

Evaluation of the Effects of the Global Assurance Project on WFP Humanitarian Capacity

Terms of reference



WFP
World Food
Programme

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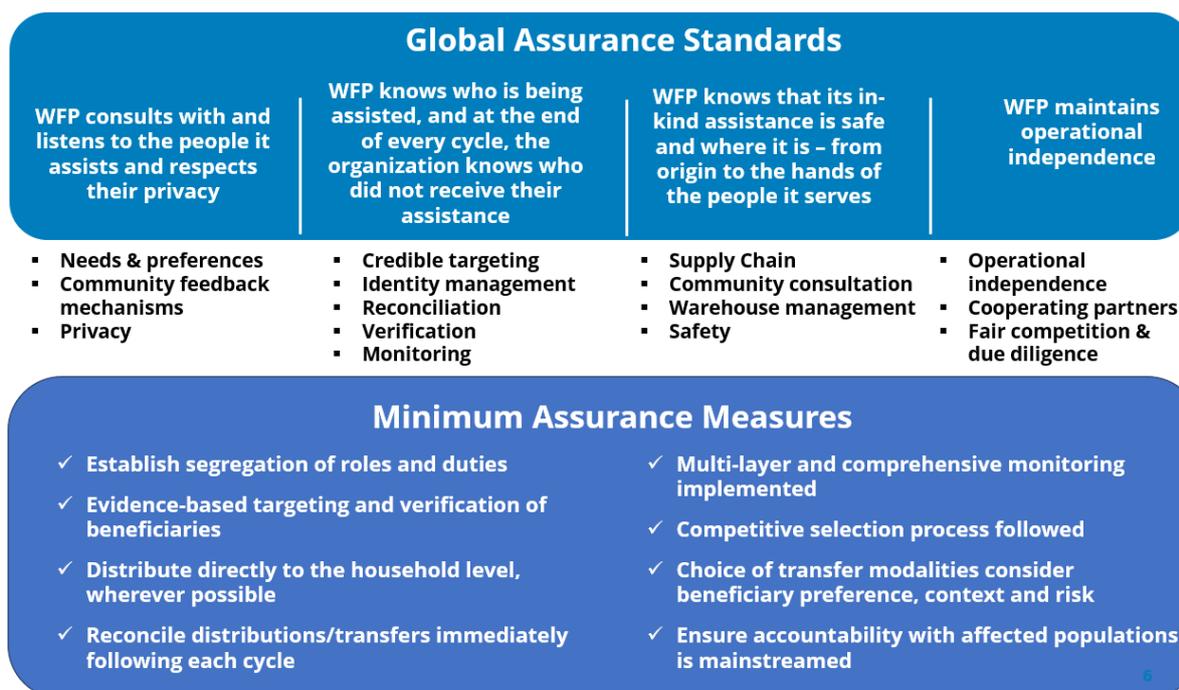
1. Introduction

1. Strategic evaluations are forward looking and focus on thematic areas, corporate initiatives or issues of relevance to inform WFP's strategic direction and management decisions from a global perspective. They are commissioned to teams of independent consultants by WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV), who manages the process ensuring compliance with United Nations and OEV norms and standards for process and content.
2. These Terms of Reference (TOR) set out the evaluation purpose, scope, questions and methodological approach, while defining the subject being evaluated and the context in which it is situated. They also provide essential information on the organization of the evaluation process and the expected deliverables at each stage.
3. In doing so, the ToR are meant to guide the preparation of technical and financial offers by consultancy firms and to inform WFP internal and external stakeholders on what to expect from the evaluation.

1.1. Evaluation Background and Purpose

5. In April 2023, in response to rising concerns about alleged food diversion WFP set up a Global Assurance Project Task Force and in September of the same year a Global Assurance Project was initiated covering 31 high risk countries.
6. The Global Assurance Project (GAP) aimed to sharpen focus on the safe delivery of assistance, quality programming, and strong controls while maintaining the agility, speed and deep field presence that the organization is known for¹. The project consisted in the implementation of eight minimum Assurance Measures for Country Offices, deemed necessary to achieve the 4 Global Assurance Standards, as illustrated in figure 1.

¹ GAP Final Report - Overview, Achievements and Lessons Learnt Summary. WFP June 2025



7. The GAP was designed for a duration of one year, but in June 2024 WFP ED issued a Circular on the [Global Assurance Framework](#) extending the applicability of the global standards and minimum assurance measures articulated in the GAP to general food assistance (in-kind, cash and vouchers) within all WFP operations, (beyond the initial 31 countries) including both immediate life-saving emergencies and longer term protracted crisis.

8. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this evaluation is to provide inputs to WFP, its executive board and senior management for strategic and operational decision making on assurance related matters, by generating evidence on results achieved and any challenges faced in the implementation of the GAP, as well as on key explanatory factors.

9. In line with the intended results of the GAP, the evaluation will assess its effects on:
- Strengthening WFP capacity to provide humanitarian assistance ensuring that the people who need such assistance receives it safely, in full and without interference.
 - Reinforcing, among donors and the people WFP serves, the confidence that WFP has such capacity.

10. The evaluation will also include an assessment of the relations between the investments made for the implementation of the GAP (financial and non-financial) and the benefits generated for the institution and the people it serves, to determine the balance between effort made, and results achieved.

11. The final evaluation report is expected by February 2027 and will be presented for consideration at WFP Executive Board Annual Session in June 2027.

12. Key stakeholders of this evaluation include EB members, WFP Senior management and staff in Global HQ and CY, host governments, cooperating partners and recipient of WFP assistance.

² 09 Feb Global Assurance Standards.pdf

1.2 Context

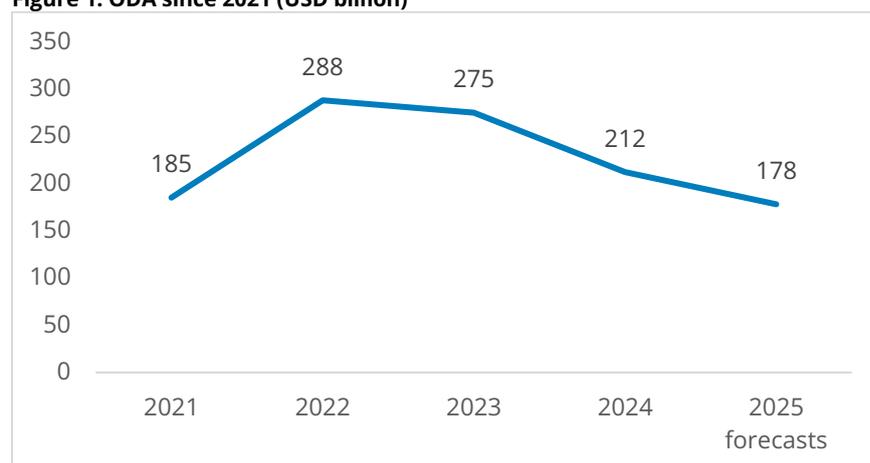
Declining Resources and raising needs

13. Beside the specific case of the alleged food diversion in Ethiopia, that directly affected donors' confidence in WFP, the context in which the GAP has been conceived and implemented is characterized by a sharp contraction of ODA and humanitarian funding.

