



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

Executive Board
Second Regular Session
Rome, 18–21 November 2024

Distribution: General
Date: 11 February 2025
Original: English

Agenda item 13
WFP/EB.2/2024/13/DRAFT
Summary of the work of the 2024 second regular session of the Executive Board

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

Draft summary of the work of the 2024 second regular session of the Executive Board

Table of contents

Current and future strategic issues	4
Appointment of the Rapporteur	4
2024/EB.2/1 Opening remarks by the Executive Director, including an overview of current and future opportunities and challenges for WFP	4
Operational matters	6
Oral global overview on humanitarian needs and operational concerns and priorities	6
Oral update on the global assurance project	8
Regional overviews	9
Southern Africa portfolio	9
Eastern Africa portfolio	10
Asia and the Pacific portfolio	11
Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio	12
Western Africa portfolio	13
Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio	15
Resource, financial and budgetary matters	16
2024/EB.2/2 WFP management plan (2025–2027)	16
2024/EB.2/3 Report of the External Auditor on findings from field audits and WFP management response	17
Other business	18
2024/EB.2/4 Second interim report of the Executive Board working group on the governance review	18

Organizational and procedural matters	18
2024/EB.2/5 Biennial programme of work of the Executive Board (2025–2026)	18
Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio	19
2024/EB.2/6 Ukraine interim country strategic plan (2025–2027).....	19
Policy issues	20
2024/EB.2/7 Resilience policy update	20
2024/EB.2/8 Climate change policy update	21
2024/EB.2/9 School meals policy update	22
Update on the implementation of WFP’s cash policy	23
2024/EB.2/10 WFP revised corporate results framework (2022–2025).....	23
Evaluation reports	24
2024/EB.2/11 Summary evaluation report on the mid-term evaluation of the WFP strategic plan (2022–2025) and management response.....	24
2024/EB.2/12 Synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP’s cooperating partners from centralized and decentralized evaluations and management response	25
Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio	26
2024/EB.2/13 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Cuba (2021–2024) and management response.....	26
2024/EB.2/14 Colombia country strategic plan (2025–2028), including evaluation results and recommendations from summary evaluation report in item 6 c) 1).....	27
Evaluation reports (continued)	28
2024/EB.2/15 Summary report on the evaluation of WFP’s emergency response to the prolonged crisis in the Sahel and other countries of Central Africa (2018–2023) and management response	28
Western Africa portfolio	29
2024/EB.2/16 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Mali (2020–2024) and management response	29
2024/EB.2/17 Senegal country strategic plan (2025–2029).....	29
Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio	30
2024/EB.2/18 Summary report on the evaluation of the interim country strategic plans for the Syrian Arab Republic (2018–2025) and management response.....	30
Eastern Africa portfolio	31
2024/EB.2/19 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Rwanda (2019–2023) and management response	31
Southern Africa portfolio	32
2024/EB.2/20 Namibia country strategic plan (2025–2029).....	32
Administrative and managerial matters (continued)	33
2024/EB.2/21 Appointment of one member to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee	33

Summary of the work of the Executive Board	33
2024/EB.2/22 Summary of the work of the 2024 annual session of the Executive Board	33
Verification of adopted decisions and recommendations.....	33
Closing remarks by the Executive Director	33
Acronyms	35

Current and future strategic issues

Appointment of the Rapporteur

1. The Board was invited to approve the appointment of Mr Vito Su, Senior Food Security Advisor from the Bureau of International Organization Affairs of the United States Department of State, as Rapporteur for the session. The proposed appointment was duly approved.

2024/EB.2/1 **Opening remarks by the Executive Director, including an overview of current and future opportunities and challenges for WFP**

2. Welcoming Board members to the session, the Executive Director reported on events and developments affecting WFP since the 2024 annual session.
3. With challenges and risks growing around the world, the planning and implementation of emergency responses was becoming increasingly difficult – including through the denial of humanitarian access – and often dangerous. WFP's leadership were ensuring that the duty of care to WFP's personnel was incorporated into all corporate policies and decision-making processes, and the Executive Director appealed for Board members' help in funding that endeavour, reminding them that the three priorities she set out at the start of her tenure were expanding and diversifying WFP's funding base, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, and scaling up partnerships and innovation.
4. The ongoing review of WFP's internal structure had identified the need to consolidate, clarify and streamline the services provided to country offices by regional bureaux and central headquarters. In response, an integrated "one global headquarters" model was being developed in which the regional bureaux and central headquarters were consolidated into a single entity while remaining in their current locations around the world. Services would be provided to country offices through a network of global hubs; hubs for shipping and vendor management were already established, and those for technology support services, supply chain management, and the finance function were expected to follow. The delegated powers and authorities, respective roles and responsibilities and lines of accountability of regional bureaux and central headquarters were being clarified. The Executive Director would update the Board on the efficiency gains, results and impact of the internal reorganization at an informal briefing in early 2025.
5. The contribution forecast for 2024 was USD 10 billion, but fundraising in 2025 would be challenging. WFP was exploring innovative financing opportunities, including the use of debt swap arrangements to fund sustainable development and resilience-building programmes. The Executive Director urged donor governments to explore the use of debt swaps and other forms of innovative financing.
6. The Executive Director would continue to serve as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Champion on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and harassment throughout 2025 and had appointed a director-level expert in protection issues to lead the implementation of WFP's comprehensive action plan for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.
7. Turning to WFP's most challenging emergency operations in conflict zones, the Executive Director reported that famine had been declared in the Darfur region of the Sudan, where constraints imposed by parties to the conflict were hampering WFP's ability to deliver life-saving assistance. In the Middle East, sound emergency preparedness had enabled WFP to rapidly scale up its operations in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic following the outbreak of conflict. A famine alert had been issued for northern Gaza, while across the territory, access and security restrictions and the breakdown of law and order made humanitarian operations nearly impossible and the number of people reached by WFP had fallen substantially over the previous two months.

8. Funding for these and other operations was desperately needed and the Executive Director urged governments to work together to find political solutions to the conflicts driving hunger around the world and to ensure humanitarian access and the safety of humanitarian staff in all emergency settings. She thanked Board members for their guidance and collaboration.
9. Board members applauded the Executive Director, management and the staff of WFP for their tireless efforts to save lives and change lives around the world, often in extremely challenging conditions. Echoing the Executive Director's concerns about the increasing numbers of hunger hotspots and complex humanitarian crises worldwide, Board members commended WFP's agility in adapting its operations to changing circumstances and welcomed its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of its food assistance by following a people-centred approach, strengthening its partnerships, and combining emergency response with work on building resilience and addressing the root causes of food insecurity.
10. Encouraging WFP to maintain these efforts, Board members emphasized the importance of work in cross-cutting areas under high-quality programmes that promoted gender equality, the inclusion of marginalized groups, the protection of beneficiaries and humanitarian workers, and improved nutrition. They also highlighted the need to clarify WFP's comparative advantages, particularly in the area of resilience building, so as to maximize the benefits of its partnerships; and the need to assess and document the results of WFP's policies and programmes, including in terms of reduced humanitarian needs.
11. Board members viewed WFP's role in resilience building as critical to its efforts to combat hunger and food insecurity and urged WFP to seize all opportunities to build resilience in the geographical areas where it had a long-established presence and could leverage its partnerships, including in climate change mitigation. They encouraged WFP to work with local communities so as to benefit from their local knowledge and experience and identify local needs. Members suggested that WFP's focus on innovation, its work on strengthening the safety and capacity of its staff, its activities at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, and its private sector strategy and policies on resilience and localization would all help to reinforce its role in resilience building. Several Board members highlighted the value of school meal programmes, particularly home-grown school feeding initiatives, both in emergency settings and as a tool for building resilience through partnerships with local actors, the creation of job opportunities and the enhancement of local production. WFP played a critical role in promoting and providing school meal programmes and supporting governments in adopting their own sustainable programmes, and Board members encouraged the international community to support those efforts.
12. Welcoming WFP's recognition of the need to move from transactional to more strategic engagement with its partners, Board members urged the organization to focus on innovative partnerships through which it could secure resources and improve the implementation of its programmes; build the capacity of local governments, communities and organizations to manage food security and nutrition programmes; and include equitable partnerships with local organizations, including affected people, as part of its localization policy.
13. Funding remained a concern, and Board members reiterated their calls for strategic resource mobilization focused on obtaining multi-year and flexible funding; the expansion and diversification of the donor base through increased collaboration with the private sector, foundations, individual donors and international financial institutions; and the use of innovative financing mechanisms. WFP's reliance on its largest donors represented a risk, and one Board member called on other donors to increase their contributions and mitigate this risk. Another member urged WFP to encourage donors by developing compelling messages about the tangible results and impact of contributions.

