



WFP EVALUATION

Evaluation synthesis of WFP's engagement in humanitarian coordination

Evaluation synthesis report

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Executive summary

Introduction

1. Humanitarian needs are rising dramatically, while funding for humanitarian assistance is in decline. Initiatives such as UN80 and the humanitarian reset are driving major systemic changes. The imperative for efficient, coordinated and collective humanitarian action is not so much a pressing need as an inevitable and transformative change.
2. Conducted by WFP's Office of Evaluation, this synthesis¹ draws on 65 independent evaluations carried out since 2018 to assess WFP's role, strengths and challenges in relation to United Nations humanitarian coordination and to inform WFP's positioning within the humanitarian system, including for the 2025 humanitarian reset and the UN80 initiative.
3. The synthesis posed four questions:
 - *How has WFP positioned itself in humanitarian coordination forums?*
 - *What contributions has WFP made to humanitarian coordination?*
 - *What difference has WFP's engagement made to coordinated humanitarian action on the ground?*
 - *What factors have supported or constrained WFP's engagement in humanitarian coordination?*
4. The synthesis covers WFP engagement in United Nations humanitarian coordination mechanisms, including the humanitarian clusters under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee model where activated² and their related results. The study also covered WFP's engagement in sectoral working groups and humanitarian country teams, its approach to coordination and collaboration with other humanitarian actors, and the services it provides to partners in support of the collective response.
5. The density of evidence varied in some areas of WFP engagement in coordination systems – meaning that sometimes, fewer evaluations supported specific findings. This does not reduce the validity of the findings presented. Given the larger number of country-level evaluations available, evidence on country-level coordination features more prominently in this report.
6. To ensure relevance and reflect current organizational arrangements, regular consultations were held with internal stakeholders.

¹ This is the summary report on the evaluation. The full report and all related documents are available on the WFP website: [Evaluation synthesis on WFP's engagement in UN humanitarian coordination](#).

² At the time of the evaluations, WFP led the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters and co-led the food security cluster. These clusters have evolved since the evaluations were conducted (including through the streamlining of clusters and the merger of the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters).

Conclusions and supporting findings

Conclusion 1: When WFP's role is clearly defined, the organization is a fundamental enabler of humanitarian responses.

The evaluations show that WFP plays a foundational role in enabling collective humanitarian response under emergency conditions. It has effectively leveraged its designated role as cluster lead or co-lead, to which many of its comparative advantages are geared, in order to lead the broader humanitarian system in the implementation of emergency responses around the world. Its agility, responsiveness and capacity to meet urgent needs are widely documented. In emergency settings, where roles are formally designated and clearly defined from an operational point of view, WFP has demonstrated the leadership, decisiveness and operational weight to mobilize, coordinate and deliver assistance where few other organizations can.

7. **Its leadership of the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters and co-leadership of the food security cluster position WFP as a critical enabler of collective emergency response.** The evaluations reported that WFP's leadership in these forums was evident, with its support assessed as substantial, timely and effective in terms of achieving objectives. The organization was recognized by partners for its flexibility, effectiveness and generosity, providing critical services to governments and other humanitarian actors and ensuring continuity of humanitarian assistance.

8. The evaluations reported that **as the leader of the logistics cluster**, WFP played a core role in facilitating the coordination of humanitarian access and the provision of logistics services, guaranteeing continuity of humanitarian operations. The logistics cluster is consistently cited in evaluations as an enabler of coordinated emergency responses, meeting the need for a systematic coordination mechanism and shared services in emergency settings.

9. **The emergency telecommunications cluster played a similarly critical role** in enabling collective humanitarian response. WFP leadership focused on ensuring that humanitarian operations remained connected and coordinated in highly challenging operating environments. Evaluations record that the supply of emergency communication systems, information and communication technology (ICT) solutions and network maintenance was key in ensuring access to life-saving information and services during crises.

10. **As co-leader of the food security cluster** with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP's leadership was instrumental in driving coordination, coherence, targeting, coverage and transition in food security responses.³ In the Syrian Arab Republic, for example, the cluster coordinated extensively with partners to ensure the streamlined delivery of assistance and avoid duplication. Evaluations reported that the cluster acts as a powerful enabler of humanitarian effectiveness when it fosters open, timely and strategic information sharing.

11. **WFP's leadership was found to be instrumental in catalysing collective preparedness in a range of settings.** In particular, the global logistics⁴ and emergency telecommunication clusters dedicated significant resources to preparedness. Contributions include developing adaptable preparedness tools, fostering private sector partnerships for additional ad-hoc capacity in emergencies, and conducting logistics capacity assessments, ICT training, contingency planning and natural hazard risk analysis.

12. However, evaluations also highlight some inconsistencies in the prioritization of coordinated preparedness efforts, including **unclear inter-agency roles in and responsibilities for preparedness; inconsistent oversight and accountability for preparedness activities; and overstretched resources**, which undermined collective action.

13. **WFP's engagement and leadership in humanitarian coordination led to concrete results improvements in the quality of the collective humanitarian response.** Evaluations record **enhanced humanitarian access** as a result of WFP's engagement in collective action, either through advocacy on

³ Also noted in the [Strategic evaluation of WFP's approaches to targeting and prioritization for food and nutrition assistance](#).

⁴ The global logistics cluster field-based preparedness project seeks to increase local supply chain resilience and coordination among governments, private sector organizations and humanitarian actors.

behalf of the humanitarian community, as in South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen, or through coordinated transport solutions via the logistics cluster and WFP's dedicated access capacity.

14. WFP's engagement in coordinated humanitarian action also **improved the operational efficiency of collective responses**. Joint coordinated assessments and tools shared within clusters reduced duplication, thereby improving efficiency in operational delivery, especially amid resource constraints.

Conclusion 2: WFP's positioning is unclear when roles are less clearly defined.

In settings where WFP's role is less clearly defined or where it operates as a team member, evaluations found its engagement to be context-specific and opportunistic – positive features – but also at times individualized. In some areas, this lack of clarity led it to step in and take the lead, driven by the humanitarian imperative, where partners lacked capacity or ability to respond. While this supported the operational response and helped to meet needs on the ground, it also created reputational risk. At times it also gave rise to insufficiently consultative or participatory approaches and, as a consequence, risked undermining the shared sense of coordination among the humanitarian community.

15. **In situations where coordination structures were mature and functioning, a clear division of labour helped to optimize use of the respective strengths of the various actors in order to maximize the effectiveness of the humanitarian response.** For example, WFP's work with refugees and migrants is established through formalized systems of collaboration, memorandums of understanding, technical agreements with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration and formal partnerships with national governments.

16. Evaluations also show examples of where **WFP increasingly assumed more prominent roles in thematic or programmatic working groups, or other coordination forums, despite not having a designated leadership role**, stepping forward in response to specific demands or on the basis of its operational strengths. In such settings, WFP demonstrated readiness to act in the absence of other humanitarian actors, playing a lead role in coordination across several thematic areas and operational circumstances, driving inter-agency-coherence.⁵

17. **WFP is playing an increasingly prominent role in coordinated nutrition interventions.** Evaluations reported that this is particularly the case with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) within the nutrition cluster and the multi-agency referral system. They highlight how WFP and UNICEF have collaborated to optimize community-level interventions, with a focus on ensuring continuity of care for children suffering from acute malnutrition, aiming to maximize the effectiveness of both agencies through stronger operational coordination. Evaluations note that at the global level, WFP plays a leading role in shaping nutrition policy and practice by driving technical guidance, coordination and learning through the global nutrition cluster and inter-agency task-teams.⁶

18. **Evaluations signal inconsistent engagement in forums on gender, protection and inclusion.** While evaluations identify positive examples of WFP's proactive engagement in the protection cluster and related working group, and successful collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment,⁷ they also find that in other cases WFP's engagement in such forums was limited to sharing information or it remained nominal, unless it was directly linked to specific programming areas.

19. **Overall, evaluations identified four recurring challenges regarding WFP's engagement in humanitarian coordination forums beyond the clusters it leads or co-leads:**

⁵ [Ethiopia](#), [Iraq](#), [Mozambique](#), [Myanmar](#), [the Niger](#), [Nigeria](#), [Somalia](#), the [Syrian Arab Republic](#), [Togo](#) and [Türkiye](#), and [Strategic evaluation of WFP's support for refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants](#).

⁶ [Strategic evaluation of WFP's work on nutrition and HIV/AIDS](#).

⁷ [Afghanistan](#), [Iraq](#), [Myanmar](#) and [State of Palestine](#).

- **Lack of clarity regarding roles.** In some cases, WFP's early and proactive engagement in emergency response resulted in unclear assignation of operational roles among partner United Nations entities. More specifically, evaluation findings highlighted that WFP was not always effective or timely in communicating its assumed leadership role to partners.
- **Confusion regarding cash transfers.** The absence of defined roles and WFP strategies for partnership, combined with the lack of a clearly stated positioning, sometimes risked duplication of effort and led to missed opportunities for collaboration. This occurred in the coordination of cash assistance, especially multi-purpose cash.
- **A narrow focus and missed opportunities.** WFP's humanitarian coordination efforts were often narrow in focus,⁸ leading to missed opportunities for strategic leadership, cross-sectoral integration and influence within broader development and resilience frameworks.
- **A sometimes-reactive approach to partnerships.** WFP's partnership approach was found to be unstructured and reactive at times, lacking a clear prioritization strategy, which hindered its ability to proactively seek new partnerships in the area of emergency preparedness and response.⁹

Conclusion 3: There is potential for WFP to support collective coordination more consistently.

Fundamentally, context determines WFP's willingness and ability to engage in wider coordination, including the wider enabling environment and the capacities of other actors. Evaluations report that WFP could use its strong reputation with partners and its operational size and weight more consistently in order to improve the broader coordination system.

20. **Overall, WFP has strong reputational capital in humanitarian coordination.** Evaluations record that key stakeholders from humanitarian country teams recognize WFP as a strong and constructive partner that adds value to collective humanitarian responses.
21. **However, gaps were noted in how WFP communicated its choice of roles and actions.** While evaluations report that many of WFP's decisions in complex settings are operationally justified – and sometimes require a more discreet approach to be effective, limited communication with partners strained relationships at times. Given WFP's scale, such missed opportunities to capitalize on its positioning with respect to government and humanitarian actors can disproportionately affect the coherence and effectiveness of the collective humanitarian response.
22. **Evaluations of operations in Ethiopia and Ukraine reported United Nations system-wide challenges that hampered efforts to secure full humanitarian access stemming from underpowered advocacy or limited support to the humanitarian system.** In Ethiopia, evaluations found that WFP and other humanitarian actors made limited efforts to advocate for the lifting of access restrictions and failed to agree on what a principled approach would entail, particularly with regard to operational independence. In Ukraine, the inability to secure humanitarian corridors reflected the complex operating environment and the limited influence of humanitarian actors on access negotiations.
23. **Coordination was also challenging when compromise was required or where WFP lacked a coordination instinct.** Evaluations found WFP sometimes working in isolation, for example on cash transfers in Ukraine, with its understanding of the need for a principled stance coming into tension with the positions of other entities, such as in relation to transfer values. Likewise, in Zimbabwe, overreliance on internal capacity led to missed opportunities for collaboration in areas related to agriculture, livelihoods, early warning and anticipatory action.
24. **Dedicated and predictable funding is a fundamental enabler of effective WFP engagement in coordination systems.** The work of WFP-led clusters is hindered by scarce funding and lack of

⁸ [Bangladesh](#), [Cameroon](#), [Mozambique](#) and [Ukraine](#).

⁹ [Evaluation of WFP's emergency preparedness policy](#).

prioritization of resources for preparedness at the country and global levels.¹⁰ Moreover, continued competition for resources among United Nations partners disincentivizes collaborative activity.¹¹

25. **Some evaluations noted insufficient WFP staffing to support engagement in coordination systems.** For example, high staff turnover and limited handovers between staff impeded comprehensive coordination of emergency responses in Mozambique and Ukraine, which was exacerbated by a lack of dedicated personnel with the necessary expertise, and difficulty in securing national staff. In these cases, the situations were compounded by the short-term nature of funding dedicated to the emergency responses.¹²

Conclusion 4: There is unrealized potential in data sharing and analysis.

WFP's contributions to data, information sharing and analysis were found to be of core value to humanitarian action, globally and at the country level. They are highly valued by WFP's partners for their quality, comprehensiveness and rigour. However, evaluations indicate room to enhance dissemination to support anticipatory action and strategic planning and as a proactive contribution to the work of the broader humanitarian community.

26. **WFP's active engagement in coordination forums, especially for targeting, resulted in more focused humanitarian responses.** At the global level, WFP engagement in inter-agency collaboration strengthened targeting and prioritization in humanitarian responses, improved coordination and allowed interventions to better reach vulnerable populations. For example, although now phased out, the Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub established by WFP and UNHCR in 2020 played a key role in strengthening and refining joint targeting and prioritization and reinforcing collaboration. At the country level, evaluations record more focused humanitarian responses as a result of collective work to identify the most vulnerable people.

27. **WFP's central role in generating evidence and analysis benefited the wider humanitarian system,**¹³ including through the global clusters and other mechanisms such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification and the Cadre Harmonisé. In a range of settings, its leadership in food security analysis, joint assessments and harmonized targeting methods was found to have helped ensure coherent, cross-sectoral planning without slowing operational speed.

28. **However, evaluations also identified shortfalls,** including:

- **Limited information and knowledge sharing** with other actors, including on targeting and prioritization methodologies. This created challenges in settings where adjustments or withdrawal of WFP assistance significantly affected vulnerable populations and where timely information-sharing could have supported coordinated prioritization by other actors. Limited information sharing is also associated with risks of duplication of assistance.
- **Limited collaboration with partners on the joint design of targeting criteria,** validation of beneficiary lists and adaptation of targeting frameworks in response to changing needs.
- Systemic **challenges in the collective targeting of specific vulnerable population groups,** particularly women and girls, and people with disabilities, as indicated in inter-agency evaluations.
- **Shortcomings in WFP and collective accountability to affected people and community feedback mechanisms.** Here, evaluations indicate promising intent from WFP's engagement in coordinated action (for example, in Lebanon and the United Republic of Tanzania), but also some shortcomings in operational delivery (in Burkina Faso and Ukraine).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ [Mid-term evaluation of the WFP strategic plan \(2022–2025\)](#) and examples from Ethiopia and Somalia.

¹² [Evaluation of WFP's emergency preparedness policy.](#)

¹³ Found in 16 evaluations.

Conclusion 5: There is potential to further support localization.

While WFP's engagement in collective preparedness and capacity strengthening for response demonstrably supported localization, evaluations found that further alignment with these goals could deepen national and local ownership and the sustainability of interventions in line with the 2025 localization policy and the WFP strategic plan for 2026–2029, which call for strengthening the influence of local and national actors in shaping coordination platforms.

