelihood building.<sup>311</sup>

### **EQ 4.2 How well did WFP establish and leverage strategic and operational partnerships at the national and field levels and to what extent did these influence performance and results?**

**Finding 4.2a: WFP strategic and operational partnerships established in the course of the CSP were appropriate, well aligned with the mandates and roles of the respective partners and critical for achievement of the CSP results, but opportunities for joint programming with other United Nations agencies and private sector were not fully exploited.**

<sup>304</sup> This section includes sub-evaluation questions 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4. Sub-EQ 4.5 'To what extent did the political and security context influence CSP performance?' cuts across analysis.

<sup>305</sup> CSP financial data and interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>306</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and donors.

<sup>307</sup> OCHA (2024). Cost of Inaction. <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-cost-inaction-november-2024>.

<sup>308</sup> Interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>309</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and donors.

<sup>310</sup> Interviews with donor partners.

<sup>311</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, donors and government officials.

186. The WFP partnership with federal and state ministries was strategic, aligning with CSP outcomes. WFP supported policy and strategy development across sectors, including agriculture, nutrition, ports, maritime transport and disaster risk management. The ministries coordinated other actors, which enabled WFP to harmonize its programmes and plans with other partners and advance a common sector strategy. For instance, the Somalia Disaster Management Agency and the states' humanitarian affairs and disaster management ministries (with WFP support) coordinated humanitarian actors to plan, review progress, identify gaps and harmonize the disaster responses of humanitarian actors. In addition, these ministries played a key role in WFP efforts in combating post-distribution aid diversion through establishing guidelines and raising community awareness and monitoring. The Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development at the federal level and in some states convened interministerial meetings to coordinate planning, review progress and facilitate learning in the implementation of the joint resilience programme. Ministries of education and health also played similar coordination roles in WFP programming particularly at state levels. Government ministries at federal and state levels also undertook joint monitoring missions with WFP, which identified progress and challenges in programme implementation and allowed both partners to identify workable solutions.<sup>312</sup>

187. WFP also established operational partnerships with government ministries, which enabled it to implement specific programmes and thus directly influenced the achievement of the CSP results. The evaluation identified examples of such partnerships with the Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range to raise awareness among pastoralist communities on adaptation to climate variability; the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources to support improvement of water sources; Puntland Highways Authority for development of feeder roads, and ministries of agriculture and irrigations at state levels for the provision of extension services and training of farmers.

188. At the field level, the extent to which the district officials for education, health, disaster management and the affairs of internally displaced people were engaged in WFP activities, varied between locations. In most locations, these local government officials coordinated local actors and supported WFP planning by providing information on the local context and needs. This contributed to WFP selecting areas and communities to support and the monitoring of WFP activities. Most of the local authority (district) officials are not, however, involved in implementation.<sup>313</sup>

189. In addition to WFP support to the humanitarian community through mandated services (United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), and the logistics cluster),<sup>314</sup> WFP partnerships with other United Nations agencies were both strategic and operational and were guided by United Nations guidance on joint programming. These partnerships influenced the achievement of CSP results especially in strategic outcomes 1, 2 and 3. For instance, WFP planned and implemented the Joint Resilience Programme with UNICEF and FAO to provide integrated education, water and sanitation, health and nutrition and food security and livelihoods-building interventions.<sup>315</sup> WFP also collaborated with IOM and UNHCR to deliver humanitarian assistance to newly displaced persons and refugees.<sup>316</sup> However, competition for resources and coordination challenges, such as differing agency decision making processes, planning cycles and pace of implementation, hindered United Nations agencies from maximizing opportunities for joint programming.<sup>317</sup>

190. The partnership between WFP and cooperating partners was most critical in the achievement of CSP results within the context of inconsistent government systems and capacity, and in the areas that were hard-to-reach due to security concerns. In 2022, WFP worked with 100 cooperating partners, and 94 in 2023, with a strong commitment to localization evidenced by local NGOs comprising 85 percent and 79 percent of partners in the respective years. Working with cooperating partners significantly enhanced WFP reach into hard-to-reach areas and local partner involvement contributed to improved community

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<sup>312</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, government ministries at all levels, district officials, donors and review of annual country reports.

<sup>313</sup> Interviews with government officials.

<sup>314</sup> Refer to Annex 18.

<sup>315</sup> Interviews with WFP and other United Nations staff and government officials.

<sup>316</sup> Interviews with WFP and other United Nations agencies.

