

Location Management Interim Guidance

1. Background

Accurate, standardized, and validated location data is a critical dependency across WFP operations. Multiple corporate initiatives (Track & Trace, SCOPE IK roll-out, and others) have highlighted persistent inconsistencies in how Country Offices (COs) identify, record, classify, and maintain operational locations such as warehouses, cooperating partner (CP) sites, delivery points (DPs), and final distribution points (FDPs).

Under the Directive on Governance and Standardization of Location Data Management Across WFP Systems, Programme (PRG) and specifically the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Service (VAM) is the data owner of master location data, and the Geoenabler database is the authoritative corporate repository that can be consumed through the Geographical Enterprise Foundational Service (GEFS). All operational systems (SCOPE, LESS and COMET mainly) must align to GEFS through approved resolution and validation processes.

This guidance consolidates earlier interim guidance (Track & Trace Location Resolution Resources, WFP Location Resolution – Quick Support Guide for End Users from SCOPE In-Kind rollout) and CO-level best practices into a single, harmonized framework applicable to all Country Offices, while providing some degree of flexibility.

2. Purpose & Scope

This interim guidance establishes a standardized, end-to-end process for:

- Recording, validating, resolving, and maintaining operational location data
- Ensuring location data alignment across COMET, LESS, SCOPE, and corporate GIS (GEFS/GEOLESS)
- Defining clear governance, roles, and accountability (RACI)
- Embedding proven CO best practices as standard procedures

It applies to all operational locations, including administrative localities, settlements, warehouses, hubs, delivery points, and FDPs.

3. Core Principles

The guidance aims at anchoring the following principles into regular CO processes to ensure a constant and consistent effort is provided in collecting, validating and maintaining/updating location information.

1. One Source of Truth: GEFS-aligned master data anchored to authoritative national administrative boundaries.

2. CO Ownership, Cross-Functional Execution: Programme, Supply Chain Delivery and VAM collaborate through a formal Location Resolution Task Force.
3. Lean but Controlled Field Capture: Practical collection methods (e.g. MoDa, ODK collect, GeoXY,...) combined with structured validation.
4. Accuracy Over Perfection: Approximate coordinates are acceptable when clearly flagged; missing data is not.
5. Dual Resolution: Locations must be resolved and usable in both Programme (COMET) and Supply Chain Delivery (LESS/SCOPE) systems.
6. Prevention over Correction: Locations must be validated before being created or used in operational systems.

4. Definitions

- Geoenabler: Corporate master repository for location data.
- GEFS: Set of API end points to access Geoenabler data in WFP
- GEOLESS: Corporate geographic reference dataset used for resolution and validation.
- Location Resolution Tool (LRT): Corporate tool used to resolve locations against GEFS/GEOLESS.
- LRTF (Location Resolution Task Force): CO-level cross functional group responsible for location management.

5. Governance & Roles

5.1 Country Office Location Resolution Task Force (LRTF)

Each CO establishes an LRTF¹ composed of the following roles (functions may vary by CO structure):

- **LRTF Chair (RAM/VAM or equivalent):** Stewards master data, convenes sessions, coordinates boundary updates with HQ Geospatial team, can delegate Location Resolution tasks to other members.
- **LR Focal Point (GIS / RAM / designated role):** Submitter & Reviewer of locations submissions to RO and HQ; runs QA, tracks KPIs, leads location data collection and - consolidation in tables.
- **Programme Focal Point (COMET):** Compiles COMET active locations, validates operational relevance of programme locations, including DPs and FDPs. Implement changes/links with Geoles in COMET once approved by HQ.

¹ For COs where the staffing structure does not allow individual participation from each functional unit (due to team size, etc.), it is recommended that the Head of Supply Chain and Programme jointly align on location data as an operational priority and assign clear ownership to a singular focal point who will be responsible for the whole process.

- **Supply Chain Focal Point (Operations):** Compiles LESS locations, resolves against LRT, informs COMET focal point, triggers new location submissions. Implement changes in LESS/resolves LESS locations towards Geoles in LRT once approved by HQ.
- **SCOPE/IDM/Delivery FP²:** Compiles SCOPE active locations, validates operational relevance of programme locations, including DPs and FDPs. Implement changes in SCOPE/resolves SCOPE locations towards Geoles in LRT once approved by HQ.

5.2 HQ & Regional Roles

- **Regional Office (Task Force comprised of: VAM, COMET, Operations / Commodity Accounting, and SCOPE focal points):** Provides technical validation, consolidation, and first-line support to COs, and escalates the issues to relevant HQ stakeholders when needed (CO → RO → HQ Geospatial/ HQ SCOPE/ HQ COMET/ HQ LESS). In cases where RO focal points receive technical questions related to SCOPE, LRT, or other systems, they serve as an escalation channel between the CO and HQ workstreams. The RO focal points for each functional area might defer tasks to Rome office directly, based on operational capacity and resources available.
- **HQ VAM (Geospatial & Intelligence unit):** Approves new location(s) to be inserted in master location data (Geoenabler), advises on complex cases, ingests admin boundary updates, provides standards and training for CO task force and location, as well as RO focal points, if any or relevant. Matters linked with operational locations management will be also channeled through the VAM Codebook Governance group among Global HQ.