29. **WFP engaged closely with partners to support collective action for capacity strengthening of national and local actors.** In diverse settings, WFP's engagement with national disaster management and sectoral authorities helped to strengthen local institutional capacities. WFP's dual role – as operational lead during emergencies and as a technical partner in preparedness – enabled hands-on capacity development, although the depth of the results achieved varied depending on government ownership, WFP's internal alignment and the maturity of national systems.

30. **As a result of collective efforts on strengthening capacity, in which WFP played an important role, national and local actors were better equipped to lead future responses independently,** reducing reliance on the external delivery of humanitarian responses. WFP helped to achieve concrete efficiency gains in humanitarian responses, strengthened coordination mechanisms and enhanced the readiness of government institutions and local non-governmental organizations to respond to crises. Evaluations found notable success stories where WFP supported government leadership in humanitarian clusters, allowing national actors to take the lead, particularly as a result of the commitment of WFP-led clusters to localizing emergency supply chain and telecommunication coordination.

31. **However, government engagement in coordination was sometimes limited, which constrained effective collaboration.** Evaluations found that government engagement in coordination mechanisms was constrained by high turnover of government staff, limited trust in coordination systems and varying degrees of national capacity. Moreover, national and local organizations sometimes remained marginalized within humanitarian coordination and decision-making despite their operational presence, knowledge of the operating environment and, sometimes, their technical capacity.

Conclusion 6: WFP needs to navigate the tensions between the humanitarian imperative and coordination.

The evaluations analysed illustrate how WFP frequently confronts and needs to navigate acute dilemmas arising from the humanitarian imperative to address human suffering and the demands of complex coordination mechanisms. Evaluations record that in such cases, the culture of WFP is to aim for a coordinated approach at first, such as in relation to cash transfers. Then, if burdens of coordination appear to risk delaying the delivery of assistance to people in need, the ethos of the organization is to ensure continuous delivery of humanitarian assistance, which it is unafraid to do alone if needed.

32. **WFP has to manage tensions between the humanitarian imperative, including the speed of the response, and the burdens involved in coordination.** Evaluations emphasize that WFP's work is driven by the moral obligation to safeguard humanitarian space and principles. Ensuring the continuity of humanitarian assistance is the central driver of its operations. This position has major strengths when it comes to meeting humanitarian needs and upholding the principle of humanity. Yet it also has costs in terms of limiting the depth of operational partnerships; posing risks to WFP's reputation as a strong humanitarian citizen; and reducing efficiency, when time and energy that could be spent on the humanitarian response are instead dedicated to resolving disagreements. Evaluations observe that WFP has opportunities to learn more from its own experience and to clarify the costs of lone action versus coordinated approaches.

33. **Evaluations highlight notable efforts by WFP to act in partnership both globally and locally.** The evidence indicates that WFP could further leverage its internal capacities to support coordinated humanitarian action more consistently. While it has limited control over external factors, it could strengthen its internal culture and mindset to better support coordinated humanitarian action, including by harnessing the power of the humanitarian imperative as an organizational driver of collaboration, as well as aligning organizational incentives with more collective goals.

34. **Trade-offs can arise where WFP's rapid operational pace, driven by its imperative to deliver, meets the sometimes-slower pace of coordinated action.** For example, in the early stages of the response to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, inter-agency disagreements arose over food security datasets, supply chain management, the construction of medical facilities and air transport, with other entities lacking WFP's mature instinct and capacity for emergency response and being slower to respond.

Conclusion 7: More progress is needed on collective transitioning out of emergency response operations.

Alongside coordinated emergency responses, WFP is fostering strategic collaboration to support early recovery, rehabilitate food systems and rebuild livelihoods. Its ability to pivot effectively to recovery programming is widely recorded in evaluations. However, evaluations note that while its commitment to recovery-focused approaches is evident, a lack of clear frameworks and early planning within collective approaches has constrained its ability to consistently balance immediate food assistance with longer-term resilience programming and system strengthening.

35. **WFP has made increasing efforts to support the humanitarian community in transitioning away from collective emergency responses.** Evaluations note that strategic collaboration with FAO and other partners enabled WFP to pivot from emergency response to collective support for early recovery, supporting the restoration of livelihoods and markets, agricultural recovery and food system rehabilitation.

36. **WFP consistently demonstrated strong coordination capacities during emergencies and early recovery, working effectively with governments and United Nations partners to deliver integrated responses.** For example, evaluations noted that in Mozambique and Türkiye, collaboration with FAO facilitated alignment between food assistance and agricultural recovery, while engagement with local authorities in Mozambique supported both immediate response and disaster preparedness. These examples highlight WFP's ability to mobilize partners quickly, ensure coherence across sectors and contribute to early recovery outcomes through joint programming.

37. **However, when responses move toward transition, resilience building or handover, WFP's strategic guidance and planning can at times become less consistent.** The inter-agency evaluation of the collective humanitarian response in Ethiopia found that the jointly developed strategy to shift from food assistance to resilience programming lacked operational clarity and faced contextual constraints. In Iraq, the handover of humanitarian coordination responsibilities – including cluster responsibilities – to government and development actors was poorly planned and communicated.

38. A nuanced picture emerged from the evaluation of WFP's response in Ukraine, where it proved challenging to balance food assistance and livelihood interventions within the food security cluster, given the predominance of food security needs. The lack of early planning for national co-leadership constrained the ability of the collective humanitarian system to support a transition from purely humanitarian action to recovery programming and system strengthening work.

Looking forwards

39. The findings of the evaluations analysed reflect a central challenge: the concurrence of rising humanitarian needs and declining funding is intensifying demands for more cohesive humanitarian action. While progress continues to be made on systemic reforms such as those under the UN80 initiative and the humanitarian reset, WFP needs a clear vision of its role in collective action and its ability to adapt to shifting inter-agency roles.

Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	By when
1	<p>To better support country-level decision-making on engagement in humanitarian coordination, and in accordance with the ongoing humanitarian reset and the UN80 initiative, clarify and prioritize – at the corporate level – WFP’s role in coordination mechanisms and forums beyond the clusters that it currently leads, guided by the need to focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Through an update of the Executive Director’s circular on WFP’s leadership in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee clusters,¹⁴ clarify the key coordination mechanisms and forums in which WFP will engage at the global and country levels, taking into account specific operational contexts, and communicate a clear corporate position. ii. To define successful coordination, conduct a learning exercise based on country office experiences with different approaches to humanitarian coordination in a variety of settings, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and gaps of each approach. 	United Nations Engagement Division	Programme Division Supply Chain and Delivery Division Country offices	December 2027
2	<p>To maximize WFP’s potential for enhancing the wider humanitarian system, create a narrative for the WFP workforce that positions humanitarian coordination as a fundamental requirement, while preserving space for independent action where the humanitarian imperative demands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. At the corporate level, develop a clear internal narrative to guide coordination-related decisions and help country offices navigate the dilemmas presented by coordination and the choices they face. ii. At the country level, build tailored communication approaches into annual performance plans in order to help WFP employees and partners to understand – and explain – the rationale behind WFP’s coordination choices, considering the role of country directors as cluster leads. 	Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer Office	United Nations Engagement Division Communications and Media Office Country offices	December 2027

¹⁴ WFP. 2013. [Executive Director’s Circular: WFP Leadership in IASC Clusters](#) (OED2013/016).

1. Introduction

1.1. Synthesis features

1. Currently, humanitarian needs are rising dramatically, while their financing is shrinking. Initiatives such as UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset¹⁵ are driving major systemic changes. The imperative for efficient, coordinated and collective humanitarian action is thus less a pressing need, than an inevitable and transformative change.
2. This synthesis brings together evidence from 65 independent evaluations on WFP's role, strengths and challenges in UN humanitarian coordination since 2018. It aims to support WFP's efforts in positioning itself within the humanitarian system, including within the 2025 Humanitarian Reset and UN80 Initiative of systemic reform, by presenting learning generated from evaluations of WFP activity in both humanitarian and development contexts.
3. The synthesis posed four main questions:¹⁶
 - **How** has WFP positioned itself in humanitarian coordination forums?
 - **What contributions** has WFP made to humanitarian coordination since 2018?
 - **What difference** has WFP's engagement made to coordinated humanitarian action on the ground?
 - **What factors** have supported or constrained WFP's engagement in humanitarian coordination?
5. The synthesis was conducted by WFP's Office of Evaluation between March 2025 and March 2026. It will be presented at the June 2026 Executive Board session (EB. A/2026).

1.2. Context

4. **What is humanitarian coordination?** Humanitarian coordination is the set of structures, processes, principles and commitments aiming to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response by ensuring greater predictability, accountability and partnership.¹⁷ The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182, established in 1991, outlined a framework for humanitarian assistance and a set of guiding principles for coordination. It also strengthened the role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and established the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC),¹⁸ which brings together the executive heads of 19 organizations and consortia with the aim of strengthening collective humanitarian action through the implementation of a coherent and unified response to humanitarian emergencies.
5. At the country level, coordination structures have three interrelated layers: strategic, operational and technical. Figure 1 summarizes these,¹⁹ noting that their roles may be revised in line with the ongoing Humanitarian Reset, which envisages a review of humanitarian clusters and the introduction of area-based coordination models.

¹⁵ The Humanitarian Reset: <https://www.unocha.org/news/humanitarian-reset-10-march-2025>.

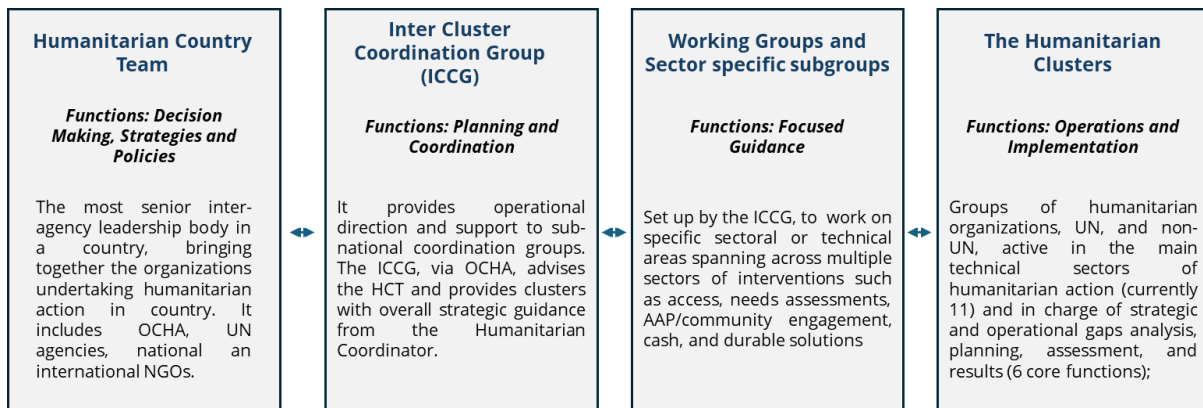
¹⁶ The original terms of reference (ToR) of the synthesis included three key questions related to positioning, successes and challenges in humanitarian coordination. In light of the evidence extracted and analysis conducted, these were further elaborated in the form outlined here to better distinguish between areas of WFP contributions, results in terms of quality of response and success or hindering factors.

¹⁷ The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) Network. Understanding and influencing the IASC system at country level. May 2025.

¹⁸ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182. 1991.

¹⁹ In line with the evidence reported, the paragraphs below aim to provide a general overview of formal coordination structures at the national level, noting that other mechanisms exist.

Figure 1 - Overview of key humanitarian coordination bodies at the country level



Source: OEV elaboration based on the following documents: ICVA guidance (2025), Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) terms of reference (2017), humanitarian country team (HCT) terms of reference (2017), and IASC Guidance on Cluster Coordination (2015). In some cases, there might be variation depending on the countries.

6. Specifically:

- **Strategic:** The humanitarian coordinator (HC) leads the humanitarian country team (HCT) as the senior decision making forum for humanitarian response, including negotiating access. The humanitarian country team endorses key planning documents such as the humanitarian needs overview and humanitarian response plans²⁰ (recently merged and renamed as humanitarian needs and response plans).
- **Operational:** Coordination is facilitated through sector-specific and intersectoral bodies that translate strategic direction into response planning and implementation.
- **Technical:** Technical and thematic working groups – such as cash working groups, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) networks, or specialized protection subgroups – provide more focused guidance on technical issues that cut across multiple sectors.²¹

7. **Humanitarian clusters:** The “cluster approach”, introduced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in 2005, establishes sector-based coordination bodies with designated lead agencies. These bring together United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with specific sectoral expertise.²² It has six core functions: (i) supporting service delivery; (ii) informing on the humanitarian coordinator and humanitarian country team’s strategic decision making; (iii) planning and strategy development; (iv) monitoring and reporting; (v) building national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning; and (vi) supporting advocacy.²³

8. At the time of writing, WFP led the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters²⁴ and led the Food Security Cluster with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO):²⁵

- The **Food Security Cluster** was established in 2011 with the aim to coordinate food security responses during and after a humanitarian crisis, addressing issues of food availability, access, utilization and stability.²⁶ In 2024, the Food Security Cluster coordinated responses to emergencies

²⁰ IASC. 2015. Reference Module for the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.

²¹ Cash Working Group. 2020. Operational Guidance and Tools.

²² IASC. 2015. Reference Module on Cluster Coordination at Cluster Level.

²³ IASC. 2015 Guidance on Cluster Coordination and Functioning.

²⁴ In line with the Humanitarian Reset efficiency approach the Emergency Telecommunications and the Logistics Cluster have been merged in 2026. (ETC, 2025. ETC & Logistics Cluster: aligning for impact. <https://www.etcluster.org/blog/etc-logistics-cluster-aligning-impact>. Accessed on 12 February 2026).

²⁵ WFP Executive Board. 2010. WFP’s role in the humanitarian assistance system.

²⁶ Food Security Cluster. Annual Report 2024.

and protracted crises in 31 operations,²⁷ out of which 27 were IASC-activated settings.²⁸ Cluster partners supported 88 million people with food, agriculture and livelihood assistance, reaching 78 percent of the 113 million people targeted with funding of USD 6.6 billion.²⁹

- The **Logistics Cluster**, established in 2005, supports global, regional and local actors to alleviate logistics constraints impeding the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance such as medical equipment, water and sanitation, life-saving food and other essential supplies to people in need around the world.³⁰ In 2024, the Logistics Cluster supported 1,145 partners across 45 countries, coordinating in emergency response and in emergency preparedness. In response contexts, the Logistics Cluster facilitated access to common services that included 246 convoys worldwide as well as the transportation and storage of 300,000 m³ of cargo, including 200,000 m³ of relief items delivered into hard-to-reach areas.³¹
- The **Emergency Telecommunication Cluster**, established in 2005, aims to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies. In 2024, the Emergency and Telecommunication Cluster engaged in ten humanitarian responses and was able to connect 10,542 users from 145 organizations.³²

9. Beyond the clusters it leads or co-leads, WFP is also a regular member of other clusters, including:³³

- The Education Cluster: Established in 2005 and jointly led by the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Save the Children, the Education Cluster provides coordination support to ensure a quality education in emergencies response.³⁴
- The Nutrition Cluster: Led by UNICEF, it provides coordinated support towards nutrition in humanitarian emergencies.
- The Protection Cluster: Led by UNHCR, it coordinates activities supporting protection in humanitarian action. It also includes the following areas of responsibility: (i) child protection; (ii) protection from gender-based violence; (iii) mine action; and (iv) housing land and property.³⁵
- The Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster: Led by UNICEF, it aims to enhance and strengthen effective and accountable humanitarian coordination for water, sanitation and hygiene.