<sup>317</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and other United Nations agencies.

ownership, targeting and programme relevance and efficiency through purposeful selection of cooperating partners that already had arrangements with other key United Nations delivery partners like FAO and UNICEF.<sup>318</sup> Security protocols limited WFP staff time in the field, which meant WFP technical expertise was not exploited fully in the field in support of cooperating partners and communities.<sup>319</sup>

191. WFP partnership with private sector (for example, retailers and financial service providers) was less extensive than other partnerships. This partnership included focused and successful initiatives in technological innovation and service delivery that contributed to the CSP results, particularly in mobile technology and market development. For example, the partnership with GSMA and Somali Mobile facilitated mobile money training for cooperating partners, whose staff subsequently trained women safety net beneficiaries, enhancing financial autonomy and inclusion.<sup>320</sup> Market development initiatives involved the implementation of an e-commerce platform for smallholder farmers, through which 24 farmer cooperatives were onboarded on to the e-Shop, creating market linkages with WFP-contracted retailers and the home-grown school feeding project.<sup>321</sup>

192. The engagement of retailers in WFP operations enhanced beneficiary access to food assistance, with retailers in locations such as Gabiley extending services to communities up to 40 kilometres from distribution centres. This was especially valuable for vulnerable populations in remote areas. It also increased beneficiary choice (retailers in Gabiley provided access to 19 WFP-assigned food items) and created economic benefits through local sourcing (retailers in Beletweyne reported purchasing from regional farmers and those in Bossaso prioritized local suppliers). In addition, innovation-focused partnerships, such as engagement with the Somalia Response Innovation Lab (SOMRIL), demonstrated WFP efforts to leverage private sector expertise for food system challenges.<sup>322</sup>

### **EQ 4.3 To what extent did the country office have appropriate human resources capacity and structure to deliver on the CSP?**

**Finding 4.3a: WFP Somalia's structure and human resources capacity were appropriate, well aligned with the CSP and adapted to the Somalia context with the country office providing oversight and area and field offices strategically located in various regions to coordinate programme planning, implementation and monitoring. Staffing levels were adjusted to fit the requirements for delivery of all strategic outcomes except SO4.**

193. WFP Somalia's organizational structure is largely aligned with the CSP strategic outcomes and activities. The country office provides strategic direction, oversight and technical support to area offices while strategically located area and field offices undertake programming, implementation and monitoring of activities at the community level in collaboration with cooperating partners. Technical expert staff assigned to lead CSP activities were supported by appropriate levels of staffing except the SO4, Activity 5 (capacity strengthening). Capacity strengthening had a lead at country office level but no support staff, expecting other staff to integrate capacity strengthening into their programmes. This contributed to challenges in all stages of capacity strengthening interventions due to staff having differing levels of experience.<sup>323</sup>

194. The relocation of the country office from Nairobi to Mogadishu moved senior management and technical experts to Mogadishu, closer to WFP operational areas and stakeholders and strengthened oversight, communication, monitoring and support of country, area and field offices. The recruitment of Somali national staff with deeper understanding of the Somali culture and context and the decentralizing of functions,<sup>324</sup> such as cooperating partners management, human resources management, financial

<sup>318</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, donors, cooperating partners and government officials.

<sup>319</sup> Interviews with cooperating partners, WFP staff, government officials and donors.

<sup>320</sup> Interviews with private sector and WFP staff.

<sup>321</sup> Interviews with WFP staff, focus group discussions with beneficiaries.

<sup>322</sup> Interviews with retailers, WFP staff and process monitoring reports.

<sup>323</sup> Interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>324</sup> Area and field office staff constitute 54 percent of the total staff while the country office in Mogadishu and the Nairobi liaison office has 40 percent and 6 percent of the total staff respectively.



management, and planning, monitoring, learning and evaluation (PMLE) to area offices, enhanced consultations with, and participation of, federal and state governments in planning and joint monitoring of activities and closer interaction with local authorities and communities in activity implementation. Business processes, such as time taken to process payments for cooperating partners and suppliers, also improved.<sup>325</sup> A lean liaison office was maintained in Nairobi to undertake strategic functions such as partnerships and resource mobilization that could not be effectively undertaken from Mogadishu.<sup>326, 327</sup>

