

**OFFICE OF EVALUATION WORK PLAN 2015–2017:
ANNEX TO MANAGEMENT PLAN**



Informal Consultation

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**World Food Programme
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INTRODUCTION

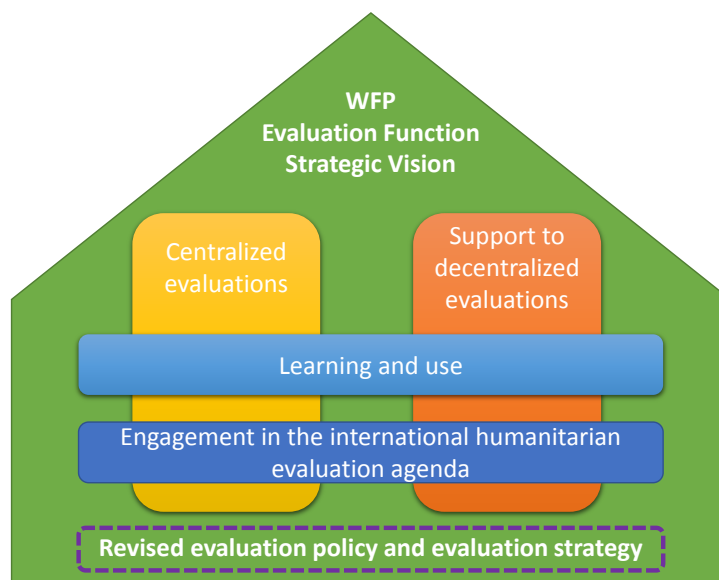
1. This annex describes the Office of Evaluation's (OEV) proposed programme of work for 2015–2017, following consultation with the Executive Board and senior management, and in line with the draft management response to the 2014 United Nations Evaluation Group-Development Assistance Committee (UNEG/DAC) peer review of WFP's evaluation function.
2. In addition to the core programme of central evaluations, the work plan contains several elements that respond to the agreed strategic shifts in OEV's role and responsibility for WFP's overall evaluation function, implied by the response to peer review recommendations. These include: a stronger policy, strategy and accountability framework for WFP's selected overall evaluation function, including decentralized evaluation; maintaining WFP's "premier league" central evaluation function as the main source of high-quality independent evaluation; engagement in the international evaluation system; and stronger use of evaluation in programme design.
3. The work plan summarised below is intended to complement and contribute to related on-going developments in WFP's performance management system led by other divisions. These include:
 - an updated process for programme design review;
 - a new approach to strategic planning through country frameworks;
 - measures to strengthen monitoring and build a stronger evidence-base for evaluation; and
 - People Strategy initiatives to enhance capacities and skills in mission-critical functions, including monitoring and evaluation.

WORK PLAN SUMMARY

4. Illustrated in Figure 1 and in line with resources allocated to it, over 2015–2017 OEV will:
 - i) develop, in 2015, a revised evaluation policy and an evaluation strategy in line with management's selected model for WFP's evaluation function, and establish appropriate information and reporting systems covering WFP's overall evaluation function;
 - ii) generate evidence for accountability and learning through continuation, at a slightly reduced level, of its programme of complex centralized evaluations. This is in line with peer review findings and recommendations that there is scope for OEV to reduce somewhat its number of evaluations in order to invest more in supporting learning from and use of evaluations;
 - iii) continue the temporary central evaluation series of single operations evaluations into 2016–2017, at coverage levels similar to those of 2014;
 - iv) facilitate the generation of evidence through decentralized evaluation at field level through:
 - setting norms, standards and guidance;
 - provision of limited technical advice and training, consistent with the updated monitoring strategy and guidance for reviews led by Performance Management and Monitoring Division (RMP);

- quality assessment of completed decentralized evaluations;
- v) develop systems to enhance evaluation’s contribution to WFP’s knowledge and learning culture, and encourage use of evaluation in evidence-based policy and programme design and approval; and
- vi) engage with the international system for evaluation to contribute to and learn from international evaluation practice, particularly as it applies to evaluation in humanitarian settings.

