

21 October 2026

Management Comments to the Internal Audit of WFP Operations in Malawi (AR/26/13)

WFP Management welcomes the observations made by the Office of the Inspector General in the Internal Audit of WFP Operations in Malawi (AR/26/13), covering the period from **1 January to 31 December 2025**. WFP Management appreciates the audit's full coverage of risk management, targeting, accountability to affected populations, logistics and monitoring, and its tailored review of governance, programme and operational planning, identity management, cooperating partner management, procurement, partnerships, and budget and programming. The audit focused on Activities 1, 4 and 9 of the country strategic plan (CSP).

Malawi is a landlocked low-income country where 82 percent of the population lives in rural areas and rain-fed agriculture is a major source of livelihoods. In 2025, weather disruptions, foreign exchange constraints and fuel shortages affected access to food, agricultural inputs and essential services. Within this context, WFP implemented a diverse portfolio spanning shock-responsive social protection, refugee assistance, school feeding, nutrition, resilience building, capacity strengthening and on-demand services, reaching approximately 2.8 million beneficiaries with direct operational expenses of USD 92 million.

WFP Management appreciates the audit's recognition of WFP's role in emergency preparedness and response, the effective linkage of humanitarian resilience and social protection interventions, and its technical assistance in school meals and social protection. WFP Management also welcomes the positive findings on WFP's strong relationships with the Government, coordination supported by the co-location of personnel in government structures, cost-efficiency measures across transport, warehousing and partnership processes, and effectiveness of controls supporting on-demand procurement and distribution services for the Government. The audit further identified no reportable observations in the supply chain and logistics areas reviewed, including warehouse operations and procurement processes with a focus on transport vendors, as well as in budget and programming, reflecting the strength of existing operational and control arrangements.

WFP Management acknowledges and agrees with the audit's overall conclusion of **"some improvement needed"**, the **two high-priority and three medium-priority observations** and the **nine corresponding agreed actions**. Management fully endorses the nine agreed actions and will implement them within the respective agreed timelines. The current CSP revision process, CSP Mid-Term Review and Global Headquarters (GHQ)/Eastern Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) support mission are already informing and advancing efforts to address these issues and strengthen strategic alignment. WFP Management will oversee implementation of the agreed actions, periodically review progress and evolving risks, and track implementation through WFP's corporate tracking tool. Global Headquarters will provide guidance and technical support where specified in the agreed actions and as appropriate.

WFP Management also acknowledges the three medium-priority observations (2, 4 and 5), which identify opportunities to strengthen the transition of the home-grown school feeding programme to national ownership, assurance over government cooperating partners, and risk-based monitoring and community feedback mechanisms. The agreed actions will formalize transition arrangements with Government, strengthen government partner capacity assessments and risk mitigation, and reinforce monitoring, feedback case management and data protection arrangements. WFP Management remains committed to supporting

Government leadership and capacity strengthening efforts to ensure sustainable and nationally owned programme outcomes.

Regarding Observation 1, Strategic positioning and risk management, in line with the focus of the WFP strategic plan (2026–2029) on reducing humanitarian needs and strengthening resilience, the Country Office will prioritize resilience interventions that build on its comparative advantage, demonstrate cost-effective and lasting results, support government-led efforts and national systems, and offer clear pathways for transition and handover to local and national actors.

WFP Management, with support from the Climate and Resilience Service, will define and approve the country office's strategic positioning, value proposition and risk appetite for resilience programming by 31 March 2027. Following this action, WFP Management will develop and approve an operational plan with defined milestones for the phased transition or exit of deprioritized resilience activities by 30 June 2027. WFP Management will also develop a partnership and resource mobilization strategy that considers donor and national priorities by 31 December 2026 and review and update it, as needed, following approval of the strategic positioning. Recognizing the evolving risk environment, WFP Management will continuously monitor risks and timely adjust mitigation measures, strategic position and resilience programming, as needed.

Regarding Observation 3, Targeting and identity management, WFP Management will assess residual risks in targeting and identity management processes and identify the digital tool that best complements the Malawi Social Registry and reduces reliance on manual processes by 31 March 2027. As an interim measure, and with support from Global Headquarters, the Country Office has already initiated the piloting of the SCOPE In-Kind platform to assess its feasibility in complementing the Government's Unified Beneficiary Registry and strengthening digital controls across beneficiary management processes.

WFP Management thanks the Office of the Inspector General for its constructive engagement and analysis. The audit observations and agreed actions provide an important basis for strengthening governance, risk management, internal controls, accountability and operational effectiveness in Malawi. WFP Management remains committed to implementing the agreed actions within the specified timelines and to using the audit results to support continued improvement across WFP operations in Malawi.