10. WFP also engages in a range of other context-specific coordination mechanisms at the country level, such as the Refugee Coordination Mechanism.

11. Over the past six years, WFP has been the major recipient of coordinated humanitarian funding (humanitarian response plans and other coordinated plans). This remained the case even as funding levels declined sharply in recent years³⁶ (Figure 2). In 2025, WFP actively engaged in all the 31 appeals expressed in the Global Humanitarian Overview,³⁷ acting as a key player in all the related response plans. Put into

²⁷ The 31 include Cox's Bazar, Haiti, Lebanon, Honduras, Guatemala and Salvador, which had an HNRP or other type of response plan but were not IASC activated.

²⁸ WFP. 2025. Update on WFP's role in the collective humanitarian response (2024).

²⁹ Food Security Cluster. Annual Report 2024.

³⁰ Logistics Cluster Strategy (2022-2026).

³¹ WFP. 2025. Update on WFP's role in the collective humanitarian response (2024).

³² ETC Cluster. 2024. 2024 Annual Report.

³³ The list is not exclusive. WFP may also engage in additional clusters (i.e. camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) or shelter) depending on the needs of the specific emergency settings, which may vary.

³⁴ Global Education Cluster. Global Education Cluster Strategy (2022-2025).

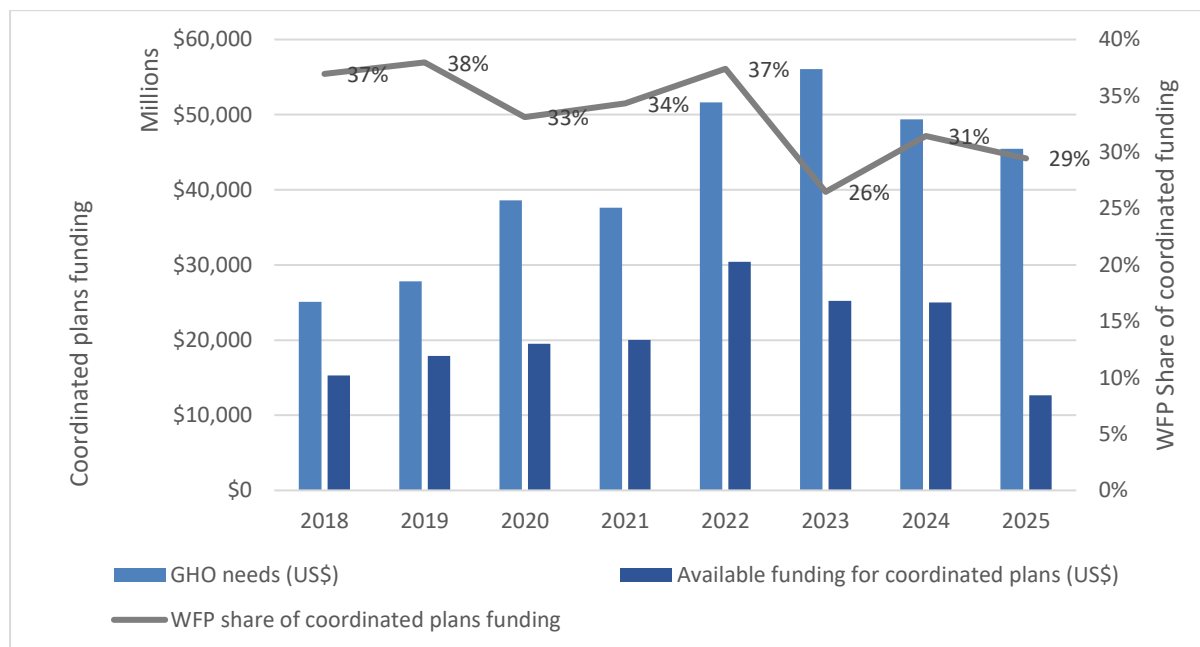
³⁵ Following the recent streamlining of clusters under the 2025 humanitarian reset, these areas of responsibilities have been integrated into the main Protection Cluster, with the exception of the housing land and property, which has been integrated in the Shelter Cluster.

³⁶ OCHA. Financial Tracking Service. Accessed December 2025. Data for 2025 may be provisional.

³⁷ OCHA. Global Humanitarian Overview 2025. <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2025-enarfres>

perspective against other actors, WFP alone received between 35 percent and 50 percent of total humanitarian funding across nine responses: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, El Salvador, Haiti, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sudan and South Sudan.³⁸

Figure 2 - Requirements for the Global Humanitarian Overview versus coordinated funding allocated to WFP



Source: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Financial tracking service (FTS). Data accessed December 2025.

12. At the time of writing, the prospects for 2026 remain uncertain: while the latest Global Humanitarian Overview requests USD 33 billion to meet the needs of 135 million people targeted across 25 countries,³⁹ major donors, such as the United States of America (USA), have committed only USD 2 billion in humanitarian assistance distributed to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for 17 crisis-affected countries – of which only 11 are included in the Global Humanitarian Overview.⁴⁰

The Humanitarian Reset and the UN80 Initiative

13. The UN80 Initiative aims to enhance operational efficiency within the United Nations system, in response to increasing global challenges ranging from conflict, displacement, climate shocks and rapid technological change, while also responding to external pressures such as shrinking financial resources and growing political divisions in the multilateral space.

14. As part of this broader reform agenda, the Humanitarian Reset,⁴¹ launched in March 2025, calls for a transformation of how humanitarian operations are organized and delivered. The need for increased efficiencies and reduced bureaucracy was already under discussion within the IASC: in late 2024, the Emergency Relief Coordinator commissioned a report outlining a proposal for a more streamlined and efficient humanitarian system.⁴²

³⁸ OCHA. Financial Tracking Service. Accessed in December 2025.

³⁹ OCHA. Global Humanitarian Overview 2026. [Global Humanitarian Overview 2026 | Humanitarian Action](#)

⁴⁰ United Nations. December 2025. [UN, US sign \\$2 billion humanitarian funding agreement for 17 crisis-hit countries | UN News](#).

⁴¹ <https://www.unocha.org/news/humanitarian-reset-10-march-2025>.

⁴² Jan Egeland. Joyce Msuya. December 2024. Proposals for a simplified and more efficient humanitarian system. [A simplified and more efficient humanitarian system | OCHA](#). The report called for faster and more decisive decision making.

15. The Humanitarian Reset has three strategic priorities: (i) delivering effective crisis response within limited means; (ii) rethinking how humanitarian work is organized; and (iii) shifting power closer to local leaders and affected communities.⁴³ The Humanitarian Reset includes a review of the IASC structure and the simplification and streamlining of the humanitarian clusters.⁴⁴ Phase 2 of the Humanitarian Reset launched by the Emergency Relief Coordinator in June 2025 highlighted that the reform will, among other changes:

- empower humanitarian country teams led by humanitarian coordinators operating as strategic, unified crisis platforms (coordination models to be context-specific, and built around the needs, priorities and capacities of communities);
- promote more equitable partnerships with local and national actors, based on trust and recognition;
- streamline humanitarian clusters and bring greater integration with refugee coordination models; and
- put greater emphasis on transitioning out of humanitarian action, with increased advocacy on resilience building and root causes of crises with development actors and international financial institutions.

16. Moreover, the September 2025 Secretary-General report on the UN80 Initiative⁴⁵ envisages a “New Humanitarian Compact”, outlining a set of actions to deliver faster, leaner and more accountable support to people in crises, restore trust in multilateral action and maximize impact. This includes, among other things: integrating supply chains across the UN system; scaling up common services; and clarifying agency roles to reduce duplication.

17. At the end of 2025, humanitarian clusters were reduced from 11 to 8, with humanitarian coordinators activating only those needed, enabling local actors to co-lead where possible. Additionally, greater integration between humanitarian clusters and other coordination mechanisms such as the refugee coordination model is being explored, with the aim to achieve a single coordination model, while the IASC structures have been streamlined by reducing layers and meetings.⁴⁶

1.3 Methodology

18. **Scope:** The synthesis covers WFP engagement in UN humanitarian coordination mechanisms including the coordination forums under the IASC model, such as the humanitarian clusters (where activated) and their related results. Additionally, WFP engagement in, and contributions to, sectoral working groups and humanitarian country teams are also included in the scope, as well as its approach to coordination and collaboration with other humanitarian actors in broad terms, and the services it provides to partners to support a collective response. The synthesis considers evaluations completed from 2018 to account for evidence generated in the context of the WFP Integrated Roadmap to Zero Hunger, launched in 2017.

19. The types of evaluations included, and their country locations, are set out in Table 1 below, and the full list provided in Annex 2. The WFP country strategic plan evaluations (CSPEs) included are from countries where at least one of the three WFP-led or co-led clusters was active between 2018 and 2025, and where a

by reducing internal processes, rationalizing overlapping coordination bodies and ensuring more effective in-country presence and leadership.

⁴³ To realize this transformation, the Humanitarian Reset outlines ten priority actions including, among other things: promoting a more people-centred response led by local and national actors; having humanitarian coordinators prioritize life-saving activities; pooling resources to collectively finance common services and operational enablers; and empowering in-country leadership.

⁴⁴ As of June 2025, WFP is the global lead agency for the emergency telecommunications and logistics clusters, and the co-lead of the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) with FAO.

⁴⁵ [UN80_WS3-1_250921_1238.pdf](#).

⁴⁶ Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). [IASC Humanitarian Reset Roadmap | IASC](#). November 2025.

humanitarian country team was operational during the same period. The sample also includes WFP corporate emergency evaluations (CEEs), inter-agency humanitarian evaluations (IAHEs) or syntheses (IAHS), WFP decentralized evaluations (DEs) with a humanitarian focus, and relevant global evaluations, such as policy evaluations (PE) and strategic evaluations (SE), within the scope of the synthesis.

Table 1 - Evaluations considered in the synthesis, by type

WFP country strategic plan evaluations	WFP corporate emergency evaluations	WFP policy /strategic evaluations	Inter-agency humanitarian evaluations/syntheses	WFP decentralized evaluations	Total
37 ⁴⁷	7	12	7	2	65

20. This report was developed following a standard process for evaluation synthesis:

- screening and selecting relevant evaluations for inclusion;
- developing and systematically applying a comprehensive analytical framework; and
- refining and triangulating evidence across evaluation reports as findings emerged from the analysis.

21. Analytical fields were refined on an ongoing basis to maintain a degree of openness to capture emerging or unforeseen themes and relevant evidence.

22. Overall, there was limited density of evidence across some areas of WFP engagement in coordination systems – meaning that sometimes, the proportions of evaluations providing evidence on a specific finding were limited. However, this caveat does not impede the overall validity of the findings presented here. It should also be noted that, in light of the significantly higher number of country-level evaluations considered as opposed to global ones, and the actual scope of global ones, evidence on WFP engagement in coordination mechanisms and other forums at the country level is more prominent in this report.

23. To help better situate the synthesis in current organizational realities and enhance the relevance of the recommendations it puts forward, regular consultations were held with internal stakeholders, including on emerging draft findings and recommendations.

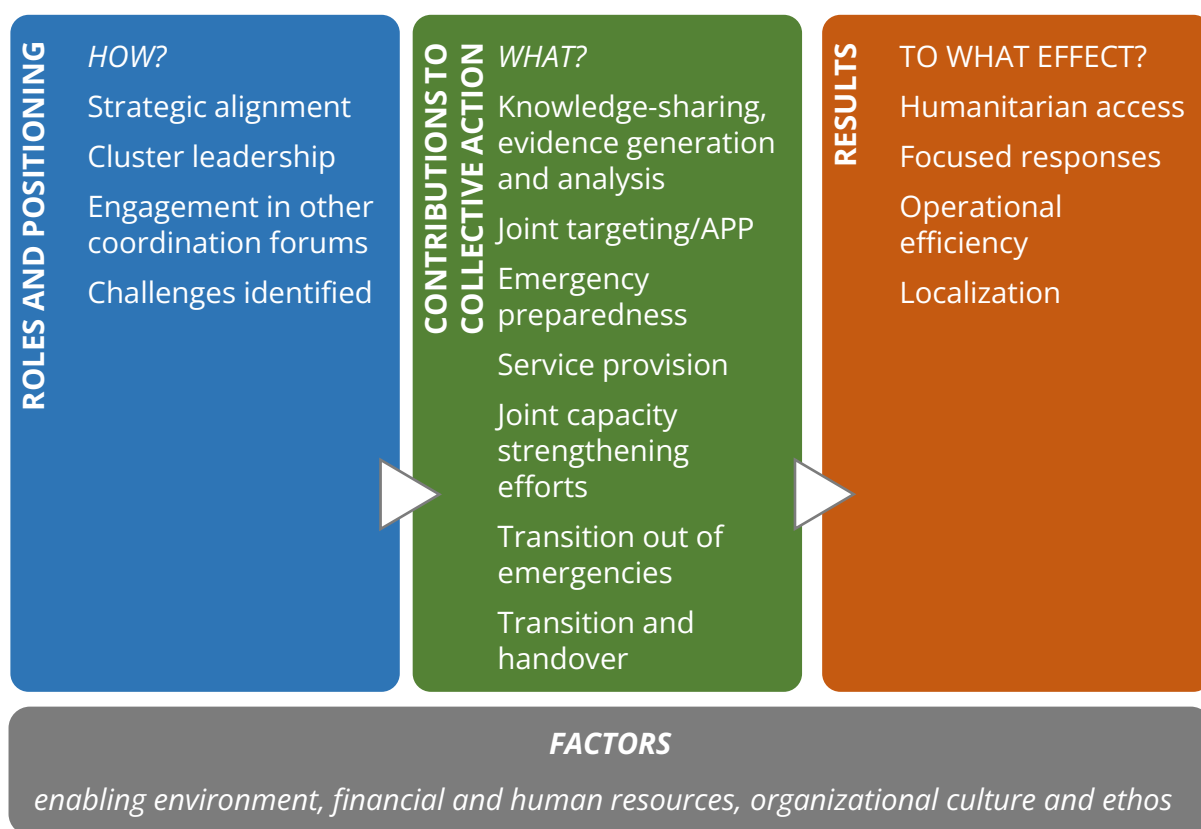
⁴⁷ Conducted in countries with WFP-led or co-led clusters or active humanitarian country teams.

2. Findings

24. This section of the report presents the key findings of the synthesis. As per Figure 3 below, it is structured in four sections, geared to the overarching questions of this report:

- **How** has WFP positioned itself in humanitarian coordination forums?
- **What contributions** has WFP made to coordinated humanitarian coordination action since 2018?
- **What difference** has WFP's engagement made to coordinated humanitarian action on the ground?
- **What factors** have constrained or supported WFP's engagement in coordinated humanitarian action?