14. Board members welcomed WFP's internal restructuring and the initiative's strong emphasis on serving the needs of country offices from an integrated global headquarters. They appreciated the continuing efforts to strengthen WFP's internal risk management and accountability processes through the global assurance project. Several Board members emphasized the importance of transparent reporting on the implementation of the project in helping to set reasonable expectations. The project also highlighted the need to ensure that WFP's oversight functions were adequately resourced and staffed.
15. Underlining the importance of risk assessment and management for all of WFP's work, Board members urged management to strengthen the capacity and awareness of staff and partners in that regard and to engage in transparent dialogue with donors and other stakeholders about the risks associated with operating in difficult settings, with a view to building a common risk appetite and developing risk-sharing mechanisms.
16. Expressing dismay at the erosion of respect for international humanitarian law in many conflict settings, Board members asserted that hunger should never be used as a weapon of war; humanitarian workers and civilians should never be the targets of warring parties; and safe and unhindered access for humanitarian actors and resources should be guaranteed. Commending WFP's efforts to maintain humanitarian corridors in Gaza and other crisis zones, Board members called on Member States and other stakeholders to engage in advocacy and diplomacy aimed at achieving political solutions to conflict, ensuring respect for international humanitarian law, safeguarding humanitarian workers, and allowing consistent, unhindered access for the delivery of critical assistance.
17. Other topics mentioned by one or more Board members included the need to increase international attention and support for responses to crises in Haiti, the Sahel, the Sudan and countries affected by El Niño and climate change. One member mentioned the negative effects of the international economic sanctions imposed on some countries, including their impact on WFP's ability to deliver assistance.
18. Many Board members provided details of the financial and other support their countries were providing to WFP's operations, and the other humanitarian and development initiatives that their governments were leading or contributing to in their own and other countries, including through South-South and triangular cooperation arrangements.
19. Thanking Board members for a very constructive discussion and their valuable guidance, the Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer looked forward to further discussions during the session.

Operational matters

Oral global overview on humanitarian needs and operational concerns and priorities

20. The Deputy Executive Director reported a continued rise in the number of people facing acute food insecurity, driven by conflict and extreme weather events. The humanitarian space and operating environment were constantly under threat, with humanitarian personnel under attack and international humanitarian law repeatedly violated, challenging WFP's ability to reach vulnerable people safely. WFP was doing everything it could to respond, with particular focus on the Sudan, the State of Palestine, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Ukraine and Haiti. At the same time, it continued to complement its humanitarian work with strong resilience and long-term efforts, aiming to prepare communities and countries for shocks before they happened and reduce the need for assistance in the long run.
21. Beyond conflict and insecurity, other global and regional crises continued to affect operations. The MPOX outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring countries had worsened in recent months. Unprecedented flooding was increasing food

insecurity in dozens of already vulnerable countries including Bangladesh, Chad, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Myanmar, South Sudan and Yemen, as well as in many parts of Western Africa. Across the globe, more frequent and severe climate extremes were damaging livelihoods and food systems while also spurring displacement, contributing to conflict and worsening food insecurity. Work on anticipating and responding to climate impacts was therefore a top priority for WFP; currently, it was preparing for the impact of La Niña-induced flooding and responding to hurricanes in the Caribbean and typhoons in Asia.

22. Other development initiatives supporting food systems and resilience included support for national social protection systems, which was key to breaking the vicious poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition cycle, as well as being a core component of WFP's mandate to change lives and a critical part of its efforts to improve its response and reduce humanitarian needs. Within that, school meals programmes were critical for WFP's work, supporting health, nutrition and education and producing far-reaching benefits for entire communities and food systems; WFP currently collaborated with 103 governments within the School Meals Coalition.
23. The outlook for the next six months was concerning. Based on internal and external analyses, including the joint WFP-FAO Hunger Hotspots report, a significant deterioration of acute food insecurity was expected, and urgent humanitarian action would be needed in 16 hunger hotspots covering 22 countries, with the Sudan, the State of Palestine, South Sudan, Haiti and Mali being of highest concern due to risk of famine as well as threats to humanitarian action. Political solutions were urgently needed, particularly solutions to conflict, along with diplomatic efforts to improve humanitarian access and protect civilians, investment in early warning and anticipatory action, and flexible and timely humanitarian funding.
24. Board members expressed deep appreciation for WFP's life-saving and life-changing work and thanked WFP field staff for their dedication and persistence under increasingly challenging circumstances. They echoed management's concern over the continued deterioration of the global hunger situation, acknowledged conflict as a primary cause and pledged to strengthen humanitarian diplomacy aimed at ending fighting and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law. The importance of transparency and collaborative partnerships between WFP and the Board was highlighted, with one member encouraging WFP to provide an overarching view of critical risks going forward to enhance the Board's role as a useful partner. The potential exclusion of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) from Gaza was also flagged by some as a grave concern.
25. One member said that the humanitarian system needed transformation to make it more effective, efficient and sustainable and encouraged WFP to push harder for a shift from reactive to proactive and anticipatory action and to focus all its core operational functions on delivering in emergencies.
26. Several members noted that addressing the funding shortage was a collective responsibility and urged all States to do their part, while at the same time encouraging WFP to continue diversifying its donor base, with emphasis on flexible and predictable funding. WFP was also encouraged to pursue its prioritization efforts and increase the efficiency of its assistance, including a strong focus on cash assistance. Several members urged WFP to strengthen and diversify its partnerships, including within the humanitarian system and with newer local partners and national actors, as a means of increasing its capacity and reach. Several also emphasized the need for humanitarian assistance to be safe, protective, inclusive and participatory; to that end, one member encouraged investments across all levels of the organization and development of institutional structures to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, protection from gender-based violence and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

27. Management thanked members for their supportive comments and reiterated that WFP needed both financial and political support to navigate the increasingly complex humanitarian environment.

Oral update on the global assurance project

28. Introducing the update, the Executive Director reported that the global assurance project was making good progress in rolling out enhanced assurance and control measures, with a focus on WFP's 31 highest-risk operations. Implementation in the higher-risk operations and rollout of new systems would continue into 2025, along with work on other aspects of the project, such as the exploration of a track-and-trace system. WFP would also identify cost-effective solutions to support implementation in smaller country operations to ensure that all country offices met the global assurance standards from 2026 onwards.
29. Management noted that on average, operations were reporting 67 percent completion of their augmented assurance plans, including meeting 53 percent of their benchmarks for targeting, 62 percent for identity management, 74 percent for monitoring, 70 percent for community feedback mechanisms, 76 percent for cooperating partner management and 72 percent for commodity management. Awareness of assurance had increased significantly, with most operations having formed cross-functional teams to oversee implementation of their plans.
30. WFP still needed to explore in greater depth how to collaborate with governments and invest in partnerships to uphold standards like operational independence. To support country offices, new guidance had been issued on working with governments as implementing partners, and additional guidance on operationalizing humanitarian principles was planned for early 2025.
31. WFP was working with cooperating partners to keep assurance frameworks flexible enough to support local capacity and accountability. Guidelines were also being developed to help country offices choose cost-effective assurance options based on risk.
32. High-risk operations were expected to meet the benchmarks and criteria for 80 percent of unconditional resource transfers by the end of February 2025. Enhanced corporate systems were being rolled out, with priority given to country offices facing highest risk; however, in some cases, systems would not be fully in place until later in 2025. For in-kind distributions, flexible identity management solutions were being used to meet benchmarks and deliver emergency assistance while long-term solutions were developed.
33. From February 2025 onwards, the project would be mainstreamed with the regional bureaux and the Risk Management Division responsible for monitoring compliance with the benchmarks and the global assurance standards.
34. Board members thanked management for providing regular updates and encouraged continued transparent communication with the Board. They welcomed the progress made but noted with concern that some country offices managing high risk operations would not be able to fully implement their plans within the set timeframe. Some members stressed the need to ensure that country offices unable to attain the benchmarks escalated the issues appropriately and received the necessary additional support.
35. Members offered a number of suggestions, including that WFP intensify its work in targeting and identity management; ensure a structured approach to collecting feedback from beneficiaries; assist its humanitarian partners in incorporating the lessons learned from the project into their own efforts; develop more positive communication on avoided risks, possibly through storytelling; ensure that country offices included elements of risk-sharing and their assurance plan-related activities in their updates to donors; and consider updating its policy on working through partner governments. Some members proposed that WFP

develop indicators to monitor whether the implemented actions had actually mitigated risks to an acceptable level.