Figure 1: OEV’s workstreams contributing to WFP’s selected evaluation function



5. Resources will be allocated to ensure progress is made on all work-streams summarised above, while maintaining priority for OEV’s primary function of generating evidence through centrally commissioned complex independent evaluations, OEV’s “core programme”. The total resources available to OEV to deliver the entire work plan are USD 9,051,160. This accounts for 0.2 percent of WFP’s total forecast contributions income. The total staff costs are USD 3,144,097; the overall non-staff resources available are USD 5,907,063, of which USD 3,010,850 will be allocated to the “core programme”, funded from Programme Support and Administrative (PSA), maintaining 2014 levels.
6. Alongside that core programme, USD 600,000 PSA has been allocated for investment to support development of the policy, enabling and reporting framework for the overall evaluation function, along with initial support elements for the decentralized evaluation function agreed in the peer review management response, concurrently with related corporate initiatives noted in para 3. With this additional investment, OEV’s total PSA budget for 2015 increases by 13 percent over 2014 to USD 6,105,985.
7. In addition, USD 2,585,175 will be made available from the dedicated special account established in 2013, drawing on project resources for delivery of the single operations evaluation series, along with USD 360,000 from the United Nations Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Under-nutrition (REACH) programme resources for a joint evaluation in 2015 led by OEV.

2015 DELIVERABLES AND 2016–2017 OUTLOOK

Policy and Strategy

8. The 2014 peer review recognized that WFP’s 2008 evaluation policy “provided clearer safeguards for the independence of evaluation, better definition of the roles of OEV and various actors in evaluation, formalization of a balance of evaluation types, and the establishment of a programme-specialist evaluation skills mix in the OEV team”. It also identified weaknesses with regard to the organization-wide evaluation function including the absence of a formal evaluation strategy to guide policy implementation across the entire function, including financial and human resources for evaluation, and insufficient clarity on terminology and coverage, and WFP’s role in national evaluation capacity development. It recommended revision of the policy “to reflect a stronger role for evaluation in performance improvement, in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and the new WFP Strategic Plan” and development of an evaluation strategy “setting out how WFP will develop evaluation capacity, resourcing, selection, coverage and utilization across the organization”.
9. In agreement with the recommendation contained in the management response to the 2014 peer review, in 2015 OEV will lead the revision of WFP’s evaluation policy, consistent with the selected model for WFP’s evaluation function indicated by the management response. The 2015 policy will govern the WFP evaluation function and reflect WFP’s commitment to accountability and learning, aligned with UNEG norms and standards. The Policy will set WFP’s evaluation function in the international and WFP context. Specifically it will:
 - formalize the linkages between evaluation, monitoring, review and WFP’s performance management system;
 - update and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board, corporate, regional and country level management, and OEV under an organizationally strengthened WFP;
 - reaffirm commitment to the principles and safeguards for governance and resourcing of independent evaluation; and
 - set expectations for evaluation coverage and use of evaluation evidence in WFP’s policy and programme cycle.
10. Also in 2015, OEV will develop an evaluation strategy to serve as a bridge between the new policy and annual management plans. It will be distinct from but complementary to WFP’s forthcoming updated monitoring strategy. The evaluation strategy will be the basis for policy implementation over the medium term, taking account of key elements of the evaluation policy concerning key roles and responsibilities, intended future capacity and resources for evaluation. Considering WFP’s multiple priorities, risks and resource constraints, the strategy will adopt a phased approach to development of evaluation capacity, resourcing, coverage, types, selection and use, covering WFP’s central and decentralized evaluation functions. In line with peer review recommendations, key performance indicators on WFP’s overall evaluation function will be selected, to enable OEV to report annually to the Board to support its oversight of WFP’s evaluation function.
11. The development of the new policy and accompanying strategy will apply lessons learned through previous evaluations on the quality of WFP policies and will follow a consultative process ensuring all relevant stakeholders groups are involved. It will build on the strengths of the 2008 policy, the findings and recommendations of the peer review and of the recent internal Business Process Review (BPR) assessment of field-level evaluation, and the

forthcoming “proof of concept” review of the operations evaluations series launched in 2013. The draft evaluation policy will be presented for approval at EB.A/2015.