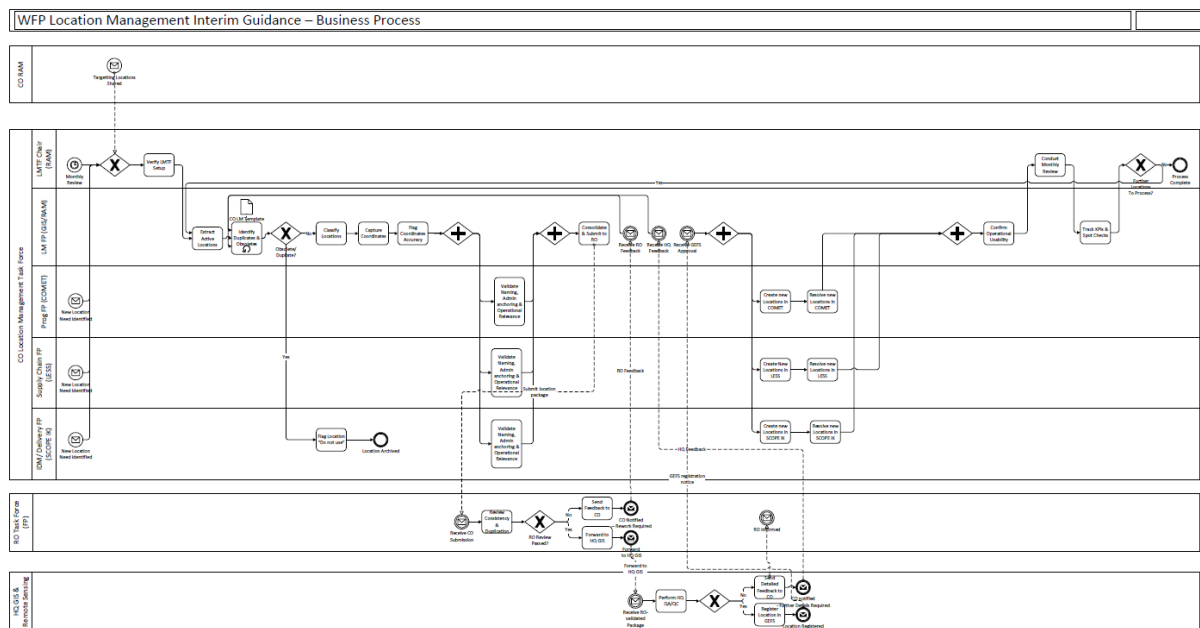
² The structure that this role sits in the CO is not relevant (e.g. TEC, Programme, SCD, etc.), can be multiple people as relevant as per specific CO operations

6. RACI – End-to-End Location Management

Activity	CO Task Force	Location Resolution FP	Programme (COMET)	Supply Chain	SCOPE/ID M/ Delivery FP	Regional Task Force	HQ VAM
Identify new/updated locations	R	A	R	R	C	I	I
Validate coordinates & admin areas	C	A&R	C	I	I	C	C
Validate operational relevance	C	A	R	R	R	I	I
Flag obsolete/duplicate locations	C	A	R	R	R	I	I
Prepare, format and maintain location data in IDM and Delivery tools (incl SCOPE IK) according to the standards	C	C	I	I	A&R	I	I
Consolidate & submit updates	I	A&R	I	I	I	C	I
Regional validation	I	C	I	I	I	A&R	I
Final approval & GEFS creation	I	C	I	I	I	C	A&R
System resolution (COMET/LESS/SCOPE)	I	C	R	R	R	I	I

Legend: R = Responsible | A = Accountable | C = Consulted | I = Informed

7. Standard End-to-End Process



Phase 0 – Prerequisites – RAM CO

- Establish LRTF and collaboration channels (MS Teams).
- Ensure access and training for LRT Submitter/Reviewer roles.
- Confirm authoritative administrative boundaries with HQ Geospatial.

Phase 1 – Review & Backlog Cleaning

- Extract active locations from COMET, LESS, and SCOPE.
- Identify duplicates, obsolete (inactive), and unresolved locations.
- Classify locations (according to standardized taxonomy Sites classification in Annex 4, see also [geographic reference taxonomy](#)).