Figure 3 - Logic structure of the synthesis findings



2.1. How has WFP positioned itself in humanitarian coordination forums?

Strategic alignment

25. **Strong commitment to strategic alignment.** Ten evaluations assessed WFP as having a strong ethos of strategic alignment, actively participating in the delivery of key UN frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and humanitarian response plans.⁴⁸ In [Kenya](#), for example, the CSPE found that WFP was committed to collaborative working enshrined in the “One United Nations” business operations strategy and is recognized by the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office for its commitment to United Nations country team (UNCT) collaboration (Kenya CSPE). In [Bangladesh](#), following a change of country office leadership in 2018, WFP progressively aligned its CSP with United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors with increased engagement in wider UNCT

⁴⁸ Ethiopia CSPE, Mozambique CSPE, DRC CSPE 2020, Nigeria CSPE, Kenya CSPE, Niger CSPE, Philippines CSPE, South Sudan CSPE, Bangladesh CSPE.

initiatives. (Bangladesh CSPE). In [Ethiopia](#), WFP is an active contributor to the annual joint government-UN humanitarian response plan, which also serves as the basis for initial WFP needs-based planning. In [South Sudan](#), WFP embraced the humanitarian response plan provision for the adoption of an integrated multisectoral approach to the engagement in the inter-cluster coordination group, in which WFP is a key player (South Sudan CSPE).

26. Evaluation evidence also points to **WFP's strong reputational capital in humanitarian coordination**. Evaluations record that key stakeholders from humanitarian country teams recognize WFP as a strong and constructive partner bringing added value to wider humanitarian responses. Specifically, evaluations highlight that this has occurred through WFP's leadership and co-leadership of humanitarian clusters, as detailed below; and its engagement in other humanitarian coordination forums on the ground. However, room for improvements in further collaboration and communication⁴⁹ was noted (see section: Challenges around WFP's positioning in humanitarian coordination).

Leadership and co-leadership of clusters

27. **A leader in cluster-led humanitarian response.** The leadership of the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters, and co-leadership of the Food Security Cluster position WFP as a critical enabler of collective emergency responses. Eleven evaluations⁵⁰ highlight WFP's clear leadership in these forums, with its support viewed as substantial, timely and effective for achieving objectives (Ukraine CEE, Syria CSPE). The organization was recognized by partners for its flexibility, effectiveness and generosity (Syria CEE), providing critical services to both government and other humanitarian actors in the aftermath of crises (Türkiye CSPE, Niger CSPE) and for ensuring continuity of humanitarian assistance (Palestine CSPE). Specifically:

28. **As leader of the Logistics Cluster**, WFP plays a core enabling role in coordinating humanitarian access, including convoys, and providing logistics services, to guarantee continuity of humanitarian operations. Eight evaluations record that the Logistics Cluster was consistently cited as enabling coordinated emergency responses, meeting the need for systematic coordination mechanism and shared services in logistics, emergency telecommunications and food security analysis (Bangladesh CSPE, Mozambique IAHE, Ukraine CEE, South Sudan CSPE, Yemen CEE). Examples include:

- In [Ukraine](#), WFP played a pivotal role in the Logistics Cluster, contributing resources, personnel and shared services – including support to inter-agency convoys – that reinforced and enabled the broader emergency architecture (Ukraine IAHS).
- In [Syria](#), as lead of the Logistics Cluster, WFP plays a crucial enabling role in coordinating cross-border movement, inter-agency convoys and providing common storage (Syria CSPE).
- In [Palestine](#), in 2020 the WFP-led Logistics Cluster assumed the liaison role on behalf of the humanitarian community to ensure continuity of humanitarian assistance (Palestine CSPE).
- In [Malawi](#), the Logistics Cluster supported the Government and humanitarian actors by playing a key role in coordinating the supply chain management's COVID-19-related medical aid (Malawi CSPE).
- In [South Sudan](#), the Logistics Cluster was seen as instrumental to, and a key enabler of, the successful implementation of the humanitarian response; strong support from the cluster helped to sustain a well-managed and fully funded common logistics service (South Sudan CSPE).

29. **The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) played a similarly critical role in enabling collective humanitarian response.** In this role, WFP focused on ensuring that humanitarian operations remained connected and coordinated in some of the world's most challenging contexts. Five evaluations⁵¹ record that the supply of emergency communication systems, information, communication and technology solutions, and network maintenance have been key to providing governments, humanitarian actors, and

⁴⁹ Mali CSPE, Mozambique CSPE, Palestine CSPE, Sahel CEE, South Sudan ICSPE, Yemen CEE.

⁵⁰ 11 evaluations: 8 CSPEs (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso DRC 2024, DRC 2020, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Syria) 1 global (SE RIMS), SE RIMs) 3 CEEs (Myanmar, Yemen, Ukraine).

⁵¹ Ukraine CEE, Yemen CEE, Syria CSPE, Niger CSPE.

communities with access to life-saving information and services during crises. For example, in [Yemen](#), the ETC delivered essential security telecommunications and power solutions, enabling internet connectivity for the humanitarian community, civil society organizations and universities across the country. This facilitated operational continuity for a wide range of humanitarian actors in one of the world's largest humanitarian crises (Yemen CEE). Similarly, in [Syria](#), the ETCr helped to maintain a stable communications network in the face of constant electricity cuts across eight common UN operational areas (Syria CSPE), while in [Niger](#), as lead of the ETC, WFP helped deploy emergency communication systems to both government institutions and communities, enabling effective communication and coordination of the collective humanitarian response (Niger CSPE).

30. Six evaluations⁵² found that, as **co-leader of the Food Security Cluster (FSC) with FAO, WFP's leadership was instrumental in driving coordination, coherence, targeting, coverage** (Malawi, Somalia, Syria) **and transition** (Ukraine) **in food security responses**. In [Malawi](#), for example, the WFP-led Food Security Cluster ran resource mobilization and advocacy for a harmonized approach to the vertical and horizontal expansion of transfer values among the Government, United Nations agencies and donors involved (Malawi CSPE). In [Ukraine](#), as the focus of the humanitarian community progressively shifted from a purely food security emergency context to livelihoods concerns, the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster served as a framework for the progressive establishment of dedicated working groups focusing on longer-term needs (Ukraine IAHS). In [Syria](#), the Food Security Cluster coordinated extensively with partners across the food security sector to ensure streamlined delivery of assistance and to avoid duplication (Syria CSPE).

31. Two evaluations suggested that the Food Security Cluster can be a powerful enabler of humanitarian effectiveness when it fosters open, timely and strategic information sharing. In [Somalia](#), the Food Security Cluster serves as a platform for organizations to share market risk analysis and price monitoring updates, and for building common assessment tools informing operations (Somalia IAHE 2018). In [Syria](#), the Food Security Cluster was considered by external partners as the best coordinated within the whole-of-Syria approach. In Syria, WFP's contributions to data analysis, planning and information management have been particularly valued by humanitarian partners (Syria CEE).

Other coordination forums

32. **A proactive role in other coordination forums.** Seven evaluations provided examples of where WFP has increasingly assumed more prominent roles in thematic or programmatic working groups, or other coordination forums, where it does not have a designated leadership role, but stepped forward given contextual demands and its operational strengths in the context.⁵³ In particular, WFP has demonstrated readiness to step in, in the absence of other humanitarian actors. Examples include:

- In [Somalia](#), in addition to co-leading the Food Security and the Nutrition Clusters and coordinating the humanitarian response, WFP filled gaps in areas where other UN agencies were absent or had less capacity, including in support of vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19 (Somalia CSPE).
- In [Türkiye](#), WFP co-chaired the basic needs working group to address the needs of Syrian refugees and other vulnerable populations (Türkiye CSPE).
- In [Togo](#), WFP's leadership of the inter-sector emergency working group was critical in the definition of an inter-agency contingency plan for covering issues such as epidemic outbreaks, flooding, the spread of conflict and the arrival of refugees from the Sahel region (emergency preparedness and response (EPR) PE).
- In [Syria](#), WFP co-led the accountability to affected populations (AAP) task force, the social protection pillar under the UN Syria Strategic Framework, and the gender working group (Syria CSPE).
- In [Niger](#), WFP was heavily involved in the cash working group, contributing to discussions on setting a common value for cash transfers (Niger CSPE).

⁵² Ukraine IAHS, Malawi CSPE, Syria CSPE, Somalia IAHE 2018, SE on Targeting and Prioritization, DRC CSPE 2020.

⁵³ Ethiopia, Iraq, Myanmar, Niger, Syria, Togo, Türkiye.

- In [Nigeria](#), the responsibility for the civil-military liaison function for ground transport was assigned to the WFP-led logistics sector, initially as support to the civil-military coordination mechanism established by OCHA, then later as full responsibility for the facilitation of operations-level liaison between humanitarian logistics actors and national military authorities (Nigeria CEE).
- In [Ethiopia](#), WFP chaired the “leaving no one behind” network and led on the Beijing Declaration progress report, indicating its active role in equity-focused coordination (Ethiopia CSPE).
- In [Iraq](#), WFP co-chaired working groups on environment and climate change, and social protection, reflecting its broader development positioning under the UNSDCF (Iraq CSPE).
- The Strategic Evaluation on Refugees, Internally Displaced, and Migrant People (RIMS SE) reports that WFP has made a case for being increasingly involved in partnership efforts for addressing internally displaced people specifically.
- In [Mozambique](#), WFP co-chaired, along with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the HIV-emergency technical working group under the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). This led to the development of a joint action plan that included a strategic area dedicated to HIV emergency and a communication-centred HIV emergency response project in Sofala (Mozambique CSPE).

33. Particularly, six evaluations report that **WFP is playing an increasingly prominent role in coordinated nutrition interventions**. This is particularly the case with UNICEF, within the framework of the Nutrition Cluster and the multi-agency referral system.⁵⁴ Evaluations highlight how WFP and UNICEF have collaborated to optimize community-level interventions, with a focus on ensuring continuity of care for children suffering from acute malnutrition, and the aim to maximize the respective effectiveness of both agencies by strengthening operational coordination (the Central African Republic (CAR) ICSPE, Niger CSPE). For example:

- In the [Central African Republic](#), WFP and UNICEF have co-financed a study aimed at simplifying the community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) protocol. Collaboration with FAO and UNICEF is also materializing through joint support to strengthen nutrition governance under the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative (CAR ICSPE).
- In [South Sudan](#), UNICEF leads the South Sudan Nutrition Cluster with WFP as deputy coordinator, which the CSP evaluation regarded as a valuable and unique arrangement. WFP led, in partnership with UNICEF, the development of revised protocols for distributions and data collection (South Sudan CSPE). UNICEF and WFP have also created a joint programme to support national governments in improving nutrition for children and women in humanitarian crises via more effective prevention, the Joint Action to Stop Wasting, which began in 2024, aimed at so-called “high-risk contexts”.
- In [Zimbabwe](#), frameworks and platforms for collaboration on nutrition are well established through a tripartite nutrition agreement among UNICEF, FAO and WFP; the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) network in the country; the nutrition group with government leadership; and a nutrition framework within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). WFP is actively engaged within these forums. However, the evaluation finds a need for improved engagement from WFP with other agencies on the nutrition agenda, for example with stronger collaboration in the collection and analysis of nutrition data and improved collaboration on nutrition programming (Zimbabwe CSPE).

34. At the global level, WFP actively contributes to global nutrition guidance, coordination and learning through the Global Nutrition Cluster, including leading sub-working groups of the Global Nutrition Cluster Technical Alliance Global Thematic Group on Management of Wasting, working closely with the FAO and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) on technical areas including prevention of undernutrition, support to country wasting guidelines development, and approaches to managing moderate acute malnutrition. Such collaborations have led to the production of tools to respond to needs identified by country nutrition clusters, and guidance on COVID-19 at the start and height of the pandemic.

⁵⁴ CAR ICSPE, Nepal CSPE, Niger CSPE, South Sudan CSPE, Zimbabwe CSPE, SE on Targeting and Prioritization.

Moreover, by co-convening the two inter-agency task teams on HIV and social protection and HIV in humanitarian settings, WFP has supported practice in both fields (Nutrition and HIV SE).

35. **Inconsistent engagement in gender, protection and inclusion-related forums.** Positively, in [Afghanistan](#), WFP was increasingly proactive within the Protection Cluster (Afghanistan CSPE), in [Myanmar](#), WFP has participated in the protection working group, the PSEA country network, the country task force on monitoring and reporting, and the monitoring and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence (Myanmar CEE). Three evaluations also pointed to successful examples of collaborations with UN Women (Iraq CSPE, Nigeria CSPE and Palestine CSPE). For example, in [Iraq](#), WFP collaborated on the design of gender-sensitive rural development activities, leveraging UN Women's policy expertise with WFP's reach at the community level. In [Palestine](#), the WFP collaboration with UN Women helped strengthen government efforts to advance gender equality and empower women through coordinated programming.

36. However, WFP's engagement in Protection Clusters was often limited to information sharing or was assessed in evaluations as nominal participation only, unless directly linked to specific programming areas. In [Malawi](#), for instance, while WFP participated in gender and protection working groups with the aim to map community feedback mechanisms across the UNCT and develop joint referral pathways, it did not pursue deeper partnerships with UN Women or women's rights organizations (Malawi CSPE). In [Mozambique](#), the CSPE evaluation described WFP's involvement in the disability working group under the Protection Cluster as very limited (Mozambique CSPE), while in [Cameroon](#), WFP's participation in Protection Clusters was limited to information exchange (Cameroon CSPE). In [Burkina Faso](#), protection issues were rarely addressed within the Food Security Cluster and barely considered in activities that may have posed risks to the physical integrity of beneficiaries, such as asset creation initiatives (Burkina Faso CSPE).

Challenges around WFP's positioning in humanitarian coordination

37. Evaluations identified **four challenges** regarding WFP's engagement in humanitarian coordination forums. These include:

38. **Clarity on roles.** In some contexts, WFP's early and proactive engagement in emergency response resulted in unclear role assignment among sister UN agencies. More specifically, evaluation findings highlighted that WFP was not always effective in communicating its assumed leadership role to partners.⁵⁵ In [Malawi](#), for example, WFP's role and positioning vis-à-vis other humanitarian and development actors lacked some clarity among partners, and its approach to the humanitarian-development continuum required stronger operational alignment with the UNCT (Malawi CSPE). In [Pakistan](#), some partners understood WFP's role as only focused on the delivery of emergency food assistance, without recognizing WFP's engagement in improving nutrition and building resilience through engagement with communities, despite it being clearly spelled out in the UNSDCF (Pakistan CSPE).