195. Moreover, the country office governance structure evolved to establish a country leadership team, expand the planning learning and review group, strengthen the resources management committee and institute the general staff meetings.<sup>328</sup> The new structures clarified roles and responsibilities and have contributed to improved organizational oversight and coherence, work environment, coordination between country, area and field offices and overall CSP implementation.<sup>329</sup>

196. A critical aspect of WFP Somalia is its ability to adapt the structure to respond to crisis through approaches such as a staffing surge (using temporary deployment of staff), use of cooperating partners and activating long-term agreements with suppliers of goods and services. These approaches enabled WFP to avoid recruitment of additional staff during crisis such as in the drought response in 2022. Further, WFP Somalia has recently recruited a programme integration lead to enhance its ability to harmonize programming and improve linkages across activities<sup>330</sup>

197. The country office has put in place measures to strategically grow its staff capacity in the long-term. Measures include: 1) the “green talent” initiative recruiting and mentoring young national professionals; 2) affirmative action in recruitment of women staff and interns; 3) the “stretch assignment initiative”, which exposes staff to high responsibilities to gain more skills and prepare for career progression; 4) the “elevate programme” involving training of staff at all levels in leadership to improve their ability to lead at any level; and 5) staff counselling services to address psychological and other challenges emanating from the work environment affecting staff performance. These measures are highly lauded by staff and early positive results contributed to enhanced implementation of the CSP.<sup>331</sup>

#### **EQ 4.4 To what extent was monitoring used to track progress and inform decision making?**

**Finding 4.4a: Through the monitoring system, WFP has been able to track CSP implementation and outputs and outcome results, and to some extent this informed decision making, but gaps were identified in the tracking of some output and outcome indicators, data management and data use.**

198. WFP Somalia aligned the CSP results framework to the corporate results framework by selecting output and outcome indicators relevant to Somalia from the corporate framework. In addition, WFP established its own monitoring strategy with baselines and targets (influenced by available funding) to monitor some additional indicators. The establishment of baselines was affected, in part, by access and security protocols, which limited time for community engagement.

199. Progress in CSP implementation was tracked at three levels:

- (i) Process monitoring conducted by monitoring staff deployed at area offices focused on risk-based monitoring of activity implementation at the community level. While large amounts of data are collected through process monitoring, utilization remains low and the technical unit, programmes leads

<sup>325</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and cooperating partners

<sup>326</sup> WFP change and transition strategy paper, March 2022, WFP Somalia country office transition plan, and interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>327</sup> KIIs with WFP staff, government officials and cooperating partners.

<sup>328</sup> WFP Somalia country office governance structure.

<sup>329</sup> WFP staff and documents review.

<sup>330</sup> Interviews with WFP staff.

<sup>331</sup> Interviews with WFP staff.

and cooperating partners need a lot of time to contact partners and stakeholders to find and implement solutions.

(ii) Output monitoring carried out by cooperating partners reported on agreed targets to the country office. Each cooperating partner is assigned targets against which it reports. Cooperating partner data are collated to track and compare planned targets with achieved results. These data inform the annual country reports.

(iii) Outcome monitoring takes place every six months, led by the PMLE unit at country office for design and data analysis while monitoring officers at area offices collect the data. Outcome monitoring (also referred to as post-distribution monitoring) tracks the CSP outcome indicators. However, factors such as duplicate indicators with different data, changes in beneficiary cohorts and data gaps especially for capacity strengthening, food systems and nutrition, meant it was not possible to establish WFP contribution to outcomes.

200. WFP staff interviewed reported that process monitoring data were used to inform decision making, citing examples such as: improvement of amenities in food distribution points; improved community engagement during beneficiary selection; addressing delays in cash transfers to beneficiaries; improving stock levels of specialized nutritious foods; follow up on schools not providing food in some days despite receiving vouchers; and terminating or issuing warnings to retailers increasing food prices.<sup>332</sup> However, examples of strategic programming decisions based on output and outcome monitoring were not evident.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and review of annual country reports.

<sup>333</sup> WFP staff.

