



World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

Executive Board
Annual session
Rome, 21–25 June 2021

Distribution: General

Agenda item 5

Date: 1 June 2021

WFP/EB.A/2021/5-F

Original: English

Policy issues

For information

Executive Board documents are available on WFP's website (<https://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

Update on the elaboration of the WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2026)

Process

1. WFP's next strategic plan, for 2022–2026, will set the future direction of the organization in helping countries meet emergency needs, improve food security and achieve zero hunger. The process for developing the next strategic plan, launched in 2020 following the mid-term review of the current strategic plan, comprises four stages:
 - i) **Context analysis:** What are the future challenges and opportunities for global food security?
 - ii) **Theory of change:** What pathways are necessary to address food insecurity and malnutrition globally?
 - iii) **WFP strategic plan:** How can WFP help countries reach zero hunger?
 - iv) **Results framework:** How can we measure the effectiveness and impact of WFP's interventions?
2. These stages have been informed by informal consultations with the Executive Board through which the Board has guided the process and provided feedback on key deliverables and milestones for each stage. As of June 2021, four informal consultations have taken place in which the context analysis, a root cause analysis, a stakeholder mapping (conducted by the Overseas Development Institute) and a corporate theory of change were presented to the Board.¹ There are three additional informal consultations planned before the new strategic plan is presented for approval at the second regular session of the Board in November 2021.

¹ Independent consultants from the Harvard University Kennedy School and the Oxford Policy Management firm supported WFP in the development of a corporate theory of change. Internally, this involved collaboration across all WFP departments and with regional and country offices.

Focal point:

Ms V. Guarnieri
Assistant Executive Director
Programme and Policy Development Department
tel.: 066513-2200

3. Beyond discussions with Board members and observers and WFP staff, the development of the strategic plan for 2022–2026 also includes consultations with other United Nations agencies, including the Rome-based agencies, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and WFP beneficiaries. The consultations with beneficiaries are a new feature, involving a diverse group of respondents residing in emergency or protracted settings in five sample countries. These transparent and candid consultations within and beyond WFP are enabling constructive, forward-looking dialogue to inform inclusive framing of the strategic plan whereby partners can see clear linkages and opportunities for collaboration.

Board consultations

4. During the informal Board consultations, Member States have asked that WFP use the new strategic plan:
 - To reflect on its contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) beyond SDGs 2 and 17 and clearly show such links in the corporate results framework;
 - To affirm the centrality of people, especially the most vulnerable and those left furthest behind;
 - To break down the silos between saving lives and changing lives and across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, recognizing that the need to save lives in many places will remain a recurrent fixture unless we change lives by building resilience and addressing the root causes of hunger and malnutrition;
 - To clarify and find ways to measure WFP’s contribution to peace in collaboration with others;
 - To prioritize emergency response, given the increase in the number of shocks and global resource constraints;
 - To outline WFP’s trajectory for partnering with other actors, collaboratively and through joint approaches, to achieve better outcomes, including to clarify where WFP is a leading versus supporting actor;
 - To strengthen the integration of cross-cutting issues such as protection and inclusion, accountability to affected people, humanitarian principles, women’s empowerment and gender equality, conflict sensitivity and environmental sustainability;
 - To highlight evidence of and lessons learned from successes and failures, notably from research and evaluations;
 - To demonstrate links between resources and results and the causal links between outputs, outcomes and SDGs;
 - To enable diversified and innovative financing strategies for leveraging funding from non-traditional donors, including from the private sector, which is paramount for reducing the unsustainable gap between assessed needs and the funding available to address those needs.

WFP’s strategic direction

5. While the internal and external consultations process continues, some key themes are emerging for the new strategic plan. They are discussed below.

Integrated programming to respond to the compounding effects of shocks, stressors and vulnerabilities

6. People who have fragile livelihoods and underlying vulnerabilities are increasingly affected by multiple and deeper stressors (e.g. debt, climate change and forced displacement) as well as bigger and more frequent shocks (e.g. natural disasters, armed conflict, pandemics and financial shocks). The next strategic plan will therefore emphasize the need for integrated programming and the layering of activities that meet people's urgent food security, nutrition and essential needs while strengthening their long-term resilience with regard to stressors and shocks. WFP will continue to use its programmes as entry points for cohesive interventions in a manner that complements the work of its partners (e.g., a school health and nutrition package linked with support for smallholder farmers) and, where possible, will seek to concurrently save lives and change lives, often for the same people.