39. **Confusions regarding cash transfers.** Ten evaluations record that the absence of clearly defined roles and WFP strategies for partnership, combined with a lack of articulated positioning, have risked duplications and missed opportunities for collaboration.⁵⁶ An area where this has come to the fore particularly has been cash coordination, especially around multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). Examples include:

- In [Ukraine](#), while MPCA was effectively deduplicated through Building Blocks across agencies, there was no coordination and deduplication between the sectoral cash provided under the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster and MPCA under the cash working group. Furthermore, the sectoral fragmentation of the humanitarian transfers was seen to significantly complicate the eventual transition from humanitarian assistance to government-led social transfers (Ukraine CEE).
- In [Yemen](#), the evaluation noted untapped opportunities to align efforts and seek complementarities with other agencies to maximize programmatic results and minimize resource duplication, including in areas such as cash transfers, noting that this is not solely the responsibility of WFP (Yemen CEE).

⁵⁵ Malawi CSPE, Pakistan CSPE, Yemen CEE, SE RIMS.

⁵⁶ Afghanistan IAHE 2024, EPR PE, Mozambique IAHE 2020, SE RIMS, Somalia IAHE 2018, SP SE, Sudan CSPE, Türkiye CSPE, Ukraine CEE, Yemen CEE.

- In [Somalia](#), MPCA would have required more cross-sector coordination to ensure coherence, reflecting broader debates on cash coordination within sectoral systems (Somalia IAHE 2018).

40. **A narrow focus and missed opportunities.** Four evaluations⁵⁷ found that WFP’s humanitarian coordination efforts were often narrowly focused, leading to missed opportunities for strategic leadership, cross-sectoral integration and influence within broader development and resilience frameworks:

- In [Bangladesh](#), WFP missed key opportunities to leverage its prominent role within the UN system to influence broader development strategies, lacking strategic engagement in coordination platforms such as the common country assessment and the Bangladesh Development Forum. As a result, WFP did not adequately position itself within the wider institutional and policy frameworks. This limited its ability to contribute to strategic dialogue and innovation, particularly in areas such as climate resilience (Bangladesh CSPE).
- In [Ukraine](#), WFP was particularly effective at leading coordination efforts, but met challenges when it involved compromise or accepting the leadership of others, and at times WFP acted to prioritize the delivery of its own programmes (Ukraine CEE).
- In [Cameroon](#), WFP missed opportunities in terms of playing a more prominent coordination role within the UNCT, leveraging its operational presence and the common shift of both the CSP and UNDAF toward resilience building (Cameroon CSPE).
- In [Mozambique](#), WFP’s strategic positioning remained relevant within the broad UN system particularly in response to crises, but further partnerships in the development area were insufficiently strategic (Mozambique CSPE).

41. **A sometimes reactive approach to partnerships.** Seven evaluation reports highlighted that WFP’s partnership approach sometimes appeared unstructured and reactive, lacking a strategy or rationale for prioritizing certain partnerships.⁵⁸ The emergency preparedness policy evaluation noted that the lack of a corporate strategy hindered WFP’s ability to proactively seek new partnerships in the area of emergency preparedness and response. For instance, in [Türkiye](#), WFP’s low profile in the country weakened its positioning with the government and donor community, limiting opportunities for joint actions. This was compounded by the absence of a partnership strategy (Türkiye CSPE). In [Afghanistan](#), the collaboration was often limited to bilateral agreements between agencies, lacking broader strategic coordination (Afghanistan IAHE 2024). In [Sudan](#), the evaluation highlighted the lack of a strategic vision, within the humanitarian country team and among donors, where meetings were highly operational. A sector-wide logistics and supply chain management plan, led by WFP, could have promoted a more coordinated approach to country capacity strengthening (Sudan CSPE).

2.2. What contributions has WFP made to humanitarian coordination?

42. This section of the report reflects the contribution made by WFP to humanitarian coordination, as recorded by evaluations. Evaluations indicate contributions in six main areas: knowledge-sharing, evidence generation and analysis; joint targeting (including considerations for accountability to affected populations (AAP)); collective efforts at humanitarian preparedness; service provision for emergency response; joint capacity-strengthening efforts; and collective efforts to transition out of emergencies. In all these areas, evaluations highlighted both strengths and weaknesses of WFP’s contributions to collective humanitarian action.

43. **Knowledge-sharing, evidence generation and analysis.** Sixteen evaluations⁵⁹ indicate that WFP plays a central role in generating evidence and analysis to benefit the wider humanitarian system, including through the global cluster system and other mechanisms such as the Integrated Food Security Phase

⁵⁷ Bangladesh CSPE, Cameroon CSPE, Mozambique CSPE, Ukraine CEE.

⁵⁸ Emergency Preparedness PE, Türkiye CSPE, Mozambique IAHE, Afghanistan IAHE 2024, Cameroon CSPE, Burkina Faso CSPE, Sudan CSPE, Somalia IAHE 2018.

⁵⁹ Bangladesh CSPE, CAR ICSPE, DRC CSPE 2024, DRC ICSPE 2020, ER Tech SE, Kenya CSPE, Mozambique IAHE 2020, Myanmar CEE, Nepal CSPE, Nigeria CSPE, Palestine CSPE, Sahel CEE, SE RIMS, South Sudan CSPE, Ukraine CEE, Zimbabwe CSPE.

Classification (IPC) and the Cadre Harmonisé (the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) CSPE 2020, South Sudan CSPE). At the global level, the Food Security Cluster issued guidance on targeting in humanitarian response plans and for urban targeting in the context of COVID-19 (Targeting and Prioritization SE). Evaluations also noted that WFP provides enabling guidance and facilitates inter-agency logistical planning and coordination through its Logistics Cluster work, considering existing access constraints, such as significant security challenges along main supply routes (Nigeria CSPE).

44. In addition, WFP plays a critical role in the conduct of **needs-based assessments** when emergencies strike. Examples include:

- In [Bangladesh](#), WFP's co-leadership in the Food Security Cluster in Cox's Bazar enabled joint and coordinated needs and market assessments that informed the targeting of cash-based assistance (Bangladesh CSPE).
- In [DRC](#), WFP conducted food security and nutrition assessments at national and provincial levels in coordination with national and international agencies and, together with UNICEF, supported the Government with national health surveys and a nutrition sentinel surveillance system. Assessments carried out by WFP and cooperating partners are shared through the cluster system (DRC CSPE).
- In [Burkina Faso](#), several WFP employees were part of a system-wide context analysis in mid-2020, through which members of different agencies produced joint analyses for operational planning (Peacebuilding PE).
- In [Ukraine](#), WFP's expertise in food security was also key in filling information gaps on food security, as evidenced by the multi-sector needs-based assessment with Reach (Ukraine CEE).
- Examples from [Sahel and northern Nigeria](#), showed that WFP's joint work with other agencies on shared methods for assessment and community-based targeting in advance of the actual response led to a coherent, cross-sectoral approach without compromising efficiency or speed (Emergencies SE).

45. **Inconsistent dissemination.** However, four evaluations reported partners' concerns about WFP's limited information and knowledge sharing with other actors, including on its targeting and prioritization methodologies.⁶⁰ This was particularly problematic in settings where adjustments or withdrawal of WFP assistance significantly affected vulnerable populations and where timely information sharing could have supported coordinated prioritization by other actors. (Targeting and Prioritization SE). Limited information sharing is also associated with risks of duplication of assistance (Yemen CEE).

Box 1 – Information sharing in displacement settings

Evidence from the RIMS SE suggests that, in dynamic displacement settings, challenges to country-level coordination include barriers in data sharing and gaps in WFP strategic engagement with governments and development partners to draw scalable strategies to transition beneficiaries from immediate needs towards self-reliance. The evaluation called for a greater focus by WFP on providing actionable, real-time or forecast-based advice to its partners in order to support the prompt introduction or adjustment of activities.

At the global level, the WFP–UNHCR data-sharing agreement is deemed promising but faces challenges due to differing agency priorities, data privacy requirements, and slow progress on interoperability between systems. There are examples where the global agreement has been replicated by WFP and UNHCR country offices, but country stakeholders from both agencies highlighted concerns over data-sharing for accountability to affected populations and the complaints and feedback mechanism, and the need for both agencies to pin down their specific, critical data-sharing needs. Stakeholders also argued for interoperability and data-sharing to become a priority focus for the Joint Hub⁶¹ and the relevant technical teams of both agencies. The need for a data-sharing framework between WFP and IOM was also highlighted (Targeting and Prioritization SE).

⁶⁰ Targeting and Prioritization SE, Tech SE, Yemen CEE, Sudan CSPE.

⁶¹ Phased out as of 2026.

46. **Joint targeting.** WFP also engaged in joint targeting processes (including in displacement settings, and particularly with UNHCR. Here, examples are mostly positive (see Table 2).

Table 2 - Examples of successful WFP-UNHCR joint targeting initiatives⁶²

<p>Jordan Joint approach on determining refugee vulnerability</p>	<p>As part of the WFP-UNHCR collaboration, both organizations use a proxy means test model to determine vulnerability levels, aligned with the model used by the Government for its national social protection programme, offering a potential pathway for the integration of assistance systems in the longer term. The collaboration has built trust between the two agencies and has unlocked broader cooperation beyond targeting.</p>
<p>South Sudan Joint approaches to vulnerability-based targeting and shared responsibilities to assist refugee caseloads</p>	<p>In 2023, WFP and UNHCR shifted from status-based to needs-based assistance, responding to over 1.1 million refugees. Around 85 percent of households were found highly vulnerable, prompting tailored targeting. Coordination ensured effective delivery, with UNHCR handling registration and WFP verifying eligibility. Challenges like unregistered individuals were resolved through joint planning and field coordination. Strong system interoperability enabled refugees to redeem entitlements using UNHCR identity cards, enhancing efficiency and accountability.</p>
<p>DRC Joint targeting approach</p>	<p>From 2021 to 2025, WFP and UNHCR partnered to support refugees through joint assessments and targeting based on protection and vulnerability. They introduced biometric tools to streamline distributions and coordinated efforts in camps and provinces. Collaboration extended to livelihoods, monitoring and feedback systems, improving planning, targeting and alignment of humanitarian and development responses.</p>

47. **Shortfalls in collaboration.** However, five evaluations also highlighted some shortfalls in collaboration with partners on joint design of targeting criteria, validation of beneficiary lists, and adaptation of targeting frameworks in response to changing needs.⁶³ Examples include:

- In **Zimbabwe**, there was a need for improved engagement from WFP with other agencies in the collection and analysis of nutrition data to inform programming (Zimbabwe CSPE).
- In **Mali**, despite synergies across several sectors, certain analyses or tools specific to each agency were not always utilized by others, including context analysis issues and approaches to support community access and acceptance. UNICEF, for instance, conducts analyses that could be of interest to WFP, such as a 2023 conflict analysis in preparation for its new CSP, or a 2021 study on the impact of the mining sector on children's rights in mining areas (Mali CSPE).
- In **Haiti**, the partnership with FAO on school feeding was hindered by poor coordination on geographic targeting and differing programme designs, calling for earlier alignment on planning processes (Haiti CSPE).

48. **Collective gaps in targeting vulnerable groups.** Inter-agency evaluations report systemic challenges in collective targeting of specific vulnerable groups, particularly regarding women and girls and people with disabilities. Examples include:

- In **Ethiopia**, the planning and monitoring of the humanitarian response gave very little consideration to questions of gender, age, disability and other factors that affect the vulnerability of different groups (Ethiopia IAHEs 2020 and 2024).

⁶² Evidence from the Targeting and Prioritization SE.

⁶³ Zimbabwe CSPE, Mali CSPE, Haiti CSPE, Ukraine IAHS, SE TP.

- In **Yemen**, only the Nutrition and Protection Clusters report on how many women and men and people with disabilities are reached, and the evaluation could not find any gender- or age-disaggregated breakdowns in the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (Yemen IAHE).
- In **Ukraine**, in the early phase of the collective response, disaggregated data on persons with disabilities, the elderly and minorities were often missing or inconsistently collected. Although data systems and targeting practices improved over time, early shortcomings affected the ability to fully understand and meet the needs of all affected populations (Ukraine IAHS).

49. **Shortcomings in WFP and collective accountability to affected populations and community feedback mechanisms (CFM).** Here, evaluations indicate promising intent from WFP’s engagement in coordinated action (Lebanon, Tanzania), but also some shortcomings in operational delivery (Ukraine, Burkina Faso). For example, WFP’s collaboration with UNHCR in Tanzania strengthened community feedback mechanisms to allow them to provide support to those who disclose cases of gender-based violence in and around refugee camps (Tanzania CSPE), while in Lebanon the two agencies introduced a grievance redress mechanism to respond to refugee concerns, prioritizing households with multiple protection vulnerabilities (Lebanon CSPE). However, in Ukraine, although community feedback mechanisms were established, the absence of a unified, cross-agency mechanism limited consistency, while multiple hotlines created confusion and reduced ease of access. (Ukraine IAHS). In Burkina Faso, challenges in inter-agency coordination constrained the inclusion of cross-cutting issues (Burkina Faso CSPE).

50. **Emergency preparedness.** Six evaluations⁶⁴ record that WFP’s leadership has been instrumental in catalysing collective preparedness across contexts, in particular, via the Global Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters (Emergency Preparedness PE), which have dedicated significant resources to preparedness.

51. Through its field-based preparedness project, the Global Logistics Cluster aims to strengthen resilience of local supply chains and ensure coordination among host governments and private sector and humanitarian actors, guided by its System Ability and Readiness Model, which assesses existing supply chain and logistics preparedness in a given context and plots an appropriate pathway to augment capacity. It was first piloted in Haiti in 2017 and subsequently expanded, with the participation of 23 countries as of 2024. The project integrates an institutional capacity-strengthening approach, which includes government-led training and simulations to identify supply chain challenges, drafting of key documents and plans, and the use of data and mapping technology to enhance disaster planning (Emergency Preparedness PE).

52. Recorded contributions in this domain include the design of adaptable preparedness tools, the development of partnerships with private sector entities for additional ad-hoc capacity in emergencies, the conduct of logistics capacity assessments, the delivery of information communications and technology training and the implementation of contingency planning and natural hazard risk analysis (Emergency Preparedness PE, Bangladesh CSPE, Mozambique CSPE). Box 2 provides further examples.

Box 2 – Examples of WFP contributions to collective emergency preparedness

- Provision of data connectivity for humanitarian personnel in anticipation of data blackouts in Ukraine (Ukraine CEE)
- Conducting detailed technical training for specialized information and communications technology personnel in Iraq, with a focus on national agency staff (Iraq CSPE)
- Leading collective contingency planning for flooding in the Central African Republic in 2020 (CAR ICSPE)
- Organizing meteorological and earthquake analysis in Haiti in preparation for the cyclone season (Emergency Preparedness PE)
- Providing a platform through the Logistics Cluster for partner coordination and information sharing, strengthening the response capacity in the event of disaster (DRC CSPE 2020)

⁶⁴ EP PE, Bangladesh CSPE, Mozambique CSPE, Ukraine CEE, Iraq CSPE, CAR ICSPE, DRC CSPE 2020.

53. However, the Emergency Preparedness Policy Evaluation highlighted some inconsistencies in the prioritization of coordinated preparedness efforts. Challenges included: unclear inter-agency roles and responsibilities for preparedness; inconsistent oversight and accountability for preparedness activities; and overstretched resources, all of which hampered the effectiveness of collective preparedness activities. (Emergency Preparedness PE)

54. **Service provision enabling collective emergency response.** Thirteen evaluations record the provision of critical common and on-demand services as fundamental enablers for collective humanitarian responses to emergencies across the world.⁶⁵ While these are already widely documented, specific contributions made by the evaluations analysed here include the examples in Table 3.