36. Additional information was sought in several areas, including mainstreaming of the global assurance project; challenges in targeting; and provision and maintenance of assurance funding for country offices.
37. Management explained that as part of the risk management cycle, the implementation of assurance plans was monitored at the country level, and country offices would escalate risks if conditions for implementation were not met, or they were unable to adhere to the standards and required support. The Risk Management Division would periodically update the Executive Board and donors on such cases. In terms of challenges to timely project implementation, access and security were key concerns, particularly in the case of targeting. It was also notable that the 31 country office implementation plans were currently 68 percent funded, although additional funding had been made available for offices with severe resourcing issues. Long-term affordability would be essential, for which flexible, cost-effective tools were key, hence the proposed guidelines for country offices on how to identify cost-effective solutions.

Regional overviews

Southern Africa portfolio

38. The Regional Director reported that Southern Africa was reeling from one of the worst droughts in recent memory. In Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, there were 26 million acutely food-insecure people, with hunger levels expected to peak in January 2025, at the height of the lean season. WFP was providing emergency in-kind and cash-based transfers, targeted supplementary feeding, emergency school feeding, early recovery and livelihood restoration and on-demand logistics services to complement national government responses. It had saved lives and preserved livelihoods through a cost-effective forward-looking approach but had only reached a fraction of the people in need. Governments recognized the value of anticipatory approaches, had committed to embedding them in their national disaster plans and had asked WFP to help communities prepare for future disasters. WFP was also working with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on timely livelihood support, particularly for smallholder farmers, with the ultimate aim of reducing humanitarian food assistance needs.
39. Conflict was also spawning humanitarian crises, most notably in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique. Those two countries, along with Madagascar and Zimbabwe, were being prioritized under the global assurance project. Political instability and social unrest in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa had also affected the region, which now hosted more than 1 million refugees and asylum-seekers, half of whom were being assisted by WFP. However, WFP's ability to provide full support was constrained by funding limitations, leading to ration cuts in some countries.
40. Overall, WFP had succeeded in reaching 11.3 million people with food and cash-based transfers, fulfilling 65 percent of its 2024 commitment. With La Niña just around the corner, investments were urgently needed to scale up anticipatory action and disaster preparedness. WFP needed USD 986 million to implement its activities in the region through March 2025, including USD 327 million to support the 7.1 million people affected by drought.
41. Board members welcomed the new Regional Director and pledged to work with him in furthering WFP's essential work. They thanked him for the update on resilience programming and regional-level work on the global assurance project but registered concern over the high level of food insecurity and the potential impact of La Niña. One member also noted the importance of addressing water scarcity as a critical issue alongside food insecurity.

42. One member, expressing concern regarding government restrictions on cash-based assistance in response to the El Niño-induced drought, urged WFP to advocate on behalf of all humanitarian partners for rapid, effective and efficient emergency assistance, including the use of cash where appropriate, and stressed that limitations on the operational independence of humanitarian partners negatively affected donors' ability to fund the drought response. Another member suggested that an evaluation of WFP's response to the drought and the declaration of a state of emergency in several countries be carried out and requested for more information on steps being taken to make resources and technical support available in the region given competing needs in Africa.
43. Noting with concern the report of increased sexual and gender-based violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and highlighting the significant role WFP could play in that regard, one member asked about steps being taking to protect the most vulnerable in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
44. In response to comments, the Regional Director highlighted the centrality of strategic partnerships and coordination in a collective, unified and effective response. In terms of resourcing, after making a concerted effort to engage other actors, WFP had benefited from an increase in funding from international financial institutions in 2024 and overall had secured funding from 35 different sources, including six governments within the region.
45. With respect to gender-based violence, WFP was an active player in the gender-based violence working group but strengthened coordination and host government engagement were needed for greater impact. The various humanitarian agency regional directors also planned to undertake joint missions to make their voices heard on the subject. On matters of assurance and excellence, WFP had succeeded in conveying the message that development and resilience-building approaches should be government-led. Finally, regarding collaboration, the Regional Director pointed out the significant role played by the Southern African Development Community in promoting engagement in the region.

Eastern Africa portfolio

46. In his presentation, the Regional Director described the impact of conflict, climate and socioeconomic shocks on the Eastern Africa region, where a number of public health emergencies had left over 60 million people unable to put sufficient food on their table. Displacement was increasing and currently stood at 26.5 million people, largely owing to the crisis in the Sudan, which was also causing people to flee to countries in and outside the region.
47. Following decades of trust-building, WFP was perceived as the implementation partner of choice by governments in the region. In Somalia, for example, the Government had contributed over USD 0.5 billion to social protection through WFP over the last few years. On average, Eastern Africa represented a quarter of WFP's funding, although even that remained insufficient to meet the growing needs.
48. The Sudan crisis, of prime concern, had rendered half the population food-insecure and displaced 14 million people. WFP faced significant access challenges but had assisted 7 million people, increased cash transfers tenfold to help spur the economy and made encouraging progress on a wheat production project in 2024. WFP was facing a shortfall of almost USD 700 million funding shortfall for the Sudan regional response to meet needs across the Sudan and neighbouring countries for the next six months.
49. Insecurity was also affecting Ethiopia, and La Niña was again threatening food security in both Ethiopia and Somalia. WFP was taking anticipatory action, in conjunction with the governments and other local actors, but funding was inadequate. Funding shortages were also affecting resilience work in the region owing to prioritization.

50. Board members welcomed the new Regional Director and thanked him for the comprehensive overview. They praised WFP's work in the region, particularly its resilience work, highlighting the importance of working with partners to effect sustainable change. One member applauded WFP's efforts to incorporate key lessons from evaluations into regional programming, notably on gender, and encouraged it to continue to do so.
51. All those who spoke expressed alarm over the conflict in the Sudan and its spillover effects on surrounding countries. They acknowledged the very difficult circumstances for humanitarian workers and commended WFP for its ambitious scale-up to better reach those in need. WFP was encouraged to continue pursuing innovative mechanisms and engaging non-traditional partners, including local partners, in delivering assistance. It was also urged to explore all cross-border and crossline options available to gain humanitarian access to civilians.
52. Members sought more details on border access developments and the investigation into allegations of fraud in the Sudan operation, as well as on further investigation into the food diversions in Ethiopia and accountability of those involved.
53. The Regional Director assured the Board that WFP was keen to pursue its resilience work in the region. Meanwhile it was doing all it could to mitigate the Sudanese crisis. Convoys had been authorized and were en route to all locations at risk of famine; they were being tracked but had not yet reached their destinations. Given the shortage of time, he proposed to respond to other queries bilaterally.

Asia and the Pacific portfolio

54. The Regional Director opened his presentation noting that 26 December 2024 would mark 20 years since the Indian Ocean tsunami. Since the disaster, the governments of the affected countries had built the capacity to be first responders to natural disasters in their countries and had tackled some of the causes of food insecurity. Throughout the region challenges remained, however, owing to climate, conflict and economic shocks, and WFP continued to work with governments providing direct food assistance and technical support.
55. In Myanmar, despite rising insecurity, displacement and operational and political constraints, WFP had reached almost 1.7 million people with food and cash. In Bangladesh, where the conflict in Myanmar had triggered a new influx of refugees into Cox's Bazar, WFP was assessing the needs of the new arrivals and would respond. In response to severe flooding in Bangladesh WFP had implemented its largest anticipatory action programme, reaching 478,000 people with cash transfers. Through operations in Afghanistan, which had attracted only 35 percent of required resources, WFP was planning to provide emergency support for 6 million people. The new law on the propagation of virtue and prevention of vice was placing further restrictions on women, but WFP continued to support the safe deployment of female staff. Throughout the region, WFP was taking steps in its programming to improve gender inclusion and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.
56. Governments in the region were increasingly turning to WFP for policy and operational support and in some cases were providing financial support to be both a technical and operational WFP partner, as in Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines.
57. Members of the Board welcomed the new Regional Director, assuring him of their support, and thanked his predecessor for his work. They expressed deep concern about the humanitarian situation in the region, particularly in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar, and the shrinking humanitarian space in Afghanistan. Two members welcomed the focus on women and girls in Afghanistan, with one urging WFP to continue strengthening the engagement of women in its teams and to separate nutrition prevention support from general food distribution, taking care to ensure that people at risk of moderate acute malnutrition received assistance.