14. According to a recent OECD report³, after peaking at USD 288 billion in 2022, international development assistance fell to USD 275 billion in 2023 and is projected to decline by 9–17 percent in 2025, following a 9 percent drop in 2024 (see Figure 1).

15. This marks the first time in nearly three decades that major donors—including France, Germany, the UK, and the US—have simultaneously reduced their ODA budgets. The report stresses that these cuts are not just cyclical adjustments but reflect deeper fiscal and political pressures that threaten the sustainability of international development financing.⁴

Figure 1: ODA since 2021 (USD billion)



Source: OECD

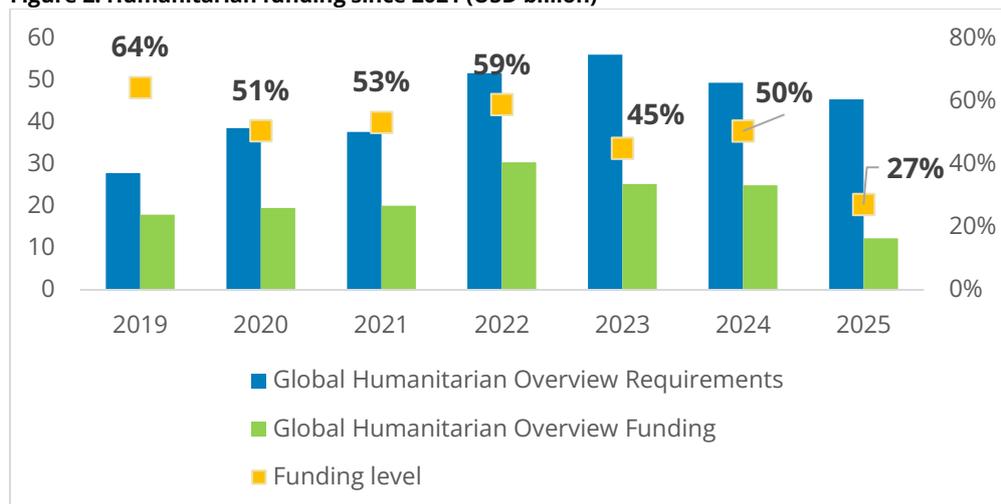
Similarly, the humanitarian sector is facing a severe financial crisis. After years of steady growth, funding began to decline in 2023 and continues to fall until today, with 2025 projections indicating that this trend will persist. This downturn comes at a time of escalating global needs (45 percent increase since 2019) driven by conflict, climate shocks, and economic instability (See Figure 2).⁵

³ OECD. June 2025. Policy Brief. [Cuts in official development assistance: OECD projections for 2025 and the near term.](#)

⁴ *ibidem*

⁵ OECD Financial Tracking System

Figure 2: Humanitarian funding since 2021 (USD billion)



Source: [Home | Financial Tracking Service](#) (data extracted in November 2025)

16. Cuts in ODA flows coincided with a surge in global military spending that has risen for 10 consecutive years, reaching an all-time high of \$2.7 trillion in 2024⁶. At the same time, escalating challenges threaten food security and nutrition worldwide. The frequency and intensity of interconnected crises – conflict, climate change, economic shocks, and pandemics – are rising. Crises are also becoming increasingly protracted and the number of forcibly displaced people has reached unprecedented levels and is projected to continue to grow.⁷

17. The global trend of development and humanitarian assistance financing is reflected in WFP’s own financial trajectory. Between 2019 and 2023, WFP’s financial requirements as set out in needs-based country portfolio budgets surged by 82 percent, rising from USD 12.5 billion to USD 22.7 billion. Until 2022, the gap between requirements and allocated contributions remained relatively stable at 30–40 percent. However, in 2023, this gap widened dramatically to a record high of 63 percent, signalling a severe mismatch between humanitarian needs and available resources.

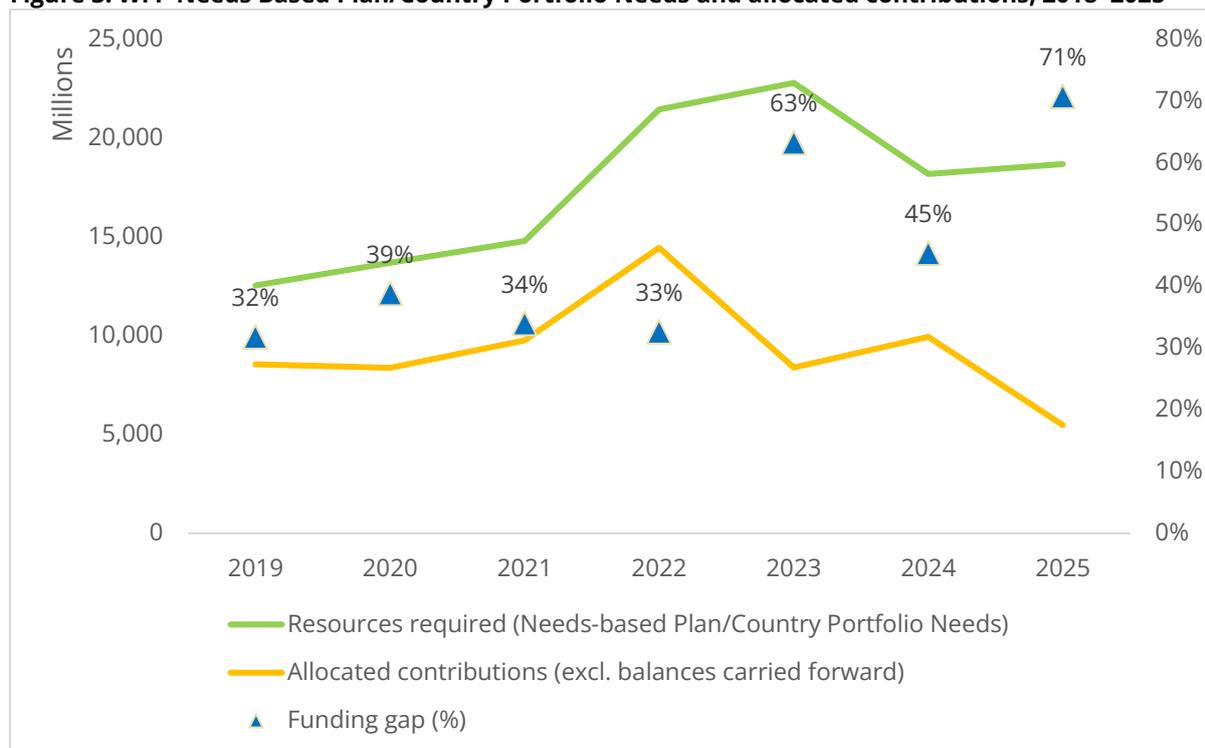
18. In 2024, following an adjustment of country portfolio needs towards a more resource-based planning⁸, the funding gap still stood at 45 percent. For 2025, as of November, confirmed contributions stand at just USD 5.4 billion, leaving a shortfall of USD 13.1 billion against assessed need (71 percent of funding gap) (see Figure 3).