Table 3 - Examples of service provision contributions by WFP-led clusters

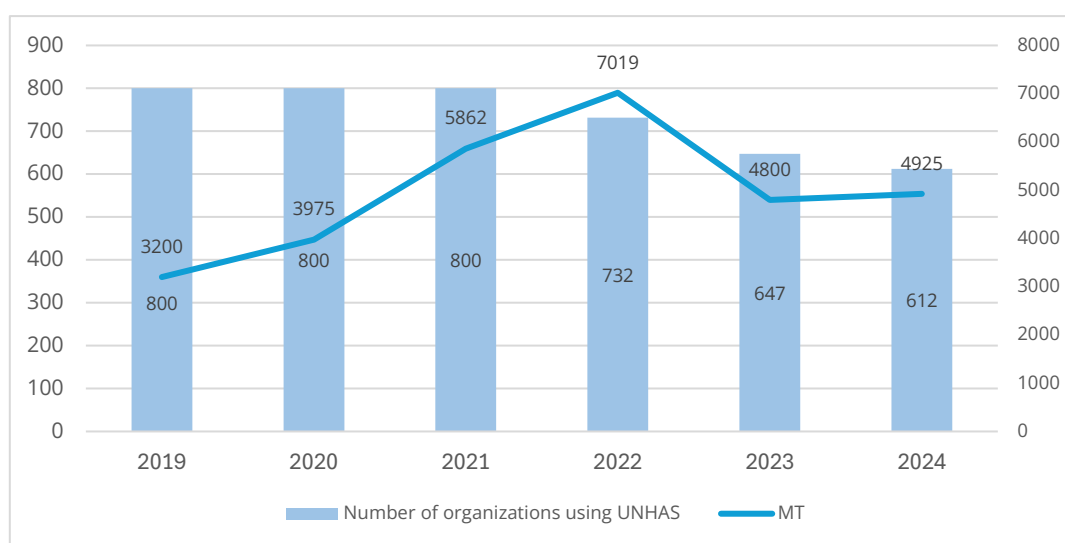
Transport and cargo	The Logistic Cluster enabled humanitarian cargo delivery via air bridges and provided last-mile transport to cyclone-affected regions. It provided critical resources and expertise to establish and maintain air transport operation throughout the cyclone emergency response (Mozambique IAHE). It provided logistics support for critical health, WASH and humanitarian services during the conflict period and COVID-19 response. It facilitated the transport of cargo (including personal protective and medical equipment, and other non-food items) by sea and air (Yemen CEE).
Fuel supply	WFP's bilateral service provision ensured fuel access through both duty-free import and local procurement (Yemen CEE). The service provision secured fuel imports in 2022 when shortage threatened the provision of humanitarian assistance (Syria CSPE).
Warehouse and storage	The Logistic Cluster provided storage capacity to UN agencies and NGOs, including 16 warehouses and 70 mobile storage units. It also facilitated the storage of 34 speed boats to support the distribution of medical items in hard-to-reach health areas (DRC CSPE 2020). It provided the management of warehouses on behalf of partners (Yemen CEE).
Emergency telecommunications	The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) ensured the maintenance of stable communications network in the face of constant electricity cuts across eight common UN operational areas (Syria CSPE). The ETC deployed emergency communication systems to government institutions to ensure effective coordination. It also set up technological services to communities, such as charging stations, phone booths and an internet access point (Niger CSPE). The ETC delivered essential security telecommunications, power solutions, and internet connectivity to the humanitarian community and civil society, including universities. It provided the use of satellite connectivity systems to counter fiber optic disruptions and import restrictions. It established and maintained public health hotlines during COVID-19 and cholera outbreaks (Yemen CEE). It provided data connectivity and security communication services and a radio infrastructure service as a back-up means of telecommunications (Ukraine CEE).

55. **United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flights were pivotal for enabling joint emergency responses** in the absence of available commercial airline traffic (Emergencies SE), including during COVID-19-related lockdowns,⁶⁶ with the service enabling the large-scale movement of people and goods. Figure 4 below shows the number of UNHAS user organizations and the scale of commodities delivered (food and non-food items (NFI)) between 2019 and 2024.

⁶⁵ Bangladesh CSPE, DRC CSPEs 2020 and 2024, Emergencies SE, Ethiopia CSPE, Guatemala CSPE, Mozambique IAHE, Niger CSPE, South Sudan CSPE, Syria CSPE, Tajikistan CSPE, Ukraine CEE, Yemen CEE.

⁶⁶ DRC CSPE 2020, Syria CSPE, Tajikistan CSPE.

Figure 4 - Overview of UNHAS user organizations and food and non-food items transported by year



Source: UNHAS annual reports 2019–2024

56. **United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) services have also played a critical role in enabling delivery to crisis-hit situations.** As of 2024, the UNHRD network managed 559 consignments for 34 partners in 95 countries. For example, UNHRD supported the [Yemen](#) humanitarian response through the delivery of more than 5 million metric tons of commodities with a value of nearly USD 9 million. In [Gaza](#), UNHRD supported 15 partners with delivery of mobile storage units, shelter kits and emergency nutrition supplies. In [Afghanistan](#), UNHRD also supported the delivery of emergency nutrition stocks on behalf of one partner. In [Ukraine](#) and [Sudan](#), UNHRD supported the delivery of water and hygiene kits as well as health items, to seven different partners (Strategic Roadmap SE).

57. **Other specific examples of effective collaboration** through WFP service provision include school rehabilitation for UNICEF and the set up a United Nations staff health clinics run during the COVID-19 response (Egypt CSPE, Malawi CSPE), the delivery of personal protective equipment during COVID-19 (Tajikistan CSPE), and the implementation of safety measures to ensure the physical safety of UN and cooperating partners’ staff, with deployment of WFP field security officers across field locations and the provision of personal protective equipment (Ukraine IAHS).

58. However, **four evaluations flagged some concerns regarding service provision**, particularly regarding their financial sustainability and transparency issues (Malawi CSPE, Tajikistan CSPE, Syria CSPE, Yemen CEE). In [Malawi](#), stakeholders confirmed longer-term service provision objectives were not determined and cost efficiencies not measured. In [Tajikistan](#), stakeholders raised concern with high costs associated with UNHAS flights and some operational and registration issues, pointing to the fact that WFP could have done more to promote the purpose and funding of such support, while in [Yemen](#), complaints referred to the lack of transparency over cargo services’ costs. In [Syria](#), performance indicators about service provision were not tracked consistently over time, limiting performance analysis.

59. **Joint action for local capacity strengthening.** Four evaluations reported that WFP engaged closely with partners to support capacity strengthening for national disaster management and logistics capabilities (Mozambique, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Bangladesh). Specifically:

- In [Mozambique](#), while leading the logistic response to the Cyclone Idai response, WFP continued working jointly with local authorities and especially with the National Institute for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (INGD), and this close collaboration provided strong “on-site” capacity development. Once the response was over, WFP turned to disaster preparedness activities alongside INGD. Challenges emerged related to different approaches by headquarters and the country office on engagement with the Government of Mozambique, since headquarters wished to respond quickly to the cyclone while the country office tried to engage more with the government authorities (Mozambique CSPE).

- In [Ethiopia](#), WFP provided supply chain capacity-building support to the national Disaster Risk Management Commission, focusing on strengthening processes, information flow, and the creation of a commodity tracking system. The Logistics Cluster's Logistics Capacity Assessment became an important source of information on the logistics infrastructure and services in the country (Ethiopia IAHE 2020).
- In [Madagascar](#), since 2018, WFP has been revitalizing the information and communication technology sectoral group in collaboration with the Ministry of Digital Development, telephone operators, and the National Bureau for Risk and Disaster Management, with a focus on disaster preparedness and response and institutional capacity strengthening (Madagascar CSPE).
- In [Bangladesh](#), building on its leadership role of co-chairing both the national Logistics Cluster and the Food Security Cluster in the humanitarian sector, WFP was able to successfully bring in the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief as co-chair of the Logistics Cluster⁶⁷ (Bangladesh CSPE).

60. **Collective transition out of emergencies.** Findings from five evaluations indicate that WFP has made increasing efforts to support the humanitarian community in transitioning out of collective emergency responses. Strategic collaboration with FAO and other partners enabled WFP to pivot from emergency response to recovery, supporting livelihoods and market restoration, agricultural recovery or food system rehabilitation. Examples include:

- In [Türkiye](#), while WFP engaged in strategic collaboration in crisis and humanitarian responses ensuring effective delivery of assistance to vulnerable populations in the aftermath of the earthquake, recovery programming benefited from collaboration with FAO on local market restoration efforts (Türkiye CSPE).
- In [Mozambique](#), the prompt response and coordination through the various clusters allowed a quick mobilization of efforts and resources both during and after the emergency response. For example, the reconstruction phase after the cyclones was facilitated by coordination between WFP (food assistance) and FAO (distribution of seeds and agricultural inputs) through the Food Security Cluster in the same regions. Additionally, WFP turned to disaster preparedness activities through engagement with local authorities (Mozambique CSPE).

61. In [Ethiopia](#), WFP worked in close consultation with the Government and UNHCR to develop a strategy⁶⁸ supporting the shift from emergency food assistance to more resilient approaches aiming to facilitate integration of refugee communities. While this was a significant and necessary step, the strategy provided limited guidance on how to achieve transition from food aid to resilience. Additionally, operational and contextual constraints hindered its effectiveness (Ethiopia CSPE).

62. In [Ukraine](#), however, the picture was more nuanced. In collaboration with FAO, WFP launched efforts to clear mine-affected agricultural land enabling small farmers and rural families to restart food production and restore livelihoods. These efforts reflect WFP's willingness to shift its role from emergency response to recovery-focused support. Furthermore, achieving the right balance between food assistance and livelihoods within the Food Security Cluster proved challenging, with livelihood actors feeling overshadowed by the predominance of food assistance priorities and needs (Ukraine CEE). More broadly, the absence of early planning for national co-leadership constrained the system's ability to support a transition from humanitarian action to recovery and system strengthening (Ukraine IAHS).

63. In [Iraq](#), the handover of humanitarian coordination responsibilities – including those of the clusters – to the Government and development actors was poorly planned and communicated. Donors were largely positive about WFP's role in the transition, attributing the gaps to heavy turnover within key positions in the UNCT and instability within the Government (Iraq CSPE).

⁶⁷ This was done in the context of the Global Logistics Cluster Field-Based Preparedness Project.

⁶⁸ WFP. Ethiopia Country Office. Food Security at the Humanitarian-Development Nexus – A Bridging Strategy for People Transitioning from Food Aid to Resilience.

2.3. How did WFP's engagement in coordination improve the quality of the collective humanitarian response?

64. In terms of the quality of the collective humanitarian response, evaluations identified four main results: (i) enhanced humanitarian access; (ii) more focused and specific serving of those in need; (iii) increased operational efficiency; and (iv) strengthened local capacities for response.

65. **Enhanced humanitarian access.** Evaluations record enhanced humanitarian access as a result of WFP's engagement in collective action, whether this occurred through advocacy on behalf of the humanitarian community, as in Yemen, Syria, Ukraine and South Sudan, or through the provision of coordinated transport solutions (including road rehabilitation, UNHAS flights or support to inter-agency convoys).⁶⁹ Many such efforts took place through the Logistics Cluster as well as WFP-dedicated access capacity. Examples include:

- In [Mozambique](#), the Logistics Cluster coordinated access to common air transport services (air bridges and last mile), allowing humanitarians to supply relief cargo into Beira and Pemba and to reach the hardest-to-access locations in areas affected by the cyclones, particularly the Sofála district in central Mozambique and the Mucojo district north of Pemba. WFP aviation supported the emergency throughout the operation by providing the necessary resources and expertise to establish an efficient air transport operation (Mozambique IAHE).
- In [Ukraine](#), WFP provided technical support to the UN-led Black Sea Initiative, notably through the appointment of a WFP staff member liaising with Ukrainian port authorities, and involvement in the Joint Coordination Centre in Istanbul. This international agreement played an important role in reopening access and contributed to global food market stability. The WFP-led Logistics Clusters also facilitated road transport, including through planning and coordinating support to inter-agency convoys (Ukraine CEE).
- In [Palestine](#), in 2020, the WFP-led Logistics Cluster assumed the liaison role on behalf of the humanitarian community to ensure continuity of humanitarian assistance. Without WFP stepping into this role, essential supplies into Gaza could have been disrupted, with a knock-on effect on increasing tensions (Palestine CSPE).
- In [Syria](#), WFP often led humanitarian crossline convoys – which allowed transfer of humanitarian relief into besieged and hard-to-reach areas – and was also particularly involved in advocacy for humanitarian access. When the siege of Deir Ezzor lifted in September 2017, WFP was the first agency allowed to enter by road, conducting a trial delivery, which was then followed by an inter-agency delivery headed by the (WFP-led) Logistics Cluster (Syria CEE).
- In [DRC](#), the Logistics Cluster enabled humanitarian access to vulnerable communities by rehabilitating some 1,200 kilometres of road, 40 road “hotspots” and two bridges in Tanganyika and North Kivu provinces (DRC CSPE 2020). However, here WFP was perceived as negotiating access bilaterally without engaging the wider humanitarian community, with partners pointing to opportunities for WFP to reinforce its role in the collective negotiation of humanitarian access (DRC CSPE 2025).
- In [South Sudan](#), the Logistics Cluster was key to increasing use of road convoys and river transport, and, through the access working group, WFP negotiated with the Government against illegal checkpoints (South Sudan CSPE).
- In [Yemen](#), the Logistics Cluster facilitated maritime transport via WFP-chartered vessels and access to overland transport for cooperating partners and the inter-agency rapid response mechanism (Yemen CEE).
- In [Haiti](#), stakeholders recognized that WFP's ability to deliver its assistance, and to help other organizations do the same despite particularly difficult circumstances, represents a major strength and added value (Haiti CSPE).

⁶⁹DRC CSPE 2020, Mozambique IAHE, Syria CSPE, Syria CEE, Ukraine CEE, Yemen CEE, South Sudan CSPE

66. On the other hand, **two evaluations reported UN system-wide challenges to enabling humanitarian access due to under-powered advocacy and limited influence of the humanitarian system.** Following the outbreak of conflict in northern [Ethiopia](#), WFP and other humanitarian actors made limited efforts to advocate for lifting access restrictions and failed to agree about what a principled approach would entail in that context, particularly with regard to operational independence from the Government. As part of this disagreement, the humanitarian country team did not define red lines (Ethiopia CSPE, Ethiopia IAHE 2024). In [Ukraine](#), the inability to secure humanitarian corridors pointed to the political and military complexities of the Ukrainian context and the limited influence humanitarian actors had on negotiating the terms of access (Ukraine IAHS).