## 3. Conclusions and recommendations

### 3.1. Conclusions

**Conclusion 1: The CSP design was relevant as it successfully positioned WFP to address both food security and nutrition needs through programme integration, introducing linkages between relief and early recovery, and enhancing the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus. However, in practice, operationalization of the CSP proved challenging due to underlying factors including a high level of need, insufficient donor funding and WFP capacity limitations to support implementation.**

201. The CSP design had an appropriate balance between provision of humanitarian assistance and improving resilience and livelihood building, which aligned with priorities and expectations of both federal and state governments. The focus on the HDP nexus, programme integration approaches, and government capacity strengthening in the CSP design signalled WFP Somalia's intention to promote sustainability in addressing the food crisis in Somalia. However, putting these approaches into practice proved challenging. High levels of need and insufficient funding for resilience and livelihood activities prevented WFP from delivering complementary and harmonized programmes. Additionally, WFP faced internal capacity limitations in areas like programme integration and using data for timely decisions.

202. WFP Somalia is a lead agency for humanitarian assistance in Somalia. Developing a niche in resilience and livelihood-building while sustaining focus on humanitarian assistance is complicated by short funding cycles and the scale of need for livelihood support. WFP efforts to position itself as a player in resilience are constrained by being relied upon as an emergency response agency and hence not being able to fully demonstrate its value proposition and comparative advantage in the resilience and livelihoods space.

**Conclusion 2: WFP adjusted and adapted its targeting of humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to the Somalia context in the face of resource constraints, access challenges and while managing risks surrounding aid diversion. However, the country office faced funding and access limitations, impacting programme effectiveness and reach to those it aimed to serve.**

203. WFP demonstrated its ability to learn and continuously adjust the targeting and prioritization of people most in need of humanitarian assistance based on available data, and established targeting criteria (vulnerability, gender, inclusion etc) and considering humanitarian principles. While WFP delivered emergency aid with speed and at scale – particularly during the 2022 drought – it also made trade-offs when faced with financial constraints such as reaching more people for a short period against reaching fewer people but for the entire period of crisis, which affected its ability to realize positive food security outcomes. However, implementing the targeting and prioritization decisions at the community level in the face of political and sociocultural dynamics, influence of clan networks, movement and displacement of people, gatekeepers and a dynamic security situation was, and remains, a complex issue that in some cases leads to exclusion and inclusion errors. Further security concerns constrained WFP from reaching people in hard-to-reach areas controlled by non-state actors and experiencing localized conflicts.

204. WFP managed significant operational risks related to aid diversion, which required the country office to undertake assurance actions related to key components of WFP delivery in Somalia, including targeting, supply chain and cooperating partner management, and these actions contributed to the achievement of CSP results.

**Conclusion 3: The CSP performance across strategic outcomes was determined by the capacity of cooperating partners, collaboration with government and local leaders, systems and the operational capacity of WFP such as the supply chain, effective planning, implementation and monitoring, as well as the level of funding and management of risks surrounding each of these areas. However, the contribution of the CSP to outcomes was hampered by the short period of support and recurring shocks.**

205. Due to adequate funding, cooperating partner capacity and WFP systems and human resources capacity, the relief programme reached its targets and contributed to alleviating suffering of beneficiaries, although the contribution to improvement of their food security status was minimal. The malnutrition treatment programme contributed to the improvement of the nutrition status of the targeted beneficiaries, but the programme coverage was largely determined by available funds. The safety net programme also reached its beneficiaries targets aided by partnership with the private sector, but results show minimal change in the food security indicators with the food consumption score deteriorating.

206. The school feeding programme was implemented at a small scale but showed positive outcomes for the beneficiaries reached, with potential for effectiveness if implemented at scale. While school feeding requires steady funding, in the case of Somalia it has been supported by ad hoc funding, which has not enabled the continuity, reach or effectiveness that the CSP envisaged. Similarly, the food systems programme (SO3) was also small-scale and only achieved positive results for the small group of beneficiaries reached. Capacity strengthening, on the other hand, contributed to the Government's ability to develop, lead and implement food security and nutrition programme to a more limited extent. WFP support for the logistics cluster was well resourced and met the demand.

**Conclusion 4: Although WFP invested heavily in integrating cross-cutting themes in its programming, challenges in accessing communities contributed to low community engagement, while sociocultural practices limited utilization of feedback mechanisms and women's participation in decision making.**

207. WFP faced the broader protection risks affecting all other humanitarian actors, including security risks facing humanitarian personnel (which also forced communities to move to areas where assistance was being provided), localized social discrimination of minorities, and the forced secondary displacement of internally displaced people residing on private land. These risks were addressed through the protection cluster, which guides all humanitarian actors. Within its programmes WFP made great efforts to ensure that beneficiaries received assistance in a safe, dignified manner and without hindrance.