⁶ [UN.2025. The true cost of peace: rebalancing world military spending for a sustainable and peaceful future.](#)

⁷ UNHCR (2025) Figures at a glance (<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/about-unhcr/overview/figures-glance>)

⁸ WFP Executive Board. [June 2024. Update to the Management Plan 2024-2026.](#)

Figure 3: WFP Needs Based Plan/Country Portfolio Needs and allocated contributions, 2018–2025



Source: Factory Shop, data extracted in November 2025

19. To adapt to reduced funding and improve efficiency, in 2024 WFP underwent a major internal restructuring. Central to this is the implementation of the “one global headquarters” model, which consolidates former regional bureaux and Rome-based headquarters into a single global structure, reducing management layers from three to two. This involved substantial staff reductions, clarifying leadership accountabilities, strengthening strategic coordination, and consolidating functions into global teams to better support country offices.⁹

20. At the operational level, when funding shortfalls have arisen WFP “has generally opted to reduce rations and/or the duration of assistance instead of or in addition to reducing caseloads. This, along with corresponding programme design decisions, has led to assistance often being spread too thinly”¹⁰. Recent WFP guidelines emphasize the need to ensure a reasonable depth of assistance, by e.g. avoiding falling below 70 percent of daily nutritional requirements¹¹.

WFP Strategic and Policy Framework relevant to the GAP

21. The **Strategic Plan 2026-2029** emphasizes the importance for “ WFP to address concerns around aid diversion and adherence to the humanitarian principles and engage in open discussions with donors on risk tolerance”; and positions *assurance* at the backbone of WFP’s accountability, stating that “assurance measures ensure that resources are used responsibly, that assistance reaches those who need it most and that every action taken by WFP reflects its commitment to accountability, neutrality and integrity with the full participation of the people and communities served.”¹²

⁹ [WFP Executive Board, June 2025, Update to the WFP Management Plan 2025-2027.](#)

¹⁰ WFP, 2025, Strategic Evaluation on WFP’s Approaches to Targeting and Prioritization (not published)

¹¹ WFP (2025) [Considerations for Prioritising Humanitarian Assistance.](#)

¹² [WFP, 2025, Strategic Plan 2026-2029.](#)

22. Relevant to the GAP are the following corporate policies and strategies:
- The revised **Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy (2021)**¹³, which reinforces the organization’s zero-tolerance stance toward fraud, corruption, and misuse of resources. The policy underscores that *“fraud and corruption not only divert resources from their intended purposes but also undermine public trust and confidence in WFP.”* Serving as the normative backbone of WFP’s governance framework, it sets out the rules, standards, and expectations for safeguarding resources and ensuring assistance is delivered with integrity. Within this framework, the GAP—and now the Global Assurance Framework¹⁴—function as operational mechanisms to test, monitor, and validate whether these standards are effectively applied in high-risk country offices.
 - The **ED’s Circular on Management of Targeting Processes by WFP Offices (2022)**¹⁵, which forms the main normative framework for targeting in WFP. This circular aims to re-establish targeting as a core activity across programmes; define key responsibilities within headquarters, regional bureaux, and country offices; and set corporate minimum standards related to targeting.
 - The **Community Engagement Strategy for Accountability to Affected People (2021–2026)**¹⁶, which places communities at the centre of WFP’s interventions by strengthening inclusion, feedback mechanisms, and information management. The strategy aims to shift focus from activities to processes, ensuring affected populations can meaningfully influence decisions throughout the program cycle. It requires country offices, and Global Headquarters to progressively implement mandatory and optional activities over five years, including standardized community feedback mechanisms and action plans for engagement
23. The **Executive Director (ED)’s Circular on corporate approach to Identity Management (IDM) (2024)**¹⁷, which defines IDM as the principles, standards, processes, and capabilities used to identify individuals, store and utilize their information, and ensure they receive the assistance that “WFP is entrusted to provide to them”. It also establishes that the authority for IDM is delegated to the Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department (AED PO), who leads strategy, priorities, normative frameworks, and assurance standards with guidance from a cross-functional- IDM Steering Committee. In this connection, the **IDM Assurance for In-Kind Framework is also relevant to this evaluation**. This framework enables country offices to receive regular updates from their technical teams, so they can be confident that the right people are receiving the in-kind food assistance they are entitled to. It is similar in many ways to the Cash Assurance Framework, but adapted to in-kind food operations and focused only on Identity Management (IDM), the processes for managing people’s personal data throughout programmes
- The **Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap (2022–2025)**, which sets the trajectory for WFP’s supply chain function under WFP’s previous Strategic Plan. The Evaluation of the Roadmap¹⁸ found that it had appropriately broadened the focus of supply chain management to reflect evolving humanitarian needs and contributed to realising the vision of positioning WFP as the partner of choice in humanitarian supply chains. The Roadmap is structured around three pillars: maintaining leadership in emergency and protracted crisis response, strengthening national systems (with local and regional food procurement as an entry point), and providing augmented services and delivery solutions. As part of the latest corporate restructuring, several areas became part of the supply chain function including management of **cooperating partners, cash-based transfers, and aspects of beneficiary ID management**, among others.

¹³ WFP.2021. Revised Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy¹³

¹⁴ WFP. ED Circular OED2024/004. [Global Assurance Framework](#)

¹⁵ WFP. ED Circular OED2022/026. [Management of Targeting Processes by WFP Offices](#).

¹⁶ WFP.2023. [Community Engagement Strategy for AAP 2021-2026](#) (version 2, 2023)

¹⁷ WFP.ED Circular OED2024/013. Corporate approach to identity management of the people we assist including delegation of authority

¹⁸ Evaluation of the Supply Chain Roadmap (WFP, forthcoming)

2. Subject of the evaluation

2.1. GAP Focus areas and logic of intervention

24. The Global Assurance Project responded to the need for WFP to clarify the standards that all WFP operations must achieve to ensure that **the right people receive the assistance they need, safely, in full, and without interference**. At the same time it was meant to offer a mechanism by which to reinforce the confidence of its donors and host governments and the trust of the people it serves.