Breaking the silos between support for humanitarian, development and peace outcomes

7. Operationalizing the humanitarian–development–peace nexus consists of addressing and gradually reducing humanitarian needs, progressively implementing and scaling up integrated interventions and pursuing social cohesion and peace outcomes. The triple nexus approach implies a gradual transition from humanitarian crisis responses towards resilience and opens pathways for peaceful coexistence, local economic development, job creation and the empowerment of women. For WFP this will mean reducing the risks, vulnerabilities and needs of affected populations by mitigating severe deterioration in food and nutrition security and protecting long-term shock responsiveness. This will be done through strong partnerships, multi-stakeholder coordination and support for governments while seizing opportunities to consolidate funding streams, programmatic tools and approaches in order to reach joint objectives.

Tailoring WFP's interventions to specific country contexts – there is no *one size fits all*

8. In contributing to countries' efforts to reach zero hunger, WFP will draw from its portfolio of activities to implement operations in a complementary manner with partners that are best fitted to country and community contexts and needs. Therefore, not all of WFP's activities will be implemented everywhere, and at the country level the optimum mode of engagement will be context-specific and evidence-driven. In countries with strong national programmes and systems, for example, WFP may only have a capacitating or technical advisory role, while in others activities may range from delivering direct assistance to supporting communities in the building of assets that improve their livelihoods and resilience and providing services to other humanitarian actors. The optimal mix of activities for a particular context will be defined in country strategic plans in consultation with governments and in alignment with national priorities.

Putting people at the centre of programme design and operational response

9. Recognizing that ultimately the most appropriate and sustainable solutions will come from people expressing their own agency (i.e., what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important), the next strategic plan will strive to put people, especially the most vulnerable, at the centre of programme design and operational response. Realizing a people-centered, need-driven approach includes ensuring that communities and people have decision making power and are supported in a way that enables them to participate in and sustain change. WFP will help establish appropriate approaches, processes and mechanisms through which affected populations can express their views, preferences and priorities and make informed decisions. In addition, WFP will prioritize safety and dignity, avoid doing harm and help to facilitate people's access to services and assistance in proportion to their needs and without erecting any barriers.

Working with and through national programmes and systems

10. National governments are primarily responsible for achieving the SDGs, with WFP positioned to help fill gaps in national response and capacity – whether in terms of helping to save lives in emergencies or working towards achieving zero hunger and the other SDGs. Faced with growing needs, WFP will prioritize working with and through national programmes and systems when possible, since the stronger and the more resilient they are the more cost-efficient, effective and sustainable responses and outcomes will be. This includes improving the coverage, adequacy, comprehensiveness and quality of national programmes as well as enhancing the organizational efficiency, effectiveness and viability of country systems towards achieving zero hunger. Working through national authorities is likely to have a more sustainable and greater impact and return on investment than direct interventions by WFP. Government approval is also necessary for obtaining financing, particularly from international financial institutions.

Expanding WFP's service provision to governments and partners

11. Increasingly complex operational settings and unprecedented needs risk jeopardizing humanitarian and development outcomes; to achieve and safeguard those outcomes WFP will continue to enhance and broaden its capacity to serve as a partner of choice by supporting others in their efforts to deliver on their mandates. The next strategic plan will magnify WFP's service provision role by providing for it to deliver augmented services, including a new generation of on-demand services, and advisory solutions to the humanitarian and development community. Such service provision will range from supply chain systems, including food procurement on behalf of governments and transport and logistic services to humanitarian organizations, to providing common administrative and field support services while also offering digital service delivery solutions, data and analytics as public goods through open platforms.

Leveraging partnerships and complementarities with other actors

12. Recognizing that its interventions cannot by themselves generate all expected outcomes, WFP will seek mutually reinforcing partnerships based on programmatic and operational complementarities with other humanitarian and development actors at the local, national, regional and global levels, including actors from the private and public sectors. The benefits of partnerships range from increased effectiveness and relevance of programmes to cost efficiency achieved by avoiding the duplication of activities and services and the pooling of resources and capabilities. WFP's engagement with partners will focus on enhancing capacity to identify needs and generate immediate change, as well as long-term sustainability. Taking a strategic approach to partnerships means identifying where WFP has a lead versus a supportive role, leveraging complementarities and collaboration to the greatest extent possible within the boundaries of respective mandates.

Making funding more diversified, flexible and multi-year

13. In response to rising hunger and the rising number of crises around the world, and despite substantial increases in financing in recent years, global funding requirements have unfortunately increased faster than donor contributions. The next strategic plan will therefore include the pursuit of non-traditional funding sources (international financial institutions, foundations, the private sector, etc.) by seeking to demonstrate compelling value propositions to those entities. In addition, flexible multi-year funding is necessary for WFP to better respond to rapidly changing contexts and meet immediate food security, nutrition and essential needs while at the same time contributing to more sustainable outcomes for people and their communities.