Phase 2 – Coordinate Capture & Validation

- Preference for using well established tools for data collection in WFP is highly encouraged to develop a process that will be sustainable on the longer term. Other methods to collect latitude and longitude can apply for specific use cases. Possible methods include:
 - Existing validated coordinates
 - GeoXY
 - MoDa
 - Other tools (Survey123, ODK,...)
 - Remote capture tools (e.g. GeoXY web form or similar approach, GIS tools, Google Maps) where physical access is not possible
- Record coordinates in decimal degrees using WGS 1984 reference coordinate system.
- Flag accuracy level (exact vs approximate). Approximate is acceptable in no connectivity areas or if collecting/identifying accurate coordinates is impossible.

Phase 3 – Internal CO Review

- Validate data quality:
 - Naming conventions (according to taxonomy (see Annex 3))
 - Admin anchoring
 - Geographical coordinates plausibility
 - Operational relevance

Phase 4 – Global HQ Validation

- Regional Office reviews for consistency and duplication.
- HQ Geospatial performs final QA/QC process and in case positive, registers locations in GEFS, if QA/QC standards are not met or if doubts remain, detailed feedback will be sent to LRTF in CO to provide further details.

Phase 5 – System Resolution & Use

- “Resolve” approved locations in COMET, LESS, and SCOPE, meaning linking records from these systems with a WFP location ID in GEFS. (see annexes 1, 2 and 4 for more details on this process)
- Confirm usability for operations, reporting, and reconciliation.

Phase 6 – Monitoring & Continuous Improvement

- Bimonthly/Monthly/weekly LRTF review and KPI tracking. Cadence of review should be adapted to follow operational requirements.
- Periodic spot checks and lessons learned.

8. Data Standards & Guardrails

- **Naming:** the name of a site is a critical information that has to capture a neutral information and should not contain any information about WFP activity but rather reference to a location that could be referenced for any other type of activity happening in that same place. Name is an essential part of the Site description as it will allow to differentiate it with other sites around a same area. The following best practices should be considered while naming sites:
 - **Use Full Names:** Avoid acronyms, abbreviations, or shortened forms unless they are widely recognized (e.g., "UNHCR," "IOM"). Always prefer full, descriptive names that clearly communicate the identity or function of the site.
 - **Include Functional Context:** Where appropriate, include the type or function of the site in the name (e.g., "WFP Warehouse Kigali," "Port of Mombasa," "Nyamata Health Centre").
 - **Name should be unique:** To avoid confusion, names should ideally be unique. In cases where names are the same in a same lower administrative area, sequential numbers can be added to differentiate sites (e.g. Goa School 1, Goa School 2).
 - **Avoid Redundancy:** Do not include administrative names in the site name if they are already provided in separate fields (e.g., do not write "Goma Area Office, North Kivu" if "North Kivu" is already in the Admin1 field).

- **Avoid Personal Names Unless Official:** Refrain from naming locations after individuals unless the name is part of an official designation.
- **Use Local Naming Conventions Where Possible:** Ensure alignment with official or commonly accepted local names, especially for public infrastructure like hospitals, schools, or markets.
- **Language Consistency:** Use English as the standard language for naming unless the official or recognized name is in another language (e.g., "École Primaire de Kaniama"). Names using non-Roman characters are not admitted in the main site name, but can be inserted in the "alternate name" column.
- **Special Characters:** Avoid using special characters, emojis, or formatting (e.g., "*", "/", "&") unless part of an official name, the use of accents ("é", "à", "è", etc.) are admitted.
- **Coordinates:** Coordinates should be expressed in **decimal degrees** with at least five decimal places for sufficient spatial accuracy. Coordinates in Degree, minutes, seconds system should be converted to decimal degrees. The coordinates should be using the WGS 1984 coordinate system.

Example of valid coordinates:

Latitude: 4.84816, longitude: 31.58482

- **Type:** Sites must be classified in a specific category in reference to land use categories following the table in Annex 5.
The list depicted in the table in Annex 5 is non-exhaustive and based on current records in Location Master Data. Further site categories can be proposed using the relevant land use orders and groups described in Annex I and further definitions in Annex II of the Global Geographic Reference Taxonomy.
- **Archiving:** Obsolete locations must be flagged "Do Not Use," not deleted.