25. The implementation of the eight minimum Assurance Measures deemed necessary to achieve the four Global Assurance Standards (as set out in figure 1, page 3 of these ToR), translated into efforts to make WFP's existing controls more focused and effective by strengthening systems and processes in five key areas, namely: **i) targeting; ii) identity management; iii) monitoring and community feedback mechanisms; iv) cooperating partner management and v) commodity management**¹⁹. In addition, two cross cutting areas are included: **Digital solutions and risk management**. (see Figure 5).

Figure 4: GAP Focus Areas



Source: [Global Assurance Project Final Report- June 2025](#)

26. The working hypothesis²⁰ underpinning the logic of intervention for the GAP can be synthesized as follows:

- **IF WFP** invests in strengthening its systems, procedures and tools for producing and using information for targeting, identity management, monitoring and CFM, CP management and commodity management.

¹⁹ And two cross-cutting areas: digital solutions and risk management.

²⁰ Developed by OEV based on desk review

- **THEN** It will be in a better position to do the right thing at the right time and ensure that the people who need assistance receive it safely, in full and without interference and the confidence of donors and of the people it serves will be reinforced

2.2. Geographic coverage and resourcing

27. Country level implementation of the GAP focused on, and was tailored for, 31 higher-risk operations representing 87 percent of unconditional resource transfers in 2024.

Figure 6: GAP Country Coverage

Asia and the Pacific (APA)		
Afghanistan	Myanmar	
Bangladesh	Pakistan	
Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)		
Democratic Republic of Congo	Mozambique	Sudan
Ethiopia	Somalia	Uganda
Madagascar	South Sudan	Zimbabwe
Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)		
Colombia	Haiti	Guatemala
Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe (MENAEE)		
Algeria	Palestine	Ukraine
Egypt	Syria	Yemen
Lebanon		
Western and Central Africa (WACA)		
Burkina Faso	Chad	Niger
Cameroon	Mali	Nigeria
Central African Republic		

To note: Regional Bureaux for Eastern Africa and Southern Africa were consolidated in May 2025.

Source: [Global Assurance Project Final Report- June 2025](#)

28. At the Global HQ level, WFP initially allocated USD 59 million for assurance-related improvements from a combination of sources²¹. This was later re-planned to USD 52.3 million and actual expenditures (including open commitments) decreased to USD 40.6 million in 2024 due to reductions in anticipated WFP resourcing. These funds were expended in 2024 with the planned exception of USD 10.5 million in critical corporate initiative funding which should have been spent by end-2025.²²

29. At the country office level, in accordance with WFP's financial framework, assurance-related enhancements were embedded in the country office's implementation costs. In February 2024, the 31 high-risk country offices with the support of regional offices completed the development of a costed reinsurance action plan that describes the specific actions they each intended to take to meet the minimum assurance measures and the global assurance standards by the end of 2024.

30. To help kick-start implementation, WFP passed on USD 10 million in PSA budget savings in 2023 to all higher-risk country offices. In 2024, "soft landing" grants, totalling USD 21.3 million, were awarded to 16 country offices with significant resource reductions and USD 8.3 million in global assurance loans were provided to 10 country offices. The remaining costs were funded through regular fundraising efforts. At the end of 2024, higher-risk country offices estimated a combined total cost of USD 127 million, of which nearly 80% or USD 100 million was funded. Going forward, assurance-related costs will continue to be integrated into implementation costs and Country Strategic Plans will be closely reviewed to ensure assurance is appropriately budgeted.²³

²¹ [WFP Management Plan \(2024-2026\), Annex V](#). To be noted that the *costed workplan* does not reflect the total resources that WFP allocates to assurance, but rather the proportion of WFP's regular annual expenditure that was refocused on the components of the project

²² [Global Assurance Project Final Report - Overview, Achievements and Lessons Learnt Summary June 2025](#)

²³ Ibid

3. Evaluation scope, criteria and questions

3.1. Analytical framework and scope of the Evaluation

31. The fundamental premise of this evaluation is that effective control and assurance mechanisms are necessary to ensure optimal use of resources for their intended purpose; and that the implementation of such mechanisms inevitably implies transaction costs. At the same time, trust is also a core requirement for efficient and effective collaboration.²⁴

32. In the context of WFP, the implementation of the GAP necessarily incurred such transaction costs, both monetary and non-monetary, to realise its ambitions, including the restoration of donor trust. Accordingly, the evaluation will ask if the control and assurance mechanisms put in place in response to the diversion events which led to the GAP's design and implementation, achieved their intended purpose and whether the transaction costs for their implementation have been commensurate to the benefits generated.

33. An internal audit of GAP implementation was conducted in 2025, and its findings will be made available to the evaluation team (see Annex II for a synopsis). The audit focused on verifying CY compliance with the minimum assurance measures in programme planning and implementation. The evaluation will build on the Audit and on the recently completed strategic evaluation of Targeting and Prioritization and of Enterprise Risk Management Policy. Taking these items as its point of departure, the evaluation will focus on the following dimensions of analysis:

- The benefits that the GAP delivered for WFP, its donors and partners and for the people it serves
- The institutional effort undertaken to implement the GAP, including financial costs, staff time and levels of effort
- Any institutional challenges which influenced implementation and results,
- Any external factors and how WFP navigated these.

34. The temporal scope of the evaluation will cover from April 2023, when the Global Assurance Project Task Force was set up, to August 2026, at which point data collection will close. This timeframe includes the design of the GAP, its original implementation period (2024) and the 18 months that followed the official closure of the project, during which Country offices were expected to continue budgeting for and implementing the augmented assurance measures. This should allow to better identify concrete results and understand the reasons for progress.

35. The geographic scope will cover the 31 high risk countries in which the Global Assurance pilot project was implemented. Within this universe, the evaluation will zoom in to a sample of country cases that will be selected ensuring appropriate representation of the investments made in different operational contexts.

3.2. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

36. The evaluation will apply the criteria of relevance efficiency, effectiveness and coherence. Within this framework, the following are the overarching evaluation questions:

- i. To what extent and how has the implementation of the GAP contributed to adequate targeting, coverage, value, timeliness and continuity of transfers, commodity management,

²⁴ [Trust: Making and Braking Cooperative Relations](#) Oxford University Library.

responsiveness to evolving needs and priorities and to the safety and protection of people receiving aid?

- ii. To what extent and how has the implementation of the GAP reinforced partners, including donors, confidence in WFP as an effective and efficient humanitarian organization?
- iii. Did the implementation of the GAP generate any unintended consequences, positive or negative?
- iv. Were the transaction costs of implementing the assurance measures, including staff time and levels of effort, commensurate to the benefits generated and are they sustainable?
- v. What are the critical factors internal to WFP that may explain performance, including but not limited to: level of ambition and appropriateness of the proposed measures visa vis country offices capacities and needs; institutional arrangements and incentives; digital solutions.