58. One member called on the international donor community to pursue sustainable solutions to the acute food insecurity in Myanmar, while another underscored the need for political solutions to allow refugees to return to the country. Appreciation was voiced for the restoration of WFP cash assistance for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and WFP's continued advocacy regarding the registration of new arrivals there. More information was sought on opportunities for delivering assistance through local actors and accountability to affected people, including feedback mechanisms.
59. Members thanked WFP staff for their courageous work in the field. One member encouraged WFP to partner with other United Nations entities to advocate safe and unimpeded humanitarian access. Another encouraged further work on risk management and continued innovation and diversification of WFP operations for better access to people in need.
60. WFP's strong collaboration with governments and regional institutions, particularly in the Philippines and the Pacific, was praised. One member said that his country's partnership with WFP included a host of initiatives, such as optimization of the public distribution system, electronic ration cards and rice fortification, that could be adopted in other countries. WFP was encouraged to strengthen early warning systems, early anticipatory action, climate resilience interventions, and pipeline management and forecasting. The importance of broadening the donor base including through the recruitment of non traditional donors was highlighted.
61. Responding to Board members' comments and questions, the Regional Director explained that in light of widespread changes in territorial control in Myanmar, WFP was rethinking how it reached vulnerable populations, keeping Board members informed of risks and risk mitigation; advocacy also remained a key focus, including through the United Nations Special Envoy and regional bodies. In Afghanistan, negotiations with the local authorities had ensured that women continued to work on WFP programmes, particularly in nutrition, school meals and resilience; women were also present on third party monitoring teams and visits by cooperating partner staff. Women and girls continued to receive general food assistance, but WFP remained extremely vigilant to detect changes in that regard. Technical solutions were being rolled out to better monitor the situation and facilitate informed decision-making.

Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio

62. The Regional Director described the grave impact of conflict across the Middle East, where millions of people were displaced and food insecurity was widespread, exacerbated by economic instability and, in Lebanon, the destruction, contamination and abandonment of farmland. Lack of access was a major challenge for WFP. Nevertheless, its emergency preparedness was effective, enabling it to act swiftly, and it stood ready to do more should circumstances permit.
63. In Gaza, food systems had collapsed, markets were empty and people were forced to rely on aid for survival. The Famine Review Committee had issued a famine alert across Gaza, but operational constraints including lack of access and the breakdown of law and order had brought relief operations almost to a standstill. Despite this, WFP was ready to scale up operations, with 100,000 mt of food ready to be delivered and road repairs close to completion. WFP was deeply concerned about recent developments related to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and their implications for the provision of essential services in the territory.
64. In Lebanon, where 1.5 million people were displaced, markets were suffering. Within two days of an escalation in conflict on 23 September 2024, WFP had reached 46,000 people and had since provided cash and food assistance to 490,000 people, thanks to its preparedness efforts. Meanwhile, in the Syrian Arab Republic, 13 million people were food insecure, and

funding was no longer forthcoming; moreover, the arrival of hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the conflict in Lebanon was placing additional pressure on already vulnerable communities. In Yemen, all 12 governorates in the north were suffering from hunger at levels that were the highest ever recorded. WFP had paused assistance until the necessary controls were in place, including monitoring, beneficiary verification, and beneficiary feedback and complaints management. WFP had prioritized assistance to 34 of the 110 most food-insecure districts, so far reaching 1.4 million out of the 2.6 million target. WFP's priorities in Ukraine remained to assist people near the frontlines, strengthen local capacities and support demining.

65. Examples of WFP's assurance efforts included enhanced identity management in the Syrian Arab Republic, a regional aid hotline in the State of Palestine and Egypt, and the use of blockchain technology in Ukraine.
66. Staff safety was a major concern in the region, and the Regional Director recalled, with relief, the recent release of a staff member who had been detained in Yemen.
67. Board members commended WFP's work in the region, particularly in Lebanon, the State of Palestine and Yemen, and expressed their gratitude to WFP staff for their tireless efforts in dangerous and complex circumstances. One member mentioned the importance of ensuring not only their physical security but also their mental health.
68. Many members called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza to alleviate the humanitarian crisis and allow for the safe and rapid delivery of food aid. Appreciation was voiced for WFP's programme redesign and retargeting efforts to address the food needs of the most vulnerable people in Egypt, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and its scaling up of the response in Ukraine. One member saw a need for WFP to cooperate closely with other humanitarian actors in conducting needs assessments in Ukraine and with regard to food assistance modalities.
69. In Lebanon, WFP was urged to scale up food aid for displaced Lebanese citizens and refugees, ensuring it reached not only people in shelters but also those staying with relatives or in informal housing; to purchase the food locally; to support local farmers and businesses; and to strengthen educational support.
70. Several members praised WFP for upholding the humanitarian principles. Two members, while recognizing the importance of food assistance in emergencies, stressed that in protracted crises WFP should adapt its approach to more cost-effective and durable interventions, such as cash transfers, with one encouraging the use of cash assistance as an entry point for the prevention of gender-based violence.
71. One member called for greater mobilization of resources to meet urgent needs and overcome the significant funding shortfall in the region. More information was requested on the main challenges during the scale-up in Lebanon and whether WFP had been able to draw on previous lessons learned.
72. Thanking Board members for their comments and support, the Regional Director said that WFP had learned from previous scaling-up efforts that funding, access and preparedness were essential. A meeting of the region's country teams would take place the following week to enhance preparedness.

Western Africa portfolio

73. The Regional Director warned that the food and nutrition security crisis in Western Africa, with 55 million food-insecure people, was expected to worsen in 2025, due to the spread of conflict and more frequent climate shocks. The climate crisis was causing widespread flooding and dry spells, devastating over 6 million people in 2024, while climate adaptation funding remained minimal at USD 2 per person annually.

74. Despite challenges, particularly conflict and access issues, WFP was prioritizing saving lives and had assisted 6 million people during the 2024 lean season. To meet the highest standards of assurance and accountability, WFP offices with high-risk operations had made progress in digitalizing their emergency interventions, improving monitoring and evaluating their supply chain and commodity management operations as well as assessing their cooperating partners' capacity to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.
75. The Regional Director appealed for a change in the collective response to break the cycle of acute and chronic food insecurity and move beyond aid, which required further investments in preparedness and resilience building through transformative and proven solutions and enhanced alignment among stakeholders.
76. As the newly elected chair of the Cadre Harmonisé technical committee, WFP was committed to continuing to work with governments and partners to strengthen national systems for anticipating and mitigating the impact of crises, including through anticipatory action, the strengthening of national food security assessments and early warning systems, and the use of new insurance products.
77. To combat land degradation, WFP partnered with governments in the region, international financial institutions and donors to restore soils, replenish water supplies, and provide communities with infrastructure and tools to achieve self-reliance. Programmes enhancing local food systems aimed at tackling food loss, supporting smallholder farmers, addressing transport and storage issues, and providing access to nutritious food, and job opportunities, especially for young people. WFP was also supporting national social protection systems and school meal programmes by linking agricultural produce to healthy meals for children.
78. The Regional Director thanked Board members for their continued support and outlined WFP's objective to assist 23 million people in Western Africa in 2025. WFP was facing a six-month funding gap of USD 780 million, however, and urgent humanitarian action and dialogue to identify solutions were greatly needed in conflict-affected settings.
79. Board members applauded WFP's integrated response in the region, noting the value of combining emergency response with anticipatory action, resilience building and the strengthening of national social protection systems. Board members welcomed WFP's focus on government priorities, including national home-grown school meal programmes, improved nutrition, strengthened supply chain management, innovative environmental management, and smallholder farmers' access to finance. They encouraged WFP's efforts to improve food systems, promoting native crops, preventing food losses and strengthening governments' capacity to collect good-quality data. They also urged WFP to follow a localized approach, leveraging local and regional partners' expertise when designing and implementing programmes; and to continue ensuring adherence to humanitarian principles and the protection of humanitarian actors.
80. Welcoming the work on the global assurance project, Board members emphasized the importance of managing and mitigating risks and investigating and reporting losses. Several Board members recognized that compromises were required when seeking to assist vulnerable people in complex situations, including those involving conflict or governance issues. They echoed the Regional Director's call for greater international support for emergency responses, particularly in the Sahel, Burkina Faso and Cameroon.
81. The Regional Director thanked Board members for their support and took note of the points raised. Responding to a comment from one member, she said that the Regional Bureau's standard operating procedure for the use of military escorts was serving as a model for the whole organization.

Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio

82. The Regional Director provided an update on the situation in Haiti, where violence caused by armed gangs had led to increasing instability, a 42 percent increase in the number of acutely food-insecure people, and the displacement of 700,000 people, while the return of 48,000 deportees from other countries since October was overburdening assistance systems and reintegration initiatives. Since the start of 2024, WFP had assisted 1.6 million people thanks to its logistics capacity and access to areas controlled by armed groups.
83. Conflict was also leading to displacement and increased food insecurity for 13 million people in Colombia. Meanwhile, in all countries in the region, the effects of climate change were worsening, with increasingly intense and frequent wildfires, hurricanes, floods and drought contributing to rising migration. WFP was providing food assistance in the aftermath of climate-related emergencies and working with governments, partners and local communities, including those of Indigenous and Afro-descendent Peoples, to strengthen national capacity to prepare for climate-related events and build resilience.
84. WFP was working with governments of the region on strengthening supply chains and national social programmes by centralizing information systems, pre-positioning stocks, carrying out gap analysis and developing emergency customs processes. The Regional Director appealed for advance financing to fund those and other anticipatory actions, including the timely procurement of food to reduce costs.
85. School meal programmes were a major part of WFP's work in the region, with cooperatives of smallholder farmers providing nutritious local food for school meals. Growing engagement in the School Meals Coalition and through the Regional Forum on School Feeding held in Mexico City was facilitating exchanges of experience and capacity among countries. In Latin America and the Caribbean, over 40 million people were in acute food insecurity and WFP had reached 7.2 million directly through its operations and millions more indirectly through country capacity strengthening.
86. Investments in strategic workforce planning included training for WFP staff and partners, medical and mental health initiatives, exchanges of personnel among country offices, and campaigns on diversity, equity and integration for WFP staff. Country offices continued to implement the global assurance project, with Colombia, Guatemala and Haiti having achieved 76 percent of their targets for the third trimester.
87. Board members thanked the Regional Director and WFP staff for their work in the region and highlighted the importance of facilitating WFP's access to climate funds and other sources of innovative financing. In particular, they welcomed WFP's work on responding to the climate crisis and supporting migrants and refugees. One Board member asked WFP to share knowledge and best practices on climate initiatives, and two called on their colleagues to work with management on overcoming the barriers to WFP's access to climate finance.
88. Many Board members commended WFP for adapting its operations to the logistics and security challenges in Haiti. Noting that WFP's operations in Haiti demonstrated the potential for combining immediate emergency response with longer-term support, Board members emphasized the importance of maintaining an impartial and neutral position in Haiti and of involving donors, other partners and the Government of Haiti in the design and implementation of the humanitarian response. One Board member encouraged WFP to increase its use of disaster risk insurance and finance in Central America.
89. Emphasizing the need to attract greater international attention to conditions in the region, Board members called on donors to increase their investments in WFP's country operations, with two mentioning the detrimental effects of unilateral coercive measures on their countries' economies.

90. Thanking Board members for their support, the Regional Director took note of their comments and said that WFP was exploring how to adapt its systems to facilitate access to climate funding.

Resource, financial and budgetary matters

2024/EB.2/2 WFP management plan (2025–2027)

91. Introducing the plan, the Executive Director noted that it reflected feedback collected during consultations held with the Board and bilateral discussions. The approach taken had enabled WFP to adopt a revised programme support and administrative (PSA) budget for 2024 and make budget preparations for 2025, positioning the organization to respond to the challenges and opportunities ahead while continuing to deliver on its vital mission.
92. The Director, Corporate Planning and Performance Division, outlined the various elements of the plan that the Board was being requested to approve.
93. Board members welcomed the plan and acknowledged WFP's efforts to deliver on its mandate in increasingly challenging settings. Several of those who spoke expressed appreciation for the strong focus on emergency response, although one stressed the need to gradually increase the focus on resilience-building and addressing root causes of hunger and poverty.
94. Noting with concern that at USD 8 billion, 2025 contributions were forecast at less than half the estimated needs, Board members encouraged WFP to diversify its donor base; prioritize partnerships with governments, the private sector and international financial institutions; and develop compelling narratives and messaging to highlight the tangible impact of donor contributions. WFP was also urged to analyse the sources of growth seen in private donations and sustain the positive trend by expanding partnerships with philanthropic foundations and private sector entities, strengthening its digital platforms, engaging untapped markets and promoting innovative giving options. Several members requested updates on the performance of the individual fundraising model.
95. WFP was further advised to accelerate the introduction of robust early warning systems and forecast-based financing mechanisms; tailor financing mechanisms such as climate risk financing and debt swaps to low-income and fragile states; present a plan for significantly scaling up anticipatory action; maintain a strong focus on cash assistance where possible; and further commit to data-sharing agreements and improve interoperability arrangements, including beyond United Nations entities.
96. Management provided additional information on funding, reporting good progress in a number of initiatives aimed at capitalizing on funding from funds and donors, including international financial institutions, and new approaches such as matching funds, co-financing and blended finance were being explored as part of the innovative financing strategy. WFP was also considering piloting climate risk financing mechanisms such as catastrophe bonds – already used for earthquakes and hurricanes – for their potential application to drought. Vertical funding was more challenging, however, primarily because WFP's financing model and its indirect support costs kept it from being a competitive partner for some of the climate funds.
97. One member, following up on the issue of vertical funding, stressed the importance of diversified funding and invited WFP to engage the Board informally to discuss how members could be of support in achieving the competitiveness WFP needed to access climate finance.

2024/EB.2/3 Report of the External Auditor on findings from field audits and WFP management response

98. The President of the Bundesrechnungshof, External Auditor of WFP, presented the report on findings from field audits. The Chief Risk Officer then presented management's response and highlighted the 77 percent closure rate for previous recommendations cited by the External Auditor as a demonstration of WFP's continued commitment to timely implementation. WFP would continue to monitor and report on outstanding recommendations.
99. Board members welcomed the External Auditor's report and indicated their satisfaction with management's response. Several expressed particular appreciation for the External Auditor's attention to the follow-up of previous audit recommendations. WFP was urged to expedite the implementation of outstanding recommendations and to keep the Executive Board informed in a timely and transparent manner on the status of implementation and any challenges that might arise.
100. One member noted with appreciation management's commitment to enhancing the use of procedural and strategic documents across the country offices with the objective of improving country-level operations in a coordinated and systematic way, but another advocated promptly holding a capacity-building exercise for field-level functionaries, linked to country director performance.
101. Many members voiced concern regarding the lack of spot checks for 94 percent of cooperating partners. WFP was asked about plans to enforce guidance on the matter and advised to prioritize corporate partner training on financial documentation and reporting. While one member said the issue also raised concerns about partner accountability and expectations in other areas, such as protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, it was generally acknowledged that issues with cooperating partners would be addressed through the global assurance project.
102. One member noted with concern the finding that regional offices had not conducted oversight missions to country offices in high-risk environments and joined several others in welcoming the recommendation that regional bureau oversight and support roles should be clearly differentiated as part of the ongoing reorganization.
103. WFP was also advised to hold quarterly follow-up meetings with country offices to monitor progress in implementing oversight report recommendations and resolve any challenges, and to strengthen inter-office communication and information-sharing on recommendations. Members also encouraged WFP to develop a plan to transition from consultants to permanent staff to ensure continuity and cost-effectiveness, and to set up a database of information from summary reports, possibly by theme, to be referred to and utilized in risk management.
104. The President of the Bundesrechnungshof thanked members for their comments and emphasized that the External Auditor conducted its work with neutrality and objectivity. The Director of External Audit stated that it was possible that the External Auditor would visit some country offices multiple times during its six-year mandate. He added that information on the share of funding channelled through cooperating partners should be reflected in the financial statements and that further efforts should be made to strengthen the oversight role of regional bureaux, including through the new terms of reference under development.
105. Management recognized that while cooperating partner spot checks were part of guidance to country offices, they had not been fully monitored. They were, however, slated to become a key assurance measure within a holistic cooperating partner management assurance framework, which would also prioritize protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. WFP had an established system for following up on the implementation of oversight

recommendations. The ongoing reorganization sought to strengthen the accountability and performance of country directors as well as strengthening oversight.