67. **More focused humanitarian responses.** Four evaluations found that WFP's active engagement in coordination forums on targeting particularly, resulted in more focused humanitarian responses. At the global level particularly, WFP's engagement in inter-agency collaboration strengthened targeting and prioritization in humanitarian responses, improved coordination and better reached vulnerable populations. (Targeting and Prioritization SE). For example, though now phased out, WFP and UNHCR established the Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub in 2020, which has played a key role in strengthening and refining joint targeting and prioritization and reinforcing collaboration between the two agencies. Demand for its support has grown, especially in countries facing financial constraints. (Targeting and Prioritization SE).

68. At the country level, evaluations also record more focused humanitarian responses as a result of collective work on identifying the most vulnerable populations. For example, in [Bangladesh](#), WFP's co-leadership in the food security cluster in Cox's Bazar ensured that targeting of cash-based assistance was directly focused on the most vulnerable groups (Bangladesh CSPE). In [Iraq](#), cooperation with UNHCR on targeting, as well as its cash and market analysis supported prioritization of vulnerable populations. This coordination was crucial in the context of shrinking resources for emergency response (Iraq CSPE). In [Mozambique](#), rapid joint aerial assessments identified the areas hardest hit by the cyclone and floods, informing critical life-saving operations during the early days. On the other hand, in provinces where cluster coordination was less regular there was evidence of conflicting information from different clusters about community coverage (Mozambique IAHE).

69. **Improved operational efficiency.** Six evaluations⁷⁰ record that WFP's engagement in coordinated humanitarian responses – particularly through its cluster engagement – improved the operational efficiency of collective responses. More specifically, six evaluations⁷¹ record that joint and coordinated assessments, and shared tools within clusters, reduced duplications and improved efficiencies in operational delivery, especially amid resource constraints (Iraq CSPE). For example:

- In [Guatemala](#), the implementation of warehouse management software supported by WFP, UNICEF, and the Global Logistics Cluster through its field-based preparedness project helped improve the efficiency of emergency response by enabling real-time tracking of humanitarian aid inventories (Guatemala CSPE).
- In [South Sudan](#), adjustments to transportation contracting arrangements enhanced operational efficiency for transporters throughout the collective humanitarian community, including WFP (South Sudan CSPE).
- In [Syria](#), The Logistics Cluster facilitated the timely transfer of supplies within the country, cross-border from Türkiye and crossline into northwest Syria, ensuring an efficient humanitarian response (Syria CSPE).
- In [Mozambique](#), WFP supported prompt response and coordination through the cluster system, allowing a quick mobilization of efforts and resources in both the emergency and reconstruction phases, as in the case of cyclones Idai and Kenneth (Mozambique CSPE).
- In [Iraq](#), cooperation with UNHCR on protection, targeting, joint needs assessment, and cash and market analysis supported prioritization of vulnerable populations. This coordination was crucial in the context of shrinking resources for emergency response (Iraq CSPE).

⁷⁰ DRC CSPE 2020, Guatemala CSPE, Mozambique CSPE, Niger CSPE, Syria CSPE, South Sudan CSPE.

⁷¹ Bangladesh CSPE, DRC CSPE 2020, Iraq CSPE, Mozambique IAHE, Ukraine IAHS, Peacebuilding PE.

70. On the other hand, in [Ethiopia](#), late cluster activation implied major logistics delays and disrupted the supply chain in the initial stages of the El Niño response; cluster lead agencies managed coordination based on quick thinking and an ad-hoc arrangement rather than a systematized approach (Ethiopia IAHE 2020).

71. **Progress and shortfalls on localization.** Evidence from seven evaluations⁷² shows that, because of collective efforts on capacity strengthening, in which WFP played an important role, national and local actors were better equipped to lead future responses independently, reducing reliance on external delivery of humanitarian responses. Examples include:

- In [Ethiopia](#), significant contributions were made to strengthening the Government's logistical capacities. The resulting efficiency gains in procurement and distribution reduced lead times by an estimated 74 percent (Ethiopia IAHE 2020).
- In [Madagascar](#), the revitalization of the information and communication technology sectoral group in collaboration with the Ministry of Digital Development and other local actors with a focus on disaster preparedness and response and institutional capacity strengthening, enabled the response of the humanitarian community under the leadership of national government, to the cyclones at the beginning of 2022 without the need to activate an Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (Madagascar CSPE).
- In [Bangladesh](#), WFP's success in involving the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief as co-chair of the Logistics Cluster contributed to strengthened coordination and more efficient import processes, storage and disbursement of emergency supplies at the start of the Rohingya response (Bangladesh CSPE).
- In [Sahelian countries](#), WFP and partners' coordinated trainings of national NGOs on cross-cutting areas, as well as financial management and security, helped strengthen the ownership of the Sahelian countries and their ability to respond to crises (Sahel CEE).
- In [DRC](#), WFP's cooperation with local NGOs in the conduct of rapid needs-based assessments during emergencies, was an enabler of swift and context-specific responses (DRC CSPE 2020).

72. However, two evaluations also record shortcomings here. In [Ethiopia](#), the response-coordination system achieved little in terms of building and maintaining national partnerships, as national NGOs were handled as subcontractors rather than decision making partners⁷³ (Ethiopia IAHE 2020). In [Ukraine](#), despite the presence of a capable and experienced civil society, local organizations were often confined to operational roles, with limited influence over key decisions related to response design, coordination, or transition planning (Ukraine IAHS). These findings are in line with the results of a previous paper from OCHA⁷⁴ synthesizing findings from IAHEs, which pointed to slow progress on localization and the concentration of funding and decision making power at the level of international organizations. In addition, in Ukraine, many donors lacked funding modalities to directly support national NGOs. This led to favouring newly arrived INGOs or UN agencies, limiting the potential for locally led solutions and exacerbating perceptions of exclusion (Ukraine IAHS).

2.4. What factors supported or constrained WFP's engagement in humanitarian coordination?

73. This section of the report brings together the factors identified by evaluations that supported or constrained WFP's engagement in collective humanitarian action. Supporting factors included: an enabling environment for fruitful coordination within which WFP could engage; dedicated funding for coordination mechanisms; and WFP's strong reputational capacity, including its commitment to implementing in partnership, in some contexts. Constraining factors included: challenges in the wider coordination context, particularly a lack of coherence structures at national and decentralized levels; limited government

⁷²Bangladesh CSPE, DRC CSPE 2020, Ethiopia IAHE 2020, Madagascar CSPE, Mozambique CSPE, Myanmar DE, Sahel CEE.

⁷³ NB: the finding refers to the UN humanitarian system in general and is not specific to WFP.

⁷⁴ OCHA. 2025. Informing the Humanitarian Reset - Insights from Recent Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (internal paper).

engagement in coordination mechanisms; financial and staffing constraints; and the operational dilemmas arising from balancing speed of response with sometimes cumbersome coordination processes.

Supporting factors

74. **An enabling environment for coordination.** In situations where coordination structures were mature and functioning, a clear division of labour between actors has helped ensure optimal use of respective strengths to maximize the effectiveness of humanitarian responses. For example, WFP's work with refugees and migrants is established through formalized corporate collaboration systems, memoranda of understanding and technical agreements with UNHCR and IOM, and by formalized partnerships with national governments (RIMS SE). At the country level, evaluations report more successful roles for WFP in coordination mechanisms where a clear division of labour is established: in [Zimbabwe](#), for example, collaboration practices on nutrition were clearly elaborated, and a clear division of labour between WFP and UNICEF in managing acute malnutrition provided a good basis for inter-agency collaboration and sharing of responsibilities (Zimbabwe CSPE).

75. **Dedicated and predictable funding for coordination systems.** Evaluations reported that predictable funding, in particular, helps ensure effective WFP engagement in coordination systems (Ethiopia CSPE, Ukraine CEE, Yemen CEE, El Salvador CSPE). In [Ethiopia](#), for instance, although the Logistics Cluster was initially underfunded, its capacity expanded significantly in 2021–2022 as funding became adequate. This enabled the cluster to scale up services in response to conflict-related demands, including for logistics support (Ethiopia CSPE).

76. **WFP's reputational capital among partners.** At least six CSPEs indicated that WFP's strong reputation as a competent and confident emergency responder, as well as its technical capabilities in specific areas, supported its efforts to engage in coordinated action. Evaluations document how its logistical and supply chain capacity, responsiveness to crises, geographical footprint, ability for rapid scale-up, data analysis and mapping, all helped maximize WFP's contributions to the strategies and plans of the wider United Nations system in the country.⁷⁵ Specific technical competencies in dedicated areas supported this, for example in school feeding (Niger), and in delivery of social safety nets and building institutional capacity (Somalia CSPE). However, evaluations reported that WFP is still not perceived by partners as a major player in resilience, despite some successes.

Constraining factors

77. **Challenges in wider coordination structures.** At least six evaluations point to unclarified and under-utilized wider synergies among partners that constrained WFP's engagement in coordinated responses (Mali CSPE, Zimbabwe CSPE, Emergencies SE). Similarly, contexts where coordination structures prove excessively heavy for agencies engaged, including WFP (Ethiopia IAHE 2020, Yemen IAHE), or not fully tailored to the context (Ukraine IAHS), also impeded WFP in its efforts to coordinate.

78. In [Mali](#), for example, coordination was hindered by limited synergies between UN agencies, including WFP, and a lack of effort to align their respective strategic plans, even when they follow the same timelines (Mali CSPE). In [Ethiopia](#) and [Yemen](#), coordination structures were overly burdensome, with duplications between forums and meetings. While in [Ethiopia](#), there was insufficient information exchange (Ethiopia IAHE 2020), in [Yemen](#), the proliferation of information systems across clusters impeded an efficient response.

79. In [Ukraine](#), coordination approaches utilized at the start of the conflict proved inappropriate for a middle-income country with a functioning government, high levels of digital literacy, and a sophisticated civil society. The standard cluster mechanisms, including those led or co-led by WFP, operated largely in parallel to national systems, overlooking existing capacities in decentralized administration (Ukraine IAHS).

80. Tensions or a lack of coherence between centralized coordination structures and those at the decentralized level also posed challenges for WFP's engagement in wider coordination (Mozambique IAHE, Ethiopia IAHE 2020 and Ukraine IAHS). In [Ethiopia](#), for example (IAHE 2020), regional-level coordination was more efficient than that at the national level, but lacked the authority for decision making, while zonal-level

⁷⁵ Ukraine CEE, DRC CSPE 2024, Ethiopia CSPE, Niger CSPE, Somalia CSPE, Türkiye CSPE.

task force coordination was less systematic than regional coordination. In Ukraine, it took time for coordination structures established at the national level to be decentralized, although once in place, these did improve the effectiveness of the response and supported WFP's engagement in collective food and cash transfers.

81. **Limited government engagement in coordination.** Eight evaluations highlighted that WFP and clusters faced challenges in engaging strategically with the government,⁷⁶ hindering effective collaboration. As IASC clusters are activated when national government capacity to lead or coordinate a humanitarian response is overwhelmed, limited, or constrained, these difficulties were further compounded by high turnover of government staff, a lack of trust in coordination systems, and varying degrees of national capacity. For example, in [South Sudan](#), high government staff turnover was the main factor hindering the Logistics Cluster's efforts in institutional capacity strengthening (South Sudan CSPE). In [Ukraine](#), the Government did not consistently engage with humanitarian clusters, as national systems and their staff were reportedly overstretched (Ukraine CEE). In [Burkina Faso](#), national government actors, while recognizing the increased need for coordination, expressed concern about the overlap between the Food Security Cluster's mandate and that of national structures. They showed limited engagement in mechanisms they felt could undermine their leadership (Burkina Faso CSPE). In [Yemen](#), limited ownership and engagement from education partners, including those involved in the Education Cluster, reduced the broader strategic alignment of education programmes in the country (Yemen CEE).

82. In [Bangladesh](#), there were challenges in raising awareness and interest within the Government about the national Food Security Cluster activities, and the importance of rapid information sharing and for early warning (Bangladesh CSPE). In [DRC](#), the Food Security Cluster benefited from active engagement of technical government entities from the Ministry of Agriculture, in particular at the field level. However, the extent to which ministries are active participants of clusters and by extension, the degree of coordination, varies across provinces and by cluster (DRC CSPE 2020). In [Iraq](#), the handover of humanitarian coordination responsibilities to the Government and development partners presented challenges largely due to gaps in leadership and coordination within both the Government and the broader UN system – factors that were beyond WFP's direct control (Iraq CSPE).

83. In [Mozambique](#), WFP-led clusters provided logistic support to private sector actors, although their involvement with the international humanitarian system was limited by the lack of an engagement strategy at the humanitarian country team level – including relevant guidance about due diligence – and the lack of a dedicated coordination staff with the relevant expertise (Mozambique IAHE). Similar issues related to coordination staffing constraints also emerged in [Ukraine](#) (Ukraine CEE).

84. **Funding constraints and competition for resources.** Ten evaluations recorded significant funding constraints for coordination.⁷⁷ For example, the Emergency Preparedness Policy Evaluation emphasized that the work of WFP-led clusters is hindered by scarce funding and a lack of prioritization of resources for preparedness, both at country and global levels.

85. The WFP Strategic Plan Mid-Term Evaluation highlighted continued competition for resources among UN partners, which poses a challenge to collaborative activity. Country-level evaluations reinforce this finding. For instance, in [Somalia](#), the CSPE found that competition for resources, coupled with poor coordination, hindered opportunities for joint programming. In [Ethiopia](#), organizations were competing by paying higher cash-for-work rates to increase the number of people participating in their projects (Ethiopia IAHE 2020).

86. Evaluations reported two exceptions, however. In [Egypt](#), although competition for resources did exist, these did not prevent agencies collaborating according to their respective comparative advantages, for example in nutrition. Likewise, in [Mozambique](#), the joint UN humanitarian responses to cyclones Idai and Kenneth in 2019 were not marked by inter-agency competition (Mozambique IAHE).

⁷⁶ Ukraine CEE, Burkina Faso CSPE, South Sudan CSPE, DRC 2020, Yemen CEE, Bangladesh CSPE, Iraq CSPE, Mozambique IAHE.

⁷⁷ Afghanistan IAHE 2024, Emergency Preparedness PE, Emergencies SE, Ethiopia CSPE, Mozambique IAHE, Ukraine CEE, Yemen CEE, El Salvador CSPE, Somalia CSPE, Strategic Plan Mid-Term Evaluation.

87. **Staffing gaps.** Seven evaluations noted insufficient WFP staffing to support engagement in coordination systems.⁷⁸ For example, high staff turnover and limited handovers were factors in [Ukraine](#) and [Mozambique](#) (Ukraine CEE, Mozambique IAHE 2020), alongside a lack of dedicated personnel with the necessary expertise, and difficulty in securing national staff (Ukraine CEE, Mozambique IAHE 2020). The situation was often exacerbated by the short-term nature of funding dedicated to emergency responses (EPR PE).