208. Regarding accountability to affected populations, WFP Somalia significantly invested in community feedback mechanisms, but the level of awareness and utilization of these mechanisms remained low. Thus, whereas WFP-trained staff and cooperating partners provided clear guidelines and tools for accountability to affected populations and improved human resource capacity in its call centre, the demand side of accountability to affected populations remains relatively weak, partly due to low literacy levels and low awareness of the community feedback mechanisms. Community engagement in the programme cycle was also low because WFP staff could not visit communities regularly or for adequate time due to the security protocols.

209. WFP aimed to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment through capacity building and by ensuring gender is part of the criteria for targeting assistance. As a result, a significant number of women were reached across strategic outcomes 1, 2, and 3. By putting money in their hands, WFP programmes supported women to participate in decision making on the use of cash-based transfers. However, sociocultural norms and practices, coupled with weak protection of women rights, remain barriers to efforts at further empowerment of women. The evaluation recognizes that it is beyond the scope of WFP programming, which is primarily focused on short-term emergency relief, to address root causes of gender inequalities and it would require WFP to collaborate with organizations with a specific mandate in gender and women rights promotion.

**Conclusion 5: WFP established multiple partnership arrangements to deliver the CSP but there is a need to clarify the objectives and deepen engagement of some of the partnerships and to intensify and explore joint programming and engagement with non-traditional partners and the private sector.**

210. Cooperating partners and the private sector played a key role in implementing WFP programmes directly supporting the delivery of most of the CSP results. Cooperating partners implemented activities on behalf of WFP at the community level and, in some cases, were able to reach locations that were inaccessible to WFP staff. The private sector enabled WFP to deliver specific services such as mobile money transfers and provision of food items to WFP beneficiaries through the retailer network.

211. Partnerships with government ministries and other United Nations agencies delivered the integrated joint resilience programme, as well as malnutrition treatment, by creating synergies and leveraging agencies' expertise. The federal and state governments played a coordination and joint monitoring role in the WFP programmes bringing stakeholders together to harmonize implementation. However, at times government partnership was reduced to accompanying WFP in activity implementation.

212. The political, social and economic context in Somalia is evolving (and likely to improve) with time and, in tandem, the role partners can play in WFP programmes is also likely to evolve. WFP Somalia is at a juncture where it needs to consolidate its partnerships by clarifying each one's scope and means of engagement, while keeping in focus its overall goal of delivering assistance in a timely, efficient and effective manner.

**Conclusion 6: WFP has had mixed results in resource mobilization for the CSP; it was able to deliver positive results for humanitarian assistance activities due to more consistent and adequate resources, as well as efforts to optimize staff and structure, while resilience and livelihoods programmes struggled with more limited funding.**

213. Funding, among other factors, determined the performance of the CSP with results more evident where funding was of sufficient size and duration – this being particularly evident in humanitarian assistance as opposed to resilience and livelihood-building programmes. Overall, the challenges WFP faced in resource mobilization for resilience and livelihood programmes show that, in addition to a greater commitment to HDP nexus programming from donors, WFP needs to demonstrate to donors that it is among the partners of choice for such support in Somalia. WFP is focusing on strengthening programme integration and relief to early recovery linkages in order to enhance its resource mobilization strategy and also improve programme quality as demonstrated in the third CSP budget revision.

214. . The establishment of the WFP Somalia country office in Mogadishu, decentralization of some functions to area offices, increased nationalization of positions and the establishment of various leadership, oversight and management committees, have led to improved oversight of programmes, and increased engagement of WFP with local authorities and communities. Decisions are taken closer to the assisted communities compared to the ICSP period, although gaps still remain in output and outcome monitoring.

**Conclusion 7: Although WFP scaled up government capacity strengthening compared to the ICSP period, it cast the net too wide, spreading available resources thinly and without a clear long-term vision for capacity strengthening initiatives.**

215. Capacity strengthening activities were initiated without a capacity assessment or analysis of how WFP support fitted into other capacity-building initiatives. The capacity strengthening strategic framework spells out WFP priorities in capacity strengthening but did not articulate the overall goal or vision of why WFP is engaged in building the capacity of the Government.