Other business

2024/EB.2/4 Second interim report of the Executive Board working group on the governance review

106. The chair of the working group on the governance review introduced the report, which presented eight recommendations and 19 sub-recommendations for approval in areas including the rationalization of Board documents; the updating of the WFP policy formulation and oversight frameworks; accountability documents; the conduct of informal meetings; a streamlined consultation process for country strategic plans (CSPs); and the roles and responsibilities and working methods of the Bureau. The working group had completed its review of all recommendations from the independent consultant's report and had begun to consider recommendations from other governance initiatives. It aimed to conclude its review and present its final report to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2025.
107. Thanking working group members for their hard work, several Board members complimented WFP on its sound oversight mechanisms, describing the governance review as an opportunity to identify opportunities for the Board to be more efficient and effective in providing strategic direction and oversight to WFP. One member commended the working group for accomplishing its task within record time, while another described its functioning as an example of good practice. Particular support was voiced for recommendations such as the January election of Bureau members and the use of digital tools to optimize consultation processes. Two members advised flexibility in the implementation of recommendations to ensure effectiveness.
108. One member expressed disappointment that the governance review had not resulted in more radical change, noting potential to reduce the focus on procedural matters at formal sessions and create a more manageable workload, particularly for small delegations. He welcomed the suggestion by the External Auditor that a more in-depth review be conducted with the support of United Nations experts, such as the Joint Inspection Unit. Another speaker warned against reducing the time spent on operational issues during Board meetings.
109. A question was raised in relation to the value of the working group examining reports by bodies that had no governance relationship with WFP, such as the recent assessment of WFP by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN).
110. The chair of the working group thanked the Board members for their comments. In relation to operational information, he clarified that the Board would continue to receive CSP presentations at formal sessions in line with current practice; the proposal was to cease tabling regional overviews, with salient operational issues covered instead during each oral global overview of humanitarian needs and operational concerns. With regard to the MOPAN assessment, the working group had agreed that its recommendations in the report were not relevant to the governance review.

Organizational and procedural matters

2024/EB.2/5 Biennial programme of work of the Executive Board (2025–2026)

111. The Secretary to the Executive Board presented the document, which reflected the implementation of changes recommended in the interim report of the ongoing governance review: categories of items included in the programme of work had been added or modified in line with the governance frameworks of the Board; the types of decision to be taken by

the Board had been reduced from three to two and now included “for decision” and “for information” categories; and items that could be handled without a dedicated presentation at a Board session were no longer included. The Secretary reminded the Board of the procedures for introducing updates or additions to the programme of work via the Executive Board Bureau.

112. Speaking on behalf of an electoral list, one Board member took the floor to voice appreciation for the programme of work. She expressed the hope that the upcoming localization policy would address some of the policy gaps in WFP’s efforts to strengthen the capacity of local governments and organizations, and facilitate the organization’s prioritization of local partnerships.

Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio

2024/EB.2/6 Ukraine interim country strategic plan (2025–2027)

113. Presenting the interim country strategic plan (ICSP), the Country Director said that 90 percent of the assistance provided under the plan was destined for people living near the front line of the conflict. WFP provided food assistance to vulnerable people in institutions and communal housing, topped up the pensions of 400,000 pensioners and persons with disabilities, and contributed to a joint demining initiative with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Government prioritized school meal programmes to support education, and the President’s Grain from Ukraine initiative had fed 11 million people in 14 countries. WFP procured 82 percent of its food assistance for Ukraine locally.
114. Board members welcomed the ICSP’s combination of crisis response and efforts to restore livelihoods and promote long-term resilience, which indirectly contributed to global food security given the ongoing exports of Ukrainian produce. They commended the people and Government of Ukraine for the Grain from Ukraine initiative and thanked them for hosting the first European regional summit of the School Meals Coalition.
115. Board members expressed appreciation of WFP’s close collaboration with the Government, and its plans for strengthening the capacity of local actors in the Ukrainian food system in preparation for the handover of its interventions. However, one Board member questioned whether the Government could acquire sufficient financial and technical capacity to expand its social protection programmes within the ICSP period, given the severity of the conflict. Several Board members emphasized the importance of WFP remaining within its mandate and building on synergies and complementarities with its United Nations partners in its work in areas such as de-mining. One member asked about the due diligence and protection standards applied to WFP’s front-line partners.
116. Board members applauded WFP’s equitable and inclusive humanitarian response for vulnerable people, including women and girls, and persons with disabilities; integration of the global assurance project into the ICSP; emphasis on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse throughout its operations and engagement with partners; disaggregation of monitoring data by sex, age and disability; and use of blockchain technology to de-duplicate beneficiaries.
117. Several Board members raised concerns regarding WFP’s shift in transfer modality from multipurpose cash assistance to cash for food. They encouraged WFP to accelerate the transition back to multipurpose cash assistance and to base decisions on transfer modalities on up-to-date data from needs assessments, following the guidelines of the humanitarian country team, coordinating with other agencies to meet non-food needs, and ensuring that affected people understood the rationale for WFP’s decisions regarding beneficiary targeting and assistance modalities. Where in-kind food assistance was needed it should be sourced locally.

118. One member expressed concern about recent attacks on WFP distribution centres, and there were calls for safe and unhindered humanitarian access to all beneficiaries.
119. Responding to points raised, management said that the use of cash-for-food transfers was a response to cost increases that had made it impossible to maintain the planned levels of support; a full return to multipurpose cash distributions would require additional funding for the ICSP budget.
120. The representative of Ukraine thanked donors and WFP for their support and summarized some of her country's work with WFP and its goals for the future.

Policy issues

2024/EB.2/7 Resilience policy update

121. Management presented the updated policy, which articulated the WFP's vision for and programmatic approach to resilience strengthening, grounded in its areas of comparative advantage. The policy had undergone a thorough consultative process, both internally and externally, including multiple rounds of internal review and exchanges with the other Rome-based agencies and United Nations partners.
122. Board members welcomed the policy and commended WFP for the extensive consultation process and the resulting quality of the final draft. Particular appreciation was voiced for the policy's people-focused approach, including the attention paid to gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls and marginalized people, and the importance accorded to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Board members also endorsed the leveraging of local and regional procurement; the focus on nutrition programmes; livelihood improvement through enhancement of natural, physical, financial, human and social capital; and the strengthening of local capacities and systems. Two members spoke of the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation, requesting that specific reference be made to the value of that mechanism in promoting the sharing of knowledge, technology and experience.
123. On policy implementation, some members called for a context-specific approach based on the principles of complementarity, comparative advantage, partnership and accountability. They also underscored the importance of linking and balancing resilience work and humanitarian assistance.
124. WFP was urged to continue to uphold humanitarian principles; meaningfully link its resilience efforts with existing local and partner capacities; expand its partnerships, especially with the other Rome-based agencies, building on the comparative advantages of each partner; provide further guidance on partnering with national governments for resilience strengthening; better leverage its role in convening operational actors across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, including to support localization; continue to reflect on where it achieved the most value-added and develop a robust methodology for measuring how and where its efforts most effectively reduced its humanitarian assistance; promote information and communication technologies at the country level; ensure that resilience action plans included a clear exit strategy and to that end, ensure the creation of tangible income-generating assets; provide the necessary support and guidance to country offices; and continue to monitor, measure and assess the impact of its resilience activities on food security, nutrition, livelihoods and social cohesion.
125. One member requested further details on how WFP would manage the simultaneous demands for lifesaving emergency response and longer-term resilience-strengthening interventions in a funding-constrained environment.
126. Management responded that given its longer-term nature, resilience work was expected to attract new resources, through WFP but also through partnerships and other mechanisms.

WFP recognized that partnership with local actors, including communities and private sector entities, was key for sustainability of actions, and the resilience policy was thus linked with the localization policy. The organization also acknowledged that learning and sharing, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, were key elements and they would be reflected in the implementation plan for the policy.