Centralized Evaluations

12. OEV’s centrally commissioned evaluations inform all stakeholders of the relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of WFP’s policies, strategies, operations and activities, and the efficiency of their implementation. There are two strands of OEV-led central evaluations, namely i) complex evaluations of policies, global strategies and programmes, humanitarian emergency (Level 3) responses, country portfolios, and the impact of WFP activities; and ii) single operations evaluations.
13. Table 1 provides an overview of OEV’s central evaluation plan. Overall, a total of 13 complex evaluations will be underway in 2015, including 7 continued from 2014 and 6 new starts. While the total is the same as that planned for 2014, a slight reduction in new starts enables further development of the overall evaluation function and greater support for learning from evaluation, in line with the peer review recommendations. When syntheses and single operations evaluations are included, the overall number of central evaluations underway increases to 38. This is achieved by using different models of evaluation management including joint, inter-agency, outsourced and partnership-based, which can render efficiency gains. Wherever appropriate and feasible, opportunities for evaluations to be carried out jointly will be taken. Joint and inter-agency evaluations offer benefits in enhanced understanding between agencies and cost-efficiencies, though not in evaluation management time.
14. The complex evaluations planned for 2015 are largely confirmed, updated from previous years to maximise relevance to WFP’s policy and programming context, and take account of the observations of the peer review, notably regarding the coverage of emergency response operations, continuation of efforts to enhance learning by conducting evaluations in series and through synthesis reports and joint evaluations with other agencies where appropriate. The outlook plans for 2016 and 2017 will be further developed following design of the new Evaluation Strategy in 2015.
15. Included in the plan for complex evaluations is a new category of Humanitarian Emergency Level 3 Response evaluations. EMOPS below Level 3 will continue to be covered under the single operations evaluations series, while Level 3 responses will be covered by OEV’s core programme. Following recent embedding of inter-agency evaluation into the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) humanitarian programme cycle requirements, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether OEV will engage in an inter-agency evaluation or conduct a separate evaluation of WFP’s response. In 2015, the evaluation of WFP’s response to the Syrian crisis will be completed as a separate evaluation in collaboration with the IASC’s coordination through a shared context analysis, evaluation frameworks, dissemination and learning strategy. The evaluation of WFP’s Philippines and South Sudan Level 3 responses will be completed in 2015 by the inter-agency evaluation mechanism, ensuring evaluation coverage in an efficient and coordinated manner. The nature of the 2015 evaluation of the Central African Republic response will be determined in due course.
16. The system for evaluation of WFP’s policies is set by the WFP policy formulation document agreed by the Board in 2011 (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B). Application of this approach for all policies approved after 2011 requires evaluation four to six years after approval, to contribute evaluation evidence and learning into WFP’s policy cycle. Consistent with this, and noting the Board’s interest expressed during consultation in strengthening follow up, in 2015 an evaluation of the capacity development policy will commence, completing the

follow up cycle from the 2008 evaluation. In addition, the evaluation of WFP's nutrition policy requested by the Board will be completed in 2015.¹ In 2016 evaluations of the humanitarian protection policy and the HIV/AIDS policy will begin. An evaluation of the safety nets update is indicated in the outlook for policy evaluations in 2017, to which others may be added depending on resources and priorities set by the evaluation strategy.

17. For policies approved more than six years ago, evaluation either of the policy itself, or of the theme addressed by the policy is considered in dialogue with WFP's Policy and Programme Division on the basis of continuing relevance to WFP's work, or potential to contribute to new policy development. Several such older policies relate to emergencies, and will be updated in the planned new emergency policy, to which the on-going preparedness and response enhancement programme (PREP) evaluation and the synthesis of the 2013–2015 series of strategic evaluations on emergency preparedness and response evaluation planned for completion in 2015, will contribute.
18. Strategic evaluations focus on strategies, systemic issues or operations with global or regional coverage. No new strategic evaluations will begin in 2015, but two global programme strategic evaluations started in 2014 will be completed - the PREP and the REACH initiative. Considering the presence of several global programmes concerning resilience, climate adaptation and risk capacity and the significance of resilience in the Strategic Plan, a strategic evaluation of resilience is included in the outlook for 2016. A series of evaluations covering the Strategic Plan (2014–2017) is planned to commence in 2016, for which an evaluability assessment will be completed in 2015.
19. Covering all WFP operations and activities over a 3-5 year period, Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPEs) are an accountability instrument and learning tool to inform country strategy. Selection considers timing issues relevant for country office strategic and operational planning with respect to WFP Strategic Plan, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and other United Nations coordination processes, portfolio size and programming profile, regional balance and presence of recent or on-going evaluation coverage. The pipeline of CPEs indicated for 2015 set out in the 2014–2016 work plan included United Republic of Tanzania, Central African Republic and Iraq. In 2015 the CPE of United Republic of Tanzania will be completed. In view of the current context in the Central African Republic, a Level 3 response evaluation may be more appropriate. Depending on the decision regarding Central African Republic, two or three additional CPEs will commence in 2015 to maintain the current level of around 4 CPEs annually (countries to be determined, though Iraq remains on the shortlist).² Looking forward, coverage and criteria beyond 2015 will be determined under a new evaluation strategy.³ Consideration will be given to the potential for adaptation of the regional portfolio evaluation concept to enhance small country office evaluation coverage in 2016.
20. The 2008 evaluation policy provision for operations evaluations will continue to be progressively met through continuation to 2016–2017 of the centrally managed temporary series of single operations evaluations. In 2015, 7 operations evaluations will be completed, and a further 15 begun, and the outlook for 2016 proposes a similar coverage level. The continuation and proposed coverage level:

¹ As noted in the 2014 work plan, the policy-evaluation cycle would normally indicate an evaluation of this 2012 policy between 2016 and 2018. While noting potential implications for evidence of results, the evaluation was requested by the Board, for 2015.