4. Methodology and Ethical Considerations

4.1. Approach and methodology

Overall Approach

37. OEV welcomes the use of theory based, mixed methods, participatory, and innovative evaluation approaches. The evaluation team is expected to propose a rigorous methodological approach to maximise the credibility impartiality and utility of the evaluation.

38. The methodology will systematically address the evaluation questions in a way that meets the dual purpose of accountability and learning. In doing so, it should demonstrate attention to impartiality and reduction of bias. The evaluation team is required to ensure the quality of data throughout the data collection, synthesis, analysis and reporting and should consider any challenges to validity of indicators, and data availability and reliability, as well as budget and timing constraints.

Elements of methodological design

39. The evaluation design will include an initial desk review of the GAP Implementation plans and of the technical and financial reports of the 31 countries covered by the project, in parallel to reviewing relevant corporate data sets, global evaluations and audits. This review should allow the evaluation team to map out expenditure and activities and develop a sense of the available evidence on results and challenges in the different focus areas of the GAP and across different country settings.

40. This initial phase should include an inception mission to Rome of the team leader and senior team members to consult with relevant stakeholders, including Executive Board members.

41. The results of the desk review and of the interviews held during the inception mission, to be included in the inception report, should also contribute to informing the selection of a sample of countries for more in-depth analysis through remote semi structured interviews (including closed and open ended questions) to be administered to an agreed proportion of the 31 countries implementing the GAP. The methodology will also comprise up to three extended country visits for primary data collection including focus group discussions with affected populations. Country visits should therefore be planned for a period that allows for consulting with national and local stakeholders, including people receiving transfers in the field. OEV evaluation manager may eventually join the first country visit to support finetuning lines of enquiry and data collection tools. Data collection may also include interviews with executive board members in Rome, in addition to those conducted at inception phase.

42. Traditional quantitative methods for cost benefit analysis may not always be applicable or feasible in the context of this evaluation, for example when assessing costs versus benefits in terms of reputation and regained confidence among donors and partners. On the other hand, the analysis of costs versus benefits on more quantitative aspects, such as responsiveness, timelines or adequacy of transfers can be based on objective measures and on quantitative comparison over time or across countries. Findings will be distilled and validated through iterative analysis of qualitative data. and systematic triangulation across different data type and sources.

43. OEV welcomes technical proposals from bidders that further develop this initial evaluation design, articulating proposed approaches and methods. The final evaluation design will be developed in dialogue between the evaluation team and OEV and will be informed by feedback from key stakeholders during the inception phase.

44. For this specific evaluation, given its sensitivity and institutional knowledge requirements, OEV envisages a collaborative model between the independent evaluation team and the evaluation management team. Thus, we encourage proposals which envisage a collegiate approach, drawing on respective knowledge

areas and expertise to deliver a high-quality evaluation, both in process and product, which best meets institutional needs. This does not compromise the independence of the evaluation team but aims to capitalise on respective areas of strength. Para 66 provides more detail.

4.2. Evaluability assessment

45. Based on a preliminary assessment, there are good prospects for evaluability. In particular, the following should be noted:

- i) There is clear demand for this evaluation and strong interest from internal and external stakeholders to engage.
- ii) The GAP is underpinned by a structured framework and assurance standards that clearly articulate objectives and expected results;
- iii) The evaluation will be able to rely on both qualitative and quantitative evidence; and
- iv) A substantial body of relevant evidence already exists, including findings from previous and ongoing strategic evaluations, complemented by operational data from high-risk country offices.

46. Within this positive framework, some challenges may arise from the difficulty of quantifying intangible benefits—such as donor confidence and reputational gains—and from variability in the quality and consistency of country-level monitoring data. During the inception phase, OEV and the evaluation team will deepen the evaluability assessment, critically review data availability and gaps, and map sources against evaluation questions and sub-questions to inform methodological choices. [Annex III](#) provides a detailed preliminary assessment of available data sources and their relevance.

4.3. Ethical considerations

47. Evaluations must conform to WFP and UNEG ethical standards and norms.²⁵ Accordingly, the evaluation firm is responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle in line with the UNEG guiding ethical principles for evaluation (Integrity, Accountability, Respect, Beneficence).²⁶ This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results do no harm to participants or their communities.

48. OEV will ensure that the evaluation team and evaluation manager will not have been involved in the design, implementation, financial management or monitoring of WFP activities over the period evaluated, nor have any other potential or perceived conflicts of interest.”²⁷

²⁵ For further information on how to apply the UNEG norms and standards (<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>) in each step of the evaluation, the evaluation team can also consult the Technical Note on Principles, Norms and Standards for evaluations (<https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000003179/download/>).

²⁶ Beneficence means striving to do good for people and planet while minimizing harms arising from evaluation as an intervention.

²⁷ Conflicts of interest are typically identified by a lack of independence or a lack of impartiality. These conflicts occur when a primary interest, such as the objectivity of an evaluation, could be influenced by a secondary interest, such as personal considerations or financial gains" (UNEG 2020 Guidelines). There should be no official, professional, personal or financial relationships that might cause, or lead to a perception of bias in terms of what is evaluated, how the evaluation is designed and conducted, and the findings presented. A conflict of interest can also occur when, because of a person's possibilities for future contracts, the evaluator's ability to provide an impartial analysis is compromised. Cases of upstream conflict of interest are those in which consultants could influence the analysis or recommendations so that they are consistent with findings previously stated by themselves. Cases of downstream conflict of interest are those in which evaluators could artificially create favourable conditions for consideration in a downstream assignment. The potential for bias increases when an evaluator's work is solely focused on one agency. During the evaluation process, the

49. All members of the evaluation team will abide by the 2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines and the [2014 Guidelines on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#). In addition to signing a pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation, the evaluation team will also commit to signing a confidentiality, internet and data security statement.

50. Should the evaluators uncover allegations of wrongdoing and misconduct in the implementation of a programme either by a WFP staff or a partner (including fraud, food diversions, misuse of WFP assets, harassment, sexual harassment, etc), the evaluation team should report those allegations to WFP Office of Inspection and Investigation (OIGI) through WFP hotline (<http://www.wfpHotline.ethicspoint.com>). At the same time, the team leader should inform the Evaluation Manager and the Director and Deputy Director of Evaluation that there are allegations of wrongdoing and misconduct without breaking confidentiality.

51. Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies can be used in this evaluation with prior approval from OEV. The evaluation team shall outline in the inception report, a comprehensive description of the intended use of AI tools, including their purpose, scope and nature and adhere to WFP data privacy requirements in all respects (see Annex IV).

4.4. Quality assurance

52. WFP's Evaluation Quality Assurance System (EQAS) sets out quality standards for process and content that will be systematically applied during this evaluation. Relevant guidance documents will be provided to the evaluation team. This quality assurance process does not interfere with the views or independence of the evaluation team but ensures that the report provides credible evidence and analysis in a clear and convincing way and draws its conclusions on that basis.