2024/EB.2/8 Climate change policy update

127. The Director of the Climate and Resilience Service presented the updated climate change policy, which had been developed through extensive consultations including with the other Rome-based agencies, United Nations partners and the Board. The policy clarified WFP's contribution to national and international climate action and consolidated – through a comprehensive framework – the organization's contributions to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster risk reduction and response.
128. Welcoming the updated policy, Board members endorsed its focus on partnerships, including with local actors, and on reaching food-insecure and marginalized communities. Links with WFP policies on school meals, resilience, the environment, gender and localization were appreciated, as was the clarification of WFP's added value and comparative advantage in global, national and local climate action and especially its commitment to disaster preparedness in the form of anticipatory action. WFP's support for a global climate finance goal and new financing mechanisms to ensure funding reached those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change was also noted.
129. Implementation of the policy was a key concern, and Board members appreciated the costed implementation plan presented with the policy. WFP was urged to strengthen staff capacity and ensure the allocation of sufficient resources in the management plan and CSPs as relevant. Noting the pressing need to mobilize funding for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, members urged WFP to tap into innovative financing mechanisms; develop, with Board support, a strategy to improve its access to climate finance; and outline a plan to reconcile the policy with the challenging funding situation.
130. Various members also recommended that WFP maximize synergies with the implementation of other policies, particularly the resilience policy; provide regular feedback to the Board on lessons learned in implementation; focus on areas where it had a comparative advantage and enhance its partnerships with the other Rome-based agencies and other United Nations partners, while also ensuring that it partnered with the best-placed actors; scale up anticipatory action and strengthen its disaster risk capacity; conduct more joint programmes and joint evaluation, reporting and learning exercises; reflect its partnerships in its reporting; make broad use of the agroecological approach; thoroughly measure how its climate efforts contributed to reducing humanitarian food assistance needs; incorporate climate risk and vulnerability information into CSP design and monitor programme impact; take a long-term view from the outset that included an exit strategy coordinated with national authorities, the private sector and local communities; and reflect in the policy the challenge of climate change for small island developing states.
131. Members sought more information on how WFP was supporting governments in accessing climate finance, efforts to facilitate direct access to climate funding for affected people, workforce capacity to implement the policy, and the potential for partnerships with local communities.
132. In response to questions on funding, management reported that WFP was working on its first catastrophe bond to raise additional prepositioned finance. It had supported 31 governments in mobilizing USD 255 million from multilateral climate funds for the implementation of national climate change adaptation priorities and was supporting another 27 in developing proposals worth USD 360 million. WFP planned to engage with the Government of Brazil, which held the presidency of the 30th Conference of the Parties to

the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to share climate action case studies, including in the most fragile and conflict-affected places. Management also welcomed the prospect of engaging with the Board on how WFP could adjust its systems to better support frontline communities and governments in accessing climate funds, including from the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage. On the question of workforce capacity, the organization intended to look at its contracting modalities to ensure that they were fit for purpose.

2024/EB.2/9 School meals policy update

133. In her presentation, the Director of School Meals and Social Protection highlighted key aspects of the updated policy, including WFP's approach to supporting government-led, nationally owned, self-reliant, self-funded school meal programmes; the institutionalization of the School Meals Coalition, of which WFP was the secretariat; efforts to streamline a food systems approach to school meals; greater focus on school meals in fragile settings; clarification of the interlinkages between school meals, gender equality and women's empowerment; a more honed approach to partnerships; and the embedding of schools meals in sustainable education approaches.
134. Board members welcomed the objectives and level of ambition of the updated policy and voiced particular support for the focus on food systems transformation and climate action; the inclusion of women, young people and Indigenous Peoples; innovation, including innovative finance mechanisms; the plans for monitoring and evaluation; and the disaggregation of data by sex, age and disability. The continued strengthening of its partnerships and the mobilization of non-traditional donors were highlighted as instrumental in implementing the updated policy.
135. There was broad appreciation for the growth of the School Meals Coalition and WFP's role as secretariat. Many speakers praised WFP's continued shift towards an enabling role, although one cautioned WFP to ensure sufficient capacity to meet demand for capacity building in relation to school meals. Another member saw potential for a greater role for South-South and triangular cooperation in capacity building.
136. Members called for a clear approach to school meal operations in humanitarian settings, including conflict sensitivity. Several members spoke of the importance of realistic plans for handing over school meal programmes to national ownership to ensure sustainability. Another urged WFP to make country-specific decisions rather than use a blanket approach to transferring programme operations.
137. WFP was encouraged to prioritize school meal programmes in low-income countries; increase attention to child protection in the context of school meals; focus on nutritional quality rather than the caloric content of meals; explore potential multi-sectoral benefits such as the inclusion of water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives; and analyse the potential of school meal programmes to increase employment. Further information was sought on targeting, reporting, sustainability and monitoring as well as how WFP would ensure accountability to affected people, given that traditional feedback mechanisms were largely unsuited to children,
138. Thanking Board members for their comments and support, the Director said that WFP was strengthening its targeting methods for school meals, with a focus on fragile settings in low-income countries. Regarding sustainability, about 50 governments had already moved to nationally run programmes, and WFP was examining lessons learned in that area. On reporting, the Board would receive information in the annual performance report and the State of School Feeding Worldwide report. She proposed bilateral discussions on the other issues raised.

Update on the implementation of WFP's cash policy

139. In her presentation, the Chief of the Delivery Assurance Service said that WFP had improved its capacity to send money to people quickly and had made good progress in issuing guidance, improving assurance, simplifying business processes and providing surge support in emergencies. More and more operations were adopting an approach that prioritized people's preferences about how they wished to receive their money. The implementation of the cash policy had also resulted in more money being sent directly to women's accounts.
140. Board members recognized the significant growth in WFP's use of cash-based transfers; its leadership role in that field; and how it was transferring cash assistance capabilities to Governments, including through the development of tools and guidance. One member, however, saw opportunity to provide more contextualized guidance, translated into local languages and accompanied by sufficient training. Turning to operations in Ukraine, one member sought more insight into the decision to discontinue multipurpose cash, adding that the approach chosen had increased the fragmentation of aid and reduced accountability to affected people.
141. Members commended WFP for integrating gender and inclusion into policy implementation. Several urged WFP to ensure that the selection of multipurpose cash assistance or cash-for-food assistance was always based on a needs assessment and beneficiary preferences. WFP was also encouraged to focus on data protection in the context of cash transfers and ensure that transfer values were always associated with an index basket.
142. Several members called on donors to increase their contributions to address the persistent resource constraints that threatened policy implementation. Concerns were also expressed about the impact of the dissolution of the Cash-based Transfer Division during the restructuring of WFP headquarters and the reallocation of the work streams to other divisions. Two members stressed the importance of coordination and adequate staffing levels and expertise, particularly in house.
143. Noting that the decrease in funding had led to a deprioritization of evidence generation, one member urged WFP to continue measuring and reporting on outcome indicators. Several members welcomed WFP's efforts to strengthen its collaboration with Global Cash Advisory Group partners on developing performance indicators related to cash coordination. One member suggested the creation of a group of friends on cash.
144. The Chief of the Delivery Assurance Service thanked Board members for their comments and support. She explained that all cash operations involved detailed assessments to identify and mitigate privacy and protection risks. WFP had retained its in-house cash-transfer expertise following the restructuring. The choice of multipurpose cash or cash for food was context-specific – specifically regarding cash in Ukraine, if WFP switched to a multipurpose cash approach, it would cost USD 2.2 billion. Assurance on cash transfers was provided throughout the transfer process. Gender, protection and inclusion work was included in the corporate results framework, and there were clear indications of how country offices should target women for cash-based transfers to mitigate specific risks. WFP was also working to ensure that countries' financial service providers and regulatory agencies were putting in place the measures necessary for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in the context of cash operations.

2024/EB.2/10 WFP revised corporate results framework (2022–2025)

145. Management presented the revised corporate results framework (CRF), which included 40 new indicators in addition to those already present in the CRF approved in 2022, bringing the total to 191. After two years of pilot testing, the new indicators had been incorporated into the indicator compendium and corporate guidance and were publicly available. Ongoing consultations with stakeholders within WFP were aimed at aligning all the

indicators in the CRF with the new strategic plan currently being developed for presentation at the Board's 2025 second regular session.

146. Board members welcomed the revised CRF, affirming that it reflected WFP's commitment to transparency and accountability. In particular, they expressed satisfaction with the inclusion of indicators of gender equality and women's empowerment, conflict sensitivity, disability inclusion, protection, accountability and the percentage of funding allocated to local and national responders. They encouraged WFP to define what the tracking of this last indicator would entail and how the indicator would be integrated into the localization policy, and to track the percentage of women on short-term as well as fixed-term staff contracts.
147. Welcoming WFP's commitment to disaggregating data by age, gender, disability and other characteristics, which would facilitate the identification and targeting of vulnerable population groups and the adjustment of programmes to meet specific needs, Board members emphasized the importance of defining an articulated approach to data disaggregation and analysis as part of programme planning and implementation. They also recommended that food consumption data from national household surveys be used in analysis of the prevalence of undernourishment, and that data be collected and publicly shared with due regard to the protection of confidential information. They looked forward to seeing the results of the mid-term review of the CRF, which would inform the development of the new strategic plan.
148. Taking note of the comments made, management reiterated their commitment to presenting a new CRF along with the new strategic plan in November 2025.