88. **Tensions between the humanitarian imperative, including speed of delivery, and the burdens of coordination.** WFP's work is driven by the humanitarian imperative: the moral obligation to safeguard humanitarian space and principles (Emergencies SE), and ensuring the continuation of humanitarian assistance (Palestine CSPE, Syria CEE), including in frontline areas (Ukraine CEE), is its central operational driver.

89. Evaluations highlight the trade-offs that can arise where WFP's rapid operational pace, driven by this imperative to deliver, meets the sometimes-slower pace that coordinated action can bring. For example, in the early stages of the COVID-19 response, inter-agency disagreements arose over food security datasets, supply chain management, construction of medical facilities and air transport, with other agencies lacking the mature emergency instinct and capacity of WFP (COVID-19 CEE) and being slower to respond.

90. In [Ukraine](#), coordination became more challenging when it required compromise or accepting the leadership of others, with WFP often working in isolation, for example, on cash transfers (Ukraine CEE). Likewise, missed opportunities for collaboration were noted in [Zimbabwe](#) in areas related to agriculture and livelihoods, early warning and anticipatory action, where too much reliance was placed on in-house WFP skills, where the capacity to deliver and respond appropriately to needs was considered the best course of action by WFP, instead of relying on partners', including FAO, for technical expertise (Zimbabwe CSPE).

91. Sometimes, the challenge arose from the poor communication signalled above. In [Yemen](#), the lack of clear communication around WFP's critical decisions – such as the food pause undertaken in the north of the country due to disagreement with the authorities on targeting lists – underscored the need for stronger engagement, transparency and information sharing (Yemen CEE). Similarly, the Strategic Evaluation on WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies reported that WFP has not always followed a consultative approach, particularly in the development of its humanitarian programmes and strategies. In Sudan, WFP was considered to have often acted independently from other UN actors (Sudan CSPE), with limited transparency and information sharing (Technology SE). Similarly, while promoting joint planning and coordinated targeting and prioritization, often WFP's decisions on its own geographical targeting have defined the operational space for other food security actors, which target the remaining areas (Targeting SE).

92. Finally, evaluations flagged that WFP's dominant presence has at times led to tensions within the UN system, especially regarding inclusivity and innovation from smaller agencies. For example, in [Sudan](#), some concerns were expressed by other UNCT members regarding WFP's dominance in the Food Security Cluster, suggesting that innovations and new approaches by smaller agencies have tended to be overlooked. (Sudan ICSPPE).

⁷⁸ Pakistan CSPE, Ethiopia IAHEs 2020 and 2024, Ukraine CEE, Mozambique IAHE 2020, Afghanistan IAHE 2024, EPR PE.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

93. The 65 evaluations of WFP's role in coordinated humanitarian action analysed here have shown both strengths and weaknesses in WFP's approach to such collaboration. With increasing pressure for systemic reforms, and with coordinated action lying at the heart of the coming change, the drive for an open and collaborative approach is no longer an option, but rather an imperative.

94. This report accordingly presents eight conclusions, and two recommendations, to support WFP as it moves forward in the new environment, recognizing that, while fewer resources will be available to invest in coordination as a dedicated aim, change under the Humanitarian Reset, for example, is inevitable.

95. **A foundational enabler of humanitarian responses where its role is clearly defined.** Evaluations highlight that WFP plays a foundational role in enabling collective humanitarian response under emergency conditions. It has effectively leveraged its designated role as cluster lead or co-lead, to which many of its comparative advantages are geared, to lead the broader humanitarian ecosystem in delivering emergency responses across the world. Its agility, responsiveness and capacities to meet urgent needs are widely documented. In these contexts, where roles are both formally designated and clearly operationally defined, WFP demonstrates the leadership, decisiveness and operational weight to mobilize, coordinate and deliver where few others can.

96. **Unclear positioning in less clearly defined roles.** In settings where WFP's role is less clearly defined – or where it is a team member, rather than a leader – its engagement is both context-specific and opportunistic – a positive – but also at times individualized. This is particularly notable in, for example, gender forums and those related to disability inclusion. In some areas, this lack of clarity has led WFP to step in and take the leading action, on the basis of the humanitarian imperative, where others lack capacity or ability to respond. While this has supported operational response, and supported the meeting of needs on the ground, it can also create perceptual risks, including confusion over role and insufficiently consultative or participatory approaches, potentially undermining the shared sense of coordination among the humanitarian community.

97. **Scope to more consistently support collective coordination.** Fundamentally, context drives WFP's willingness and ability to engage in wider coordination, including the wider enabling environment and the capacities of others in the context. Given its reputational capital with partners and its operational size and weight, the organization could more consistently use these strengths to enhance and improve the broader coordination ecosystem. A key challenge here has been inadequate communication and sometimes limited transparency regarding its choice of roles and actions. While many of WFP's choices and decisions in complex settings are operationally justified – and in some cases may require a more discreet, less visible approach to be effective – limited communication with partners has strained relationships and created a sense of mistrust. Given WFP's scale and size, such missed opportunities to capitalize on its positioning vis-à-vis government and humanitarian actors can have disproportionate effects on the coherence and effectiveness of the collective humanitarian response. At the same time, resources, both human and financial, have been a constraint.

98. **Unrealized potential in data sharing and analysis.** WFP's contributions to data, information sharing and analysis are all of core value to humanitarian action, globally and at the country level, and are highly valued by its partners for their quality, comprehensiveness and rigour. However, evaluations indicate room to enhance their sharing and dissemination, to support both anticipatory action and strategic planning, and as a proactive contribution to the humanitarian community.

99. **Supporting localization.** While WFP's engagement in collective preparedness and capacity strengthening for response have demonstrably supported localization, further alignment with these goals could deepen ownership and sustainability under the framework of its recently approved Localization

Policy⁷⁹ and the WFP Strategic Plan (2026-2029), which call for strengthening the influence of local and national actors in shaping coordination platforms. There are notable success stories where WFP has supported government leadership in humanitarian clusters, allowing national actors to take the driving seat, particularly thanks to the commitment of WFP-led clusters to localizing emergency supply chain and telecommunication coordination. Such examples highlight the potential for sustainable, locally led humanitarian coordination, as well as demonstrating the value of actively engaging with national cooperating partners and the private sector.

100. **Navigating the tensions between the humanitarian imperative and coordination.** The evaluations analysed here have shown how WFP frequently confronts, and needs to navigate, acute dilemmas between the humanitarian imperative to address human suffering, and the demands of complex coordination mechanisms. In such cases, evaluations record a culture of trying first for a coordinated approach, such as on cash transfers, and, if its burdens appear to risk swift delivery to those in need, an ethos that is unafraid to “do it alone”, at times driven by the need to maintain operational autonomy.

101. This has major strengths in terms of both meeting humanitarian needs and supporting adherence to the principle of humanity. Yet it also has costs in terms of: real operational partnership; risks undermining external perceptions of WFP as a strong humanitarian citizen; and efficiency, where time and energy, which could be spent on humanitarian response, is in fact dedicated to resolving disagreements. Here, WFP has opportunities to learn more from its real-world experience and have greater clarity on the costs of lone action with regard to coordinated approaches.

102. Evaluations highlights notable efforts to act both globally and locally in partnership. At the same time, the evidence suggests that WFP has further opportunities to draw on its internal capacities to more consistently support coordinated humanitarian action. While it has limited control over external factors, it does have scope to strengthen its internal culture and mindset to better support coordinated humanitarian action, including harnessing the powerful organizational driver of the humanitarian imperative for a greater instinct to collaborate, as well as aligning organizational incentives with collective goals.

103. **Progress on collective transitioning out of emergencies.** Finally, alongside coordinated emergency response, WFP is fostering strategic collaboration to support early recovery, rehabilitate food systems and rebuild livelihoods. Its ability to pivot effectively toward recovery programming, for example through coordinated market restoration and rural development, is widely recorded in evaluations. While WFP’s commitment to recovery-focused approaches is evident, a lack of clear frameworks and early planning with relevant actors around such collective approaches – coupled with external factors including funding and competition for resources – has constrained its ability to consistently balance immediate food assistance with longer-term resilience and system strengthening. Yet this is a key direction of travel for the future, as also highlighted in the WFP Strategic Plan (2026-2029), which highlights the importance of leveraging partnerships and relationships for emergency response and to help speed recovery and transition between humanitarian and resilience programming at scale.

104. **Looking forward.** As humanitarian needs continue to grow, and global development financing reduces, the pressure for more coordinated and cohesive humanitarian action is exponentially rising. While systemic reforms such as UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset are moving apace, WFP will need, even more than previously, a clear-sighted vision of its role in collective action, while also maintaining adaptability to upcoming changes, including evolving inter-agency roles, while recognizing operational boundaries. The two recommendations that close this synthesis aim to support WFP as it positions itself within these evolutions.

⁷⁹ WFP/EB.A/2025/5-A.

3.2. Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	By when
1	<p>To better support country-level decision-making on engagement in humanitarian coordination, and in accordance with the ongoing humanitarian reset and the UN80 initiative, clarify and prioritize – at the corporate level – WFP’s role in coordination mechanisms and forums beyond the clusters that it currently leads, guided by the need to focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Through an update of the Executive Director’s circular on WFP’s leadership in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee clusters,⁸⁰ clarify the key coordination mechanisms and forums in which WFP will engage at the global and country levels, taking into account specific operational contexts, and communicate a clear corporate position. ii. To define successful coordination, conduct a learning exercise based on country office experiences with different approaches to humanitarian coordination in a variety of settings, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and gaps of each approach. 	United Nations Engagement Division	Programme Division Supply Chain and Delivery Division Country offices	December 2027
2	<p>To maximize WFP’s potential for enhancing the wider humanitarian system, create a narrative for the WFP workforce that positions humanitarian coordination as a fundamental requirement, while preserving space for independent action where the humanitarian imperative demands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. At the corporate level, develop a clear internal narrative to guide coordination-related decisions and help country offices navigate the dilemmas presented by coordination and the choices they face. ii. At the country level, build tailored communication approaches into annual performance plans in order to help WFP employees and partners to understand – and explain – the rationale behind WFP’s coordination choices, considering the role of country directors as cluster leads. 	Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer Office	United Nations Engagement Division Communications and Media Office Country offices	December 2027

⁸⁰ WFP. 2013. [Executive Director’s Circular: WFP Leadership in IASC Clusters](#) (OED2013/016).

ANNEXES

Annex I: Evaluation universe

Table 4 - Overview of country-level evaluations consulted (CSPEs and IAHEs)

Country	Evaluations	Data collection year	Publication year
Afghanistan	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2021	2022
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (2021-2023)	2023	2024
Bangladesh	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2016-2019)	2021	2021
Burkina Faso	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2022	2023
Cameroon	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2020)	2019	2020
Central African Republic	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2021	2023
Chad	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2019-2023)	2021	2023
Colombia	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2021-2024)	2023	2024
The Democratic Republic of the Congo	Interim Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2020)	2019	2020
	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2021-2025)	2024	2025
Ecuador	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2017-2021)	2021	2022
Egypt	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2023)	2022	2023
El Salvador	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2017-2022)	2021	2022

Country	Evaluations	Data collection year	Publication year
Ethiopia	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response in Northern Ethiopia (2020-2024)	-	2024
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Drought Response (2015–2018)	-	2020
	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2020-2025)*	2024	2024
Guatemala	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2021-2025)	2024	2025
Haiti	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2022	2023
Honduras	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2021)	2021	2022
Iraq	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2024)	2023	2023
Kenya	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2023)	2022	2023
Lebanon	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2021)	2020	2021
Madagascar	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2019-2023)	2022	2023
Malawi	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2019-2023)	2022	2023
Mali	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2020-2024)	2023	2024
Mozambique	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2017-2021)	2021	2022
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of Cyclone Idai Response	-	2020
Myanmar	Decentralized Activity Evaluation (2016-2019)	2019	2020
	Corporate Emergency Response Evaluation (2018-2022)	2023	2023
Nepal	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2019-2023)	2022	2023
Niger	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2020-2025)	2024	2025
Nigeria	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2019-2022)	2021	2023
	Corporate Emergency Response Evaluation (2016-2018)	2019	2019

Country	Evaluations	Data collection year	Publication year
Pakistan	Decentralized Activity Evaluation (2014-2020)	2021	2022
	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2021	2022
Palestine	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2022	2023
Philippines	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2023)	2022	2023
Somalia	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2022–2025)	2024	2025
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (2017)	-	2018
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (2025)	-	2025
South Sudan	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2021	2022
Sudan	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2018-2022)	2021	2022
Syria	Corporate Emergency Response Evaluation (2015-2018)	2018	2018
	Transitional and Interim Country Strategic Plans Evaluation (2018-2025)	2023	2022
Tanzania	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2017-2021)	2021	2022
Tajikistan	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2019-2024)	2021	2022
Türkiye	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2023-2025)	2024	2025
Ukraine	Corporate Emergency Response Evaluation (2022-2024)	2024	2025
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Synthesis	-	2025
Yemen	Corporate Emergency Response Evaluation (2019-2024)	2024	2025
	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (2015-2021)	-	2022
Zimbabwe	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation (2017-2021)	2020	2022

Sources: OEV, MIS Database.

Table 5 - Overview of global or multi-country evaluations consulted

Type	Evaluations	Publication year
Policy evaluation	Evaluation of WFP's Safety Nets Policy Update Evaluation of WFP's Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings Evaluation of WFP's Policy on Country Strategic Plans Evaluation of WFP's Disaster Risk Reduction Management and Climate Change Policies Evaluation of WFP's Emergency Preparedness Policy	2019 2023 2023 2023 2025
Corporate emergency response evaluations	Evaluation of the WFP Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Evaluation of WFP's Emergency Response to the Prolonged Crisis in the Sahel and Other Countries of Central Africa (2018-2023)	2022 2024
Strategic evaluations	Evaluation of WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies Evaluation of WFP's Use of Technology in Constrained Environments Evaluation of WFP's work on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS Evaluation on WFP's Support to Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants Mid-Term Evaluation of the WFP Strategic Plan (2022-2025) Evaluation on Targeting and Prioritization Approaches (DRAFT) Evaluation on Supply Chain Roadmap (DRAFT)	2019 2022 2023 2024 2024 - -

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Annex III: Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to affected populations
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CAR	Central African Republic
CEE	Corporate Emergency Evaluation
CFM	Community feedback mechanism
CMAM	Community-based management of acute malnutrition
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CSPE	Country Strategic Plan Evaluation
DE	Decentralized Evaluation
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
ETC	Emergency Telecommunication Cluster
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSC	Food Security Cluster
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IAHE	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation
IAHS	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Synthesis
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICCG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
ICSPE	Interim Country Strategic Plan Evaluations
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally displaced person or people
INGD	National Institute for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
MPCA	Multi-purpose cash assistance
MSNA	Multi-sector needs assessment
mt	Metric ton
NFI	Non-food item
NGO	Non-governmental organization

OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OEV	Office of Evaluation (WFP)
PE	Policy Evaluation
PPE	Personal protective equipment
PSEA	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
RIMS	refugees, internally displaced persons, and migrants
SE	Strategic Evaluation
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TP	Targeting and Prioritization
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

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