53. The evaluation team will be required to ensure the quality of data (reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the data collection, synthesis, analysis and reporting phases. OEV expects that all deliverables from the evaluation team are subject to a thorough quality assurance review by the evaluation company in line with WFP's EQAS prior to submission of the deliverables to OEV.

54. All final evaluation reports will be subjected to a post hoc quality assessment by an independent entity through a process that is managed by OEV. The overall rating category of the reports will be made public alongside the evaluation reports.

evaluators are not allowed to have another contract with the evaluand/ unit subject to evaluation. To avoid conflicts of interest, particular care should be taken to ensure that independence and impartiality are maintained.

5. Organization of the Evaluation

5.1 Phases and Deliverables

55. To present the evaluation in the Annual Executive Board session of 2026, the following milestones should be taken as reference. A detailed timeline will be developed at a later stage in dialogue with the Country Office and the selected evaluation team.

Main phases	Timeline	Output
1. Preparation	Mid March 2026	Final TOR Evaluation team and/or firm selection and contract
2. Inception	Mid-March to May 2026	Inception report
3. Data collection	June to September 2026	Data systematization and indexes
4. Data Analysis Reporting	October 2026 to March 2027	Draft Final Evaluation Report Stakeholder workshops Final evaluation report Summary evaluation report (SER) Briefings with Senior Management
5. Dissemination	March to June 2027	SER editing/evaluation report formatting Management response and Executive Board preparation

5.2 Evaluation team composition

56. The evaluation should be conducted by a core team of up to 3 senior consultants, plus two research analysts. The core evaluation team should combine solid experience in evaluation and management reviews with strong understanding of quantitative and qualitative methods and familiarity with the dynamics of the multilateral humanitarian system, including the relation between UN organizations and member States. Familiarity with WFP is a plus. Both the team leader and team members should have experience in managing extensive field-based data collection.

57. Working language for the evaluation deliverables will be English, however, the team should combine language skills that allow to conduct case studies in different country contexts.

58. **The Team Leader** position requires a minimum of 15 years' of relevant experience in evaluation, a post graduate academic degree in social sciences and specific experience conducting evaluations of multilateral organizations and familiarity with corporate assurance standards and measures.

59. The primary responsibilities of the team leader will be:

- setting out the detailed methodology in the inception report
- guiding and managing the team during the inception and evaluation phases, including directing and coordinating field-based data collection.
- overseeing the preparation of data collection outputs by other members of the team
- consolidating team members' inputs to the evaluation products in line with agreed Centralized

- Evaluation Quality Assurance System (CEQAS) standards and agreed timelines.
- representing the evaluation team in meetings with stakeholders

60. **The Senior evaluators** should have at least 10 years' experience in conducting evaluations and management reviews. They should also have a post graduate academic degree in social sciences and experience conducting evaluations or management reviews of humanitarian organizations.

Primary responsibility of the of the senior evaluators include:

- Supporting the team leader in setting out the methodology
- Develop data collection tools as assigned by the team leader
- Conduct field visits as assigned by the team leader
- Collect, synthesize and analyse data from secondary and primary sources as assigned by the team leader
- Support the team leader in drafting the final report.

5.3 Roles and responsibilities

61. The evaluation manager, Sergio Lenci, will be the main interlocutor between the team, represented by the team leader, the long-term agreement firm focal point, and WFP counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process. He is responsible for drafting the TOR; selecting and contracting the evaluation team; preparing and managing the budget; participating in the inception mission contributing to further developing the evaluation scope and methodological design in dialogue with the team leader; eventually, participate to the first in country mission as articulated in para 41. He will also conduct first-level quality assurance of the evaluation products (inception report and evaluation report); organize the team briefing and the stakeholder workshop and solicit WFP stakeholders' feedback on draft products. Finally, the evaluation manager will participate in the data analysis workshop that will be held in presence after data collection in a venue to be decided by the bidder. The participation of the evaluation manager is intended to ensure early alignment on issues of data treatment and analysis, aiming to prevent multiple reiterations on the draft final report. The evaluation manager will also be responsible for writing the summary evaluation report (SER).

62. The OEV research analyst will provide comprehensive support during the entire evaluation process, including ensuring data accessibility, conducting preliminary data analyses, and managing organizational aspects of the evaluation process.

63. An internal reference group (IRG) will be formed and asked to review and comment on draft evaluation reports, provide feedback during evaluation briefings and be available for interviews with the evaluation team.

64. The Deputy Director of evaluation will provide second level quality assurance of evaluation products. The Director of Evaluation will approve the final evaluation products and present the SER to the WFP Executive Board for consideration.

5.4 Security considerations

65. Security considerations will vary depending upon the nature of the context and the nature of the contracting arrangements with WFP.

66. As an 'independent supplier' of evaluation services to WFP, the contracted firm will be responsible for ensuring the security of the evaluation team, and adequate arrangements for evacuation for medical or insecurity reasons. However, to avoid any security incidents, the evaluation manager will ensure that the WFP CY registers the team members with the security officer on arrival in country and arranges a security briefing for them to gain an understanding of the security situation on the ground. The evaluation team must observe

applicable United Nations Department of Safety and Security rules including taking security training (BSAFE and SSAFE) and attending in-country briefings.

67. The contracted firm should have the necessary insurance and access to field safety training to allow consultants to visit the field locations identified during the inception phase. Companies may have to travel to all relevant WFP programme countries, including those with hazardous contexts as per the LTA agreement.

5.5 Communication

68. All strategic evaluation products will be produced in English. As part of the international standards for evaluation, WFP requires that all evaluations are made publicly available. Should translators be required for fieldwork, the evaluation firm will plan accordingly and include the cost in the budget proposal.

5.6 The Offer

69. The offer will include a detailed technical and financial proposal. The latter should include consultant fees and travel costs for an inception mission to WFP Global HQ in Rome and for up to three country visits during data collection. In this connection, bidders are encouraged to prepare a realistic estimate of travel costs, based upon the country sample size proposed in the technical offer (i.e. based on the number of countries where it is expected to travel). One international consultant should be budget for each country visit. In addition, the budget should include fees for national consultants to support field-based data collection. The number and level of seniority of national consultants to be budget for each country visit should be commensurate to the filed data collection approach proposed in the technical offer. Local transportation will be covered by the evaluation firm and included in the financial proposal.

70. Finally, the budget should include costs for the core evaluation team to physically meet and work together for at least three days as part of the data synthesis and analyses to be conducted during the reporting phase. OEV evaluation manager will join this meeting to support the analysis and costs related to his participation will be covered by OEV.

71. Following the technical and financial assessment, an improved offer could be requested by WFP to the preferred bid(s) to better respond to the TOR requirements. WFP may conduct reference checks and interviews with selected team members.