Examples of good inputs:

Site name	Latitude	Longitude	Site type
Bilkey	33.003595	7.784887	Open Area
Wanyjok Primary School	27.568546	9.019626	School
Mabil-Biet Nutrition Site	27.838326	9.302673	Treatment Centre

9. Compliance

All COs must:

- Apply these procedures before creating or using locations in operational systems (COMET, LESS, SCOPE)
- Ensure cross-functional validation of locations by the LRTF
- Refrain from unilateral system-level location creation
- Escalate issues through Regional Offices

10. Annexes

Annex 1 – Location Data Compilation Template - [Location Data Compilation Template](#)

Annex 2 – Burkina Faso Guidelines - [20250610-TDR Task Force LRT Burkina RS MS SL TA JM AS LB SR AD MY V102.docx](#)

Annex 3 – [Global Geographic Reference Taxonomy](#)

Annex 4 – Track & Trace Location Resolution Resources - https://wfp.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/WFPSupplyChainTrackandTraceProjectPublic/Eq23q31_DhJPhcaaBrZ5PfcBfEspWjlU6rm93jYW47r-zw?e=DV1Ar6

Annex 5 – Table for Site type categories (See column “Site categories”)

land use order	Land use group	Site categories	Definition	Land use code
Recreation and leisure	Outdoor amenity or space	Square or open space	Outdoor public areas such as squares, plazas, green spaces, or pedestrian zones used for recreation, gatherings, or cultural events.	U041
	Sports facility or ground	Outside sports centre/ground	Open-air sports grounds or fields used for organized or informal physical activities, such as football pitches or athletics tracks.	U044
	Sports facility or ground	Sports facility	Dedicated venues for indoor or outdoor sports, including stadiums, arenas, and multi-sport complexes.	U044
Transport	Transport terminals and interchanges	Airport	A facility for the arrival, departure, and maintenance of aircraft, typically equipped with runways, terminals, and cargo handling areas. In the context of WFP operations, airports are key logistical nodes used for the transport of personnel, food, and non-food items.	U052
	Transport terminals and interchanges	Port	A coastal or inland facility where ships load and unload cargo and passengers. Ports may include docks, container terminals, warehouses, and customs facilities. They serve as major entry or exit points for international and regional shipments.	U052
	Transport terminals and interchanges	Railway station	A designated stop along a railway network where trains pick up or drop off passengers. Railway stations used in logistics operations may include sidings, loading platforms, and storage areas to support the movement of humanitarian goods.	U052
	Goods and freight terminals	Railway sorting depot	A logistics site where goods are transferred from one mode of transport to another or from one vehicle to another for further delivery. This could include a cross-docking point, a staging area for intermodal transport, or an interim stop in a supply chain route.	U055
	Goods and freight terminals	Logistics Hub	A centralized logistics location where goods are received, temporarily stored, and then redistributed to various destinations.	U055
	Goods and freight terminals	Road transshipment facility/point	Locations where goods are transferred between trucks or transport modes; often used for onward distribution or temporary storage.	U055
Utilities and infrastructure	Post and telecommunications	Telecommunication site	Telecommunication facilities for transmitting and receiving signals by telephone, radio, radar, cable, television, microwave and satellite.	U065
	Manufacturing	Food processing facility	A site where raw food materials are processed, packaged, or transformed into consumable products. These facilities support supply chain and distribution activities in humanitarian contexts.	U101
	Manufacturing	Workshop	A facility for technical or maintenance work, such as vehicle repairs, equipment servicing, or construction support.	U101
	Manufacturing	Bakery	Facility for producing bread and baked goods; may serve local communities or humanitarian food distribution.	U101
Residential	Residential institutions	Guesthouse	Residential accommodation for WFP or other humanitarian staff	U073
Retail	Shops	Shop/Retailer	Single closed premise for the retail sale and display of goods to visiting members of the public	U091
	Shops	Market	Group of premises for the retail sale and display of goods	U091
	Wholesale distribution	Supplier	An external entity or business that provides goods or services to WFP operations. The location typically refers to a production site, depot, or vendor office.	U091
Industry and businesses	Offices	Office	A location where staff carry out administrative, coordination, or support activities. Offices can range from field-level to global headquarters.	U102
	Storage	storage facility/warehouse	Storage place and facility for onward distribution of equipment, bulk materials and goods	U103
Community services	Hospital/Health facility	Hospital	Facility offering medical diagnosis, treatment, and emergency care; includes inpatient and outpatient services.	U081

	Hospital/Health facility	Health centre	Primary care facility offering basic medical services, consultations, and preventive care.	U081
	Hospital/Health facility	Treatment centre	Specialized facility for managing specific health conditions, such as infectious diseases or malnutrition.	U081
	Place of worship	Church	Christian place of worship; may also serve as community gathering space.	U082
	Place of worship	Mosque	Islamic place of worship; often includes prayer halls and community services.	U082
	Place of worship	Temple	Hindu, Buddhist, or other religious site used for worship and rituals.	U082
	Place of worship	Synagogue	Jewish place of worship and community gathering.	U082
	Education	School	Educational institution for primary or secondary learning; includes classrooms, playgrounds, and administrative areas.	U083
	Education	University	Higher education institution offering undergraduate and postgraduate programs; may include research and dormitory facilities.	U083
	Community services	Community centre	Facility hosting social, cultural, or civic activities; includes youth clubs, public halls, and meeting spaces.	U084
	Community services	Distribution facility	Facility used for distribution of humanitarian assistance	U084