² See outlook for 2015–2016 in OEV work plan 2014.

³ Consistent with the 2014 OEV work plan.

- achieves a better fit with the evaluability profile of WFP’s operations/programme of work;
- reduces the global annual cost burden of the series, appropriate in the current resource environment, and
- enables continuity of coverage while the strengthened decentralized evaluation function envisaged by management is developed over the duration of this plan period.

The results of the forthcoming 2014 “proof-of-concept” review of the operations evaluations series will further shape the outlook for the years following 2015, to ensure best fit with WFP’s decentralized operating model under Fit for Purpose, its evolving performance management and project cycle management systems, and the revised monitoring, review and evaluation strategies. Recalling that single operations evaluations are published but not presented to the Board, a synthesis of completed operations evaluations will be prepared for the Board each year.

21. In 2015 a new multi-country series of impact evaluations is planned to start, covering moderate acute malnutrition activities. Building on OEV’s previous experience with three series of impact evaluations⁴, OEV is exploring a strategic global partnership with the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) for this series and others in future.⁵ This would enable WFP to increase coverage by partnering with additional specialized expertise for the conduct and management of credible, quality impact evaluations, meeting the particular methodological challenges of humanitarian contexts and of this topic in particular (consistent with the evaluability assessment conducted in 2014). Continuing the series approach with a synthesis will deliver efficiencies in the evaluation process and enable a “double-win” of individual evaluations of high utility at country level alongside a synthesis to identify factors that are country-specific and those that apply across different contexts.

Strengthening Decentralized Evaluation

22. The peer review found that, in contrast to centralized evaluation, the development of decentralized evaluation - evaluations not conducted by OEV – has been neglected. In line with peer review recommendations, there has been extensive consideration of the appropriate model by senior management and the Board. Given the resourcing environment and the high priority accorded to strengthening monitoring while maintaining WFP’s high-performing central evaluation function, a phased approach to development of a demand-led decentralized function has been selected based on a modified version of the peer review’s model 2 – *Centralized Evaluation plus Demand-Led Decentralized Evaluation*. Over the life of this Management Plan, the enabling framework for a strengthened decentralized evaluation function will be established, in line with the Strategic Plan and Fit for Purpose intentions for a field-based evaluation function.

23. While it is not possible to immediately implement the peer review’s model 2 full features of regional evaluation officers or augmented OEV capacity to provide support, some additional resourcing has been allocated to OEV to progress the essential enabling framework in 2015, in close coordination with the development and roll-out of WFP’s monitoring and review strategy. Progress on both will be reviewed in 2016 to determine the next phase in development of the decentralized evaluation function in time for the 2017

⁴ On school feeding, food assistance in protracted refugee situations and food for assets

⁵ Therefore, these do not appear in Table 1.

Management Plan, notably concerning evaluation capacity and resourcing needs at regional level.

| TABLE 1: CENTRAL EVALUATION PLAN 2015 AND OUTLOOK 2016–2017 | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Type | 2015 (Board session) | 2016 | 2017 |
| Policy | <i>Continued from 2014:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition (2/15) <i>New starts:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development | <i>Continued from 2015:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development <i>New starts:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanitarian Protection HIV/AIDS | <i>Continued from 2016:</i> <i>New starts:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety nets update Tbc |
| Strategic | <i>Continued from 2014:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PREP (A/15) REACH (joint) | <i>New Starts:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilience Evaluation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 | <i>Continued from 2016:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 |
| Country portfolio | <i>Continued from 2014:</i> United Republic of Tanzania (2/15) <i>New starts:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iraq⁶ (tbc) CPE 2 (tbd) CPE 3 (tbd) | <i>Continued from 2015:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPE 2 (tbd) CPE 3 (tbd) <i>New starts: To be determined in line with evaluation strategy</i> | <i>To be determined in line with evaluation strategy</i> |
| Humanitarian emergency Level 3 response | <i>Continued from 2014:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFP's Syrian Crisis Response; Philippines (joint inter-agency) South Sudan (joint inter-agency) <i>New starts:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central African Republic (tbd WFP or Joint Inter Agency) Iraq/other⁷ (tbd) | <i>Tbd by context</i> | <i>Tbd by context</i> |
| Single operations (excluding Level 3) | <i>Continued from 2014:</i> 7 <i>New starts:</i> 15 | <i>New starts:</i> 15 | <i>Tbc by progress review of decentralized evaluation function</i> |
| Evaluation syntheses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Evaluation Report 2014 (A/15) Single-operation evaluations Synthesis 2014/15 Strategic evaluation theme synthesis: Emergency preparedness and response (2/15) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Evaluation Report 2015 (A/16) Single-operation evaluations 2015/16 Strategic thematic synthesis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Evaluation Report 2016 (A/17) Single-operation evaluations 2016/17 |