Annex I. Role and composition of internal reference group

1. Background

The Internal Reference Group (IRG) is an advisory group providing advice and feedback to the Evaluation Manager and the evaluation team at key moments during the evaluation process. It is established during the preparatory stage of the evaluation.

2. Purpose and Guiding Principles of the IRG

The overall purpose of the IRG is to contribute to the credibility, utility and impartiality of the evaluation. For this purpose, its composition and role are guided by the following principles:

- *Transparency*: Keeping relevant stakeholders engaged and informed during key steps ensures transparency throughout the evaluation process.
- *Ownership and Use*: Stakeholders' participation enhances ownership of the evaluation process and products, which in turn may impact on its use.
- *Accuracy*: feedback from stakeholders at key steps of the preparatory, data collection and reporting phases contributes to accuracy of the facts and figures reported in the evaluation and of its analysis.

3. Roles

Members are expected to review and comment on key evaluation deliverables and share relevant insights at key consultation points of the evaluation process.

The IRGs main role includes the following:

- Participate in face-to-face or virtual briefings to the evaluation team during the inception phase and/or evaluation phase.
- Suggest key references and data sources in their area of expertise.
- Participate in debriefings.
- Review and comment on the draft inception report with particular focus on the proposed scope and methodology.
- Review and comment on the draft evaluation report, with a particular focus on: a) factual errors and/or omissions that could invalidate the findings and change the conclusions; b) issues of political sensitivity that need to be refined in the way they are addressed or in the language used; c) recommendations.
- Participate in workshops to discuss conclusions and recommendations.

4. Composition

Name	Organizational Unit

Annex II Preliminary evaluability assessment.

1. This preliminary evaluability assessment offers an initial mapping of potential quantitative and qualitative data sources to support some of the proposed dimensions of analysis and evaluation questions (see Section 4.2). The identification of these sources is intended to guide early planning and will be further refined during the inception phase to ensure relevance, reliability, and alignment with evaluation objectives and questions.

2. To be noted that at the start of inception phase, OEV plans to conduct an online survey targeting the 30 high-risk country offices to collect comprehensive information on how augmented assurance resources for the GAP were utilized. The survey will serve as an initial data-gathering exercise, capturing details on e.g. the implementation of assurance measures, resource allocation, and the integration of tools and processes introduced under the GAP. Evidence from the survey will then be used to address some of the EQs (details below)

3. The evaluation will draw on the following completed and ongoing evaluations: the Strategic Evaluation on Targeting and Prioritization, the Enterprise Risk Management Policy Evaluation, the Evaluation of Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap, the Strategic Evaluation on Partnership the recent CSP Evaluation/CEEs conducted in some of the 30 high-risk countries (e.g. Yemen CEE, Ethiopia CSPE, Somalia CSPE, Palestine CEE, Niger CSPE, Nigeria CSPE, Bangladesh CSPE, CAR CSPE)

4. For evaluations that are still ongoing, OEV will actively explore opportunities to create synergies, align timelines where feasible, and ensure that relevant findings and lessons are incorporated into this evaluation to maximize complementarity and avoid duplication.

5. A primary source of both qualitative and quantitative information across all evaluation questions will be the quarterly **country-level GAP reports** produced throughout the implementation of the Global Assurance Project and the Rakonto lessons learned. These reports provide comprehensive updates on progress against assurance benchmarks and document key activities across the focus areas, i.e. targeting, identity management, monitoring and community feedback mechanisms, supply chain, and cooperating partner management. They combine narrative analysis with quantitative indicators such as milestone achievement rates, financial allocations, and compliance scores, while also highlighting outstanding gaps and contextual challenges.

6. To facilitate clarity and focus, the analysis that follows is organized by evaluation questions.

7. **Evaluation Question 1:** *To what extent and how has the implementation of the GAP contributed to adequate targeting, coverage, value, timeliness and continuity of transfers, as well as responsiveness to responsiveness to evolving needs and priorities and to the safety and protection of people receiving aid?*

addresses several critical aspects of WFP's assistance, particularly i) how the organization identifies people to assist, ii) whether the assistance provided is sufficient, timely, safe and without abrupt interruptions iii) WFP's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and deliver assistance promptly.

8. The Evaluation will be able to rely on an extensive body of evidence from the **Strategic Evaluation on Targeting and Prioritization**, which assessed how relevant, appropriate and effective WFP's approaches to targeting and prioritization are for food and nutrition assistance, in a time of rising needs and shrinking resources.

9. Relevant findings can be summarised as follows:

- WFP has substantially improved its normative framework for targeting since 2020, introducing clearer guidance and assurance mechanisms

- Targeting approaches vary widely across country offices, with community-based methods most common and hybrid models increasingly used to combine data-driven analysis with participatory processes
- WFP has shifted toward vulnerability-based targeting for many programmes, moving away from blanket or status-based approaches, though this transition is incomplete and not yet scaled up globally
- Despite improvements, WFP lacks systematic evidence on inclusion/exclusion errors and cost-effectiveness of different targeting approaches, limiting its ability to assess performance in its targeting approaches
- Agility remains a challenge: once caseloads are set, WFP struggles to adjust targeting in response to changing needs or appeals due to rigid planning and resource constraints

4. The evaluation will also consider and build on insights from both internal and external audits, including the recent internal audit of the GAP. A recent summary of conclusions from five country operation audits related to the GAP highlights the following²⁸:

- **Overly Optimistic Self-Reporting**
The “After” reports from country offices were largely based on self-reporting without independent verification. Many of them reported pilots or planned actions as actual improvements, making it hard to confirm the effectiveness of controls. Continuous monitoring and validation are needed.
- **Lack of Evidence-Based Reporting**
Some “After” actions were general statements rather than concrete evidence of enhanced controls. Reporting was not standardized against set parameters, limiting WFP-wide comparability and assessment of GAP achievements.
- **Disconnect Between Actions and Standards**
There was no clear link between reported actions, benchmarks, Global Assurance Standards, or Minimum Assurance Measures. Responsibilities for first- and second-line functions and independent validation remain unclear and need further development.
- **Siloed Approach to Internal Controls**
GAP’s structure around six processes led to fragmented controls. Benchmarks across areas were not complementary, highlighting the need for a more integrated approach that considers interdependencies.
- **Sustainability Concerns**
WFP must assess how enhanced assurance measures will remain sustainable under evolving funding conditions and align with its risk appetite.
- **Fragmented Digital Systems**
Digital tools supporting internal controls are fragmented. A holistic approach involving technical units is needed to design integrated IT solutions.
- **Critical Processes Not Covered by GAP**
Key risk areas—such as security and humanitarian access, finance and treasury, budget

²⁸ WFP Office of Inspector General. December 2025. Consolidated insights on the Global Assurance Project. Based on Country Office Operations Audits (for EB and Internal Use only)

management, and Country Strategic Plan activities in smaller offices—were excluded from GAP but require attention for assurance mainstreaming.