216. The number of government ministries supported for capacity strengthening increased in the CSP period compared to the ICSP period, where WFP supported mainly Federal Government ministries. However, WFP did not have adequate funds to effectively support capacity gaps across such a large scope. Consequently, the capacity strengthening support was spread thinly across several federal and state-level ministries covering a wide range of capacity domains. Moreover, the ability of government ministries to utilize capacity building is limited by budgetary, human resources, logistical, structural and political challenges and it will take significant resources and time to enable the Government to develop and lead programme implementation. On the other hand, WFP faces challenges mobilizing adequate financial resources to mount a huge capacity strengthening effort. In this context, prioritizing where capacity strengthening resources are invested could maximize results. Further, WFP could leverage resources of others through coordinating government capacity strengthening with other development partners. WFP has initiated this process, but it is in its early stages, and it will also take time to develop a coherent coordination mechanism.

**Conclusion 8: While comprehensive monitoring systems and capacity were put in place, challenges in data quality, access and utilization of monitoring data limited their effectiveness in driving evidence-based programme improvements as envisioned.**

217. WFP Somalia established a comprehensive gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation system aligned with its corporate results framework and with the CSP's ambitions for evidence-based programming and adaptive management. However, data inconsistencies (both in gaps and duplication), inadequate indicators (for some programmes, such as capacity strengthening), and limitations in the way data are presented, limited the reliability and accessibility of the country office monitoring systems.

### 3.2 Recommendations

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<b>Recommendation 1: Strengthen linkages in the implementation of relief to resilience and livelihood building and capacity strengthening to establish building blocks for a sustainable response to food crises in Somalia in line with the federal and state governments' goal of transitioning from ad hoc humanitarian response to more long-term programming.</b>	Strategic	Country office management	Programme teams; Regional office	High	June 2026
1.1 Enhance integrated programming backed by geographic analysis of which integrated service packages can be provided in which geographic areas.					
1.2 Develop a comprehensive strategy to guide the operationalization of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus informed by a realistic resilience and livelihood needs assessment considering ecological zones and capacity and resource needs to effectively translate the triple nexus into practical action and ensure potential integration with relief activities.					
1.3 Further refine the links to and role of social protection under all CSP outcomes.					
<b>Recommendation 2: Ensure that the needs-based plan for resilience, school feeding and nutrition programming is informed by realistic resourcing assumptions, based on scenario planning and backed by a realistic resource mobilization strategy.</b>	Strategic	Country office management	Country office partnerships	High	June 2026
2.1 Develop innovative resource mobilization strategies for the CSP, leveraging opportunities such as joint programming and partnerships with development-oriented actors.					
2.2 Develop a school feeding programme strategy that includes a long-term scenario-based investment plan that shows donors and the authorities where investments are needed, which resources are required and for how long.					
<b>Recommendation 3: Improve programme design and adaptation based on better integrated analysis and use of monitoring data, building on progress made in gender mainstreaming. In addition, disseminate good practices in the implementation of WFP's assurance plan and risk management.</b>	Operational	Country office programme team	Monitoring and evaluation teams	Medium	June 2026

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
3.1 Enhance gender mainstreaming by building on progress in capacity building, operationalizing the tools in place, reporting on gender indicators and using gender-disaggregated data.					
3.2 Improve the use of monitoring data through regular dissemination of internal reporting and triangulation of monitoring data from various types of monitoring (process, output, outcome, community feedback mechanisms).					
3.3 Collaborate with WFP global headquarters to share good practices in the implementation of WFP's assurance plan and risk management.					
<b>Recommendation 4: Align partnerships with the requirements of the next CSP to make clear how each partnership will influence or contribute to achievement of CSP results. This may be achieved through the following steps:</b>	Strategic	Country office programme team	Partnerships team; Regional office	High	June 2026
4.1 Develop a robust partnership strategy aligning and expanding strategic and operational partnerships within the strategic direction of the next CSP and changing circumstances in Somalia.					
4.2 Establish a systematic approach to building partnerships with the authorities, other United Nations entities, other development actors and private sector entities at the country office and area office levels in line with the partnership strategy.					
<b>Recommendation 5: Ensure that the government capacity-strengthening approach is based on clearly articulated objectives and defined targets and that the overall scope of capacity strengthening is informed by funding expectations and WFP technical capacity at the country office and field levels.</b>	Strategic	Country office programme team		High	June 2026
5.1 Enhance the use of capacity assessments to better tailor capacity strengthening initiatives.					
5.2 Focus, where relevant, on regional and state-based approaches to capacity strengthening while maintaining support and aligning at both the federal and state levels.					
5.3 Strengthen coordination of government capacity strengthening with other partners supporting similar efforts.					



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