24. Specifically in 2015, OEV will establish:

- norms and standards for decentralized evaluation, to complement those for Monitoring and Review, and provide decision-support to managers on whether and when to plan for and conduct review or evaluation;
- training inputs to existing WFP learning platforms;

⁶ Subject to context, may change to Humanitarian Emergency Level 3 category

⁷ To be determined by context and IASC decisions

- limited technical advice through guidance on evaluation approaches, methods and process, consistent with maintenance of OEV's independence;
 - A post-hoc quality assessment system for completed evaluation reports; and
 - establish Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and reporting systems for the decentralized evaluation function linked with Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plans under WFP's revised programme design requirements.
25. The outlook beyond 2016 will be further developed when capacity and resourcing for decentralized evaluation at field level has been clarified, through the progress review noted in para 22.

Promoting Learning and Use of Evaluation

26. In addition to their accountability function, evaluations also should stimulate learning to inform policy, strategic and operational decision-making. The 2014 peer review of WFP's evaluation function found that although the independence and credibility of WFP's central evaluations are well developed, improvements in evaluation use could be made to enhance the impact of evaluations on WFP's organizational performance. The peer review commended OEV's recent efforts to promote learning within the evaluation process and dissemination of evaluation findings, but proposed this be further prioritised, if necessary with some adjustments to evaluation coverage. While recognising the limitations in the absence of a corporate knowledge management function, the peer review recommended OEV strengthen its inputs to WFP's revision of project design and approval processes to encourage the use of evaluation evidence and improve arrangements for evaluation within projects.
27. Starting in 2015, and as part of the new evaluation strategy, OEV will build on its recent efforts and further develop its approach to learning and use in line with the recommendations, in order to enhance the contribution of evaluation to improving WFP's performance, under three main components:
- i) enhancing learning from evaluation processes and the use of evaluation evidence for programme, policy, planning and implementation, for example by strengthening guidance for stimulating learning in evaluation processes, and engagement with WFP's revised project review process;
 - ii) augmenting the suite of communication products from evaluations, responsive to user needs, such as evaluation syntheses, Top 10 Lessons, evaluation briefs and evaluability assessments; and
 - iii) developing and maintaining information systems that ensure evaluation information is archived and readily available to stakeholders, for example developing a knowledge base of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations and an information system for all WFP evaluations including decentralized evaluations.

International Evaluation System Engagement

28. As the world's largest humanitarian agency, WFP has a responsibility to seek to improve and model accountability and learning. Recent years have seen intensified international debate on the quality and use of evaluation evidence for improved performance in humanitarian action. The forthcoming year of evaluation in 2015 and the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 offer stimulus and opportunity for further advancement and embedding of good practice in international norms and standards as well as in WFP's forthcoming evaluation strategy.

29. Through increased inter-agency collaboration and strategic partnerships over 2015–2017 with United Nations system-wide evaluation networks, UNEG, the IASC’s humanitarian programme guidance evaluation arrangement and other relevant networks, OEV will contribute to the intended overall outcome of increased evaluation coverage of humanitarian action, with appropriate standards, methods and guidance suitable to context. Specifically, in 2015, OEV will:

- continue to participate as a member of the Inter Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group engaging in selected evaluations, lesson-learning under the IASC humanitarian programme cycle of the Transformative Agenda, and strengthening evaluation practice for accountability to affected populations;
- strengthen engagement on humanitarian evaluation in UNEG and other international professional networks⁸ during the 2015 International Year of Evaluation, and the lead up to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit;
- elaborate OEV and WFP’s role in the recently approved policy for system-wide evaluations under the QCPR, in line with the new evaluation policy and strategy;
- build a strategic partnership with the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) under its thematic window on humanitarian evaluation to increase coverage of WFP operations by rigorous impact evaluation; and
- enhance collaboration among evaluation offices of the Rome-based agencies, as envisaged under the “joint statement of intent” agreed in 2014.

⁸ Such as Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), on which OEV serves as a steering group member; impact evaluation networks, such as the Network of Networks for Impact Evaluation; and professional evaluation associations, such as the American and European evaluation associations.