10. Building on this evidence, the Evaluation will seek to deepen understanding through country case studies and, where possible, assess whether and the extent to which the GAP has contributed to addressing some of the issues identified above.

5. With regard to the level of assistance, the evaluation will examine both the **intensity of assistance and the nutritional adequacy** to determine whether WFP provides meaningful support that meets minimum standards. Intensity of assistance refers to the depth and quality of aid delivered—such as the size and duration of food rations or cash transfers—while nutritional adequacy assesses whether assistance meets at least 70 percent of daily dietary requirements, as recommended in WFP’s corporate guidance²⁹. These indicators are critical for understanding whether WFP’s assistance goes beyond coverage to achieve real impact on food security and nutrition outcomes. To be noted that data on these two measures are available since 2022.

11. Some **process monitoring activities** conducted by Country Offices—such as distribution monitoring reports, post-distribution monitoring reports, targeting monitoring reports, and related action tracking sheets—can provide valuable insights into whether assistance is delivered safely and with dignity. These tools also assess beneficiaries’ access to, use of, and satisfaction with assistance and capture perceptions on cross-cutting issues such as gender, protection, and accountability to affected populations (AAP). However, the quality and comprehensiveness of these reports vary significantly across Country Offices, affecting consistency and comparability across case studies

6. Additional evidence will be drawn from Country-specific **Community Feedback Mechanisms** and community consultations, which may provide more comprehensive data for case studies. A central digital solution (SugarCRM³⁰), which has been recently rolled out in most of the high-risk Country Offices, will offer aggregate data since 2022 on the number and types of enquiries.

12. **Country risk registers** provide a consolidated overview of the key risks identified at the operational level and the mitigation measures planned or implemented to address them. They represent a valuable source of information for the evaluation, as they capture context-specific challenges that may affect WFP’s ability to deliver assistance safely, effectively, and in line with humanitarian principles. These registers typically include risks related to targeting, partner capacity gaps, and potential exposure to bias or elite capture in community-based processes. They also document operational risks linked to timeliness, resource constraints, and compliance with assurance standards.

13. The review of these registers may help the evaluation to assess how GAP-related assurance measures have been integrated into risk management practices and whether they have contributed to strengthening accountability.

14. EQ1 and EQ3 speaks also to the third global assurance standard, whereby “WFP knows that its in-kind food assistance is safe, meets food quality standards and where it is from the point of origin to the hands of the people we serve”. To this regard, the evaluation will be able to rely on **supply chain data** related to the *LESS Last Mile* project, the *SCOPE in-kind* roll-out as well as the *Track and Trace* project. Data availability on this will be further explored during inception phase.

Evaluation Question 2: *To what extent and how has the implementation of the GAP reinforced donors’ confidence in WFP as reliable effective and efficient humanitarian organization?*

15. Relevant sources of qualitative and quantitative information include:

- Executive Board meeting records (verbatim) before, during, and after GAP implementation, including dedicated sessions on GAP progress.

²⁹ WFP.2025.Guidance Note: Planning for nutritionally adequate in-kind General Food Assistance (draft)

³⁰ <https://analytics.wfp.org/#/views/2024CFMGlobalProfile/CFMProfile?.iid=1&:redirect=auth>

- Notes for the Record (NFRs) from bilateral meetings with donors.
- Donor statements and feedback provided during formal consultations or through official correspondence related to GAP outcomes.
- Donor contribution data over time, to identify trends and shifts in funding behaviour
- Analyses of donors' contributions earmarking levels and duration, as proxy to assess confidence and trust in WFP

Evaluation Question 4: *Were the transaction costs of implementing the assurance measures, including staff time and levels of effort, commensurate to the benefits generated and are they sustainable?* This analysis presents two main challenges:

- **Complexity of measuring intangible benefits:** Traditional cost-benefit analysis methods may not fully apply when benefits are qualitative or intangible—such as increased donor and partner confidence, improved reputational standing, or enhanced trust in WFP's systems. These outcomes are difficult to monetize or quantify but remain essential for organizational sustainability and GAP's objectives. The main source of information will be the key informants' interviews (KIIs) as well as the survey.
- **Feasibility of Quantitative Comparisons:** For more tangible aspects—such as improved responsiveness, enhanced timelines, or adequacy of transfers—objective metrics can be used. This could involve: i) tracking key performance indicators over time ii) benchmarking against pre-GAP baselines to assess improvements attributable to assurance measures

Annex III. AI in WFP evaluations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies may be used in this evaluation only with prior approval from the WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV). Following the approval, the evaluation team must include in the inception report, a comprehensive description of the intended use of AI tools, including their purpose, scope and nature.

The evaluation team is responsible for upholding ethical standards and accuracy in the application of AI tools. This includes diligently checking the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated outputs and assuming full responsibility for the accuracy of any results derived from AI.

- The evaluation team must ensure that the use of AI technologies complies with relevant normative and ethical frameworks applicable to the use of AI in the United Nations system and WFP, including but not limited to:

5.7 Digital & Technology Network Guidance on the Use of Generative AI Tools in the United Nations System;

- Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System³¹;
- WFP Global Data Strategy³²;

5.8 UNEG Ethical Principles for Harnessing AI in United Nations Evaluations;

- WFP AI strategy (2025)³³;
- WFP's Personal Data Protection and Privacy Framework³⁴;
- WFP's Interim AI Guidance³⁵; and
- Principles for Ethical Use of AI in the United Nations System.³⁶

- The evaluation team must employ AI tools in a manner that upholds the principles of non-discrimination, fairness, transparency, and accountability, and take appropriate measures to avoid the exclusion, disadvantage or harm of any group in connection with the use of AI technologies.

- The evaluation team must ensure that any data used in connection with AI tools is handled in accordance with WFP data protection standards and confidentiality obligations. AI tools shall not be used in any way that compromises the privacy or security of evaluation data.

³¹ UN. 2022. [Principles for the Ethical Use of AI in the UN System](#)

³² WFP. 2023. [WFP Global Data Strategy \(2024 – 2026\)](#)

³³ WFP. 2024. [WFP Global Artificial Intelligence Strategy \(2025 – 2027\)](#)

³⁴ WFP. 2024. [WFP Personal Data Protection and Privacy Framework](#)

³⁵ WFP. 2025. [WFP Interim Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Guidance](#)

³⁶ UN. 2022. [Principles for the Ethical Use of AI in the UN System](#)

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Annex V. Acronyms and abbreviations

CY	Country Office
EB	Executive Board
ED	Executive Director
GAP	Global Assurance Project
HQ	Headquarters
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OEC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
TORs	Terms of Reference
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WFP	World Food Programme

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