Evaluation reports

2024/EB.2/11 Summary evaluation report on the mid-term evaluation of the WFP strategic plan (2022–2025) and management response

149. The Director of Evaluation presented the main findings of the evaluation, which had found the strategic plan for 2022–2025 to be highly relevant to WFP's ambitions as a humanitarian agency also committed to building resilience and addressing the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition. Management had started to implement the evaluation recommendations and was in full agreement with 11 of the 13 sub-recommendations.
150. Board members welcomed the evaluation and management response, which provided a good starting point for the design of the next strategic plan. In particular, members appreciated the evaluation findings regarding WFP's progress towards more integrated programming; the diversification of funding sources; the prioritization and planning of resource use, targeting the most vulnerable people; and WFP's growing role as a provider of services for its partners.
151. Reflecting recommendations from the evaluation, Board members emphasized the need to more clearly define WFP's long-term vision, priorities and areas of comparative advantage, including in relation to its changing lives agenda and its role at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. WFP should also continue to streamline its internal systems and processes, clarify the roles of central headquarters and the regional bureaux in supporting country offices, and ensure that staff have the capabilities required to implement the new strategic plan.
152. Board members urged management to intensify their efforts to enhance quality funding, including by engaging with Member States, and align the new strategic plan more closely with realistic forecasts of donor funding. They called on funding partners to provide more flexible and predictable resources, and on WFP to strengthen its partnerships, including through innovative approaches focused on strategic engagement as well as the pursuit of funding.

153. Welcoming WFP's increasing focus on cross-cutting issues, Board members emphasized the importance of budgeting for that work and developing ways of assessing progress towards the achievement of cross-cutting priorities. One member suggested that localization be included as a cross-cutting issue in the new strategic plan. Several Board members reiterated the evaluation's calls for more strategic gathering of evidence for use in decision-making, and improved dissemination of information, including internally and to affected communities.
154. Board members looked forward to receiving clearer information on WFP's comparative advantages in the changing lives agenda, to be presented in a white paper in February 2025.
155. In response to Board member comments, the Director of Evaluation clarified that the wide scope of the evaluation meant that its findings referred only to the overall situation; the shortcomings and achievements mentioned did not necessarily apply to all the situations covered. Other evaluations – of CSPs, impacts, policies, etc. – provided more details on aspects such as gender issues and disability inclusion.
156. Management outlined the research and other work being carried out in preparation for the development of the new strategic plan throughout 2025. The process would involve broad consultations with the Board, other United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, private sector entities, and the communities and people served by WFP.

2024/EB.2/12 Synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP's cooperating partners from centralized and decentralized evaluations and management response

157. The Director of Evaluation presented the synthesis, which was based on 47 evaluations conducted between 2020 and 2023. Overall, it showed that cooperating partners played an essential role in allowing WFP to fulfil its mandate, although WFP did not fully leverage their expertise. Cooperating partners brought valuable assets such as local knowledge and technical expertise, but capacity gaps persisted, compounded at times by staff turnover. The evaluations had found that administrative delays and multiple contracts in the same geographical areas created inefficiencies. Other insights included that the use of long field-level agreements enhanced partnership quality; that WFP capacity-strengthening activities largely met partners' needs, despite a lack of strategic approach; and that relationships with cooperating partners were becoming more transparent, equitable and mutually beneficial.
158. The Chief of the Delivery Assurance Service presented management's response to the recommendations in the report, including a two-year road map for streamlining, simplifying and strengthening cooperating partner management that covered aspects such as digitalization and sustainable funding.
159. Board members recognized the critical role of cooperating partners in WFP operations and in providing sustainable solutions tailored to needs on the ground. One member urged WFP to use the evaluation findings to inform the development of the localization policy. Others encouraged WFP to continue supporting capacity building for cooperating partners, particularly in financial management, compliance with humanitarian standards, transparency, gender inclusiveness and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.
160. While one member saw WFP's relationships with cooperating partners as increasingly collaborative, another was of the view that many partnerships remained primarily transactional. Support was voiced for the recommendation that more multi-year contracts be established with a view to improving partnership quality.
161. With one member remarking that the synthesis lacked information on risk management and compliance and control mechanisms, several members said that it was crucial for WFP to strengthen its compliance monitoring and evaluation framework for cooperating partners, using clear indicators, effective monitoring mechanisms, regular audits and periodic

performance reviews. One member expressed appreciation for the plan to reinforce spot checks, and two welcomed ongoing efforts to develop guidance and policies for cooperating partner government entities.

162. Two members endorsed the plan to employ tools for more effective data management in order to support transparent data-sharing and improve needs assessment, risk management and the monitoring of programme results and capacity-building activities. Others underscored the importance of risk management, particularly with regard to data protection or sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, with one of them requesting more information on WFP's approach.
163. Thanking Board members for their comments and support, the Director of Evaluation noted that compliance with control mechanisms was typically the focus of audits as opposed to evaluations. Management took note of a request that the two-year road map be shared in document form with the Board. Guidance on working with governments as cooperating partners had been issued recently.

Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio

2024/EB.2/13 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Cuba (2021–2024) and management response

164. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation, which had found that WFP had drawn on its comparative advantages to strengthen national capacity in risk management, emergency response, and food and nutrition security in Cuba. Areas for improvement included a need to enhance coordination with other United Nations entities, strengthen advocacy with the Government of Cuba in order to overcome critical issues, invest in communication and knowledge management, and prioritize CSP activities.
165. The Country Director welcomed the insights of the evaluation team and outlined the actions being taken to implement the recommendations presented in the evaluation report.
166. Board members thanked WFP staff for their dedication to saving lives, reducing poverty and working with the people of Cuba, including in responding rapidly to the many climate-related crises to hit the country. They welcomed the evaluation findings regarding WFP's mainstreaming of gender and other cross-cutting issues into its interventions; the pre-positioning of food stocks for use in sudden-onset emergencies; the strengthening of local food systems, which had improved food security and nutrition while promoting the social inclusion and resilience of vulnerable people; and contributions to increased knowledge of nutrition and healthy diets. The CSP had provided a good combination of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, making WFP an effective partner in the United Nations country team.
167. Noting that its network of trustworthy local partners had enabled WFP to deliver food in hard-to-reach areas, Board members urged WFP to scale up its partnerships with non-governmental organizations in Cuba. Members also encouraged WFP to increase its collaboration with partners on optimizing data collection and analysis systems and to maintain its focus on empowering women and girls with a view to achieving transformational change.
168. Responding to a Board member's question about WFP's coordination with the other Rome-based agencies, the Director of Evaluation said that the evaluation had found strong partnerships with FAO and IFAD in the areas of risk management, nutrition, emergency response and agricultural value chains.

169. The Country Director thanked Board members for their comments and offered examples of some of WFP's work with its partners in Cuba.

2024/EB.2/14 Colombia country strategic plan (2025–2028), including evaluation results and recommendations from summary evaluation report in item 6 c) 1)

170. Presenting the results of the evaluation, the Director of Evaluation affirmed that the previous CSP for Colombia had been evidence-based and relevant, although WFP's responsiveness to new funding opportunities and government requests had stretched it too thinly across thematic and geographical areas. WFP had complemented the Government's response to multiple humanitarian crises and successfully reached the most vulnerable communities. Results had also been achieved in social cohesion and socioeconomic integration but not at the national level. The evaluation identified scope for improvement in areas such as the conceptual and strategic framework of the CSP; capacity strengthening and service delivery; evidence generation and the systematization of lessons learned; and project management. The evaluation further noted that medium and long term planning – key to resilience strengthening – had been hampered by heavily earmarked funding, short grants and donor preferences for certain geographical and thematic areas.
171. Welcoming the evaluation, the Country Director presented the new CSP, which responded to the recommendations and reflected national priorities and the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework. Through the plan, WFP sought to address food insecurity and contribute to strengthening national social protection systems. The commitment of the Colombian Government to the work of WFP was clear, not least in its provision of close to 40 percent of the organization's 2024 budget. Fragmentation was an issue in Colombia, not only for WFP, and the United Nations country team had prioritized 3 of the 32 departments for operations, with WFP as lead coordinator for United Nations efforts in La Guajira. Meanwhile, the country office had restructured its workforce, reducing layers of hierarchy and increasing the share of national staff, and it was on track to implement assurance measures for improved accountability and risk reduction.
172. Board members supported the new CSP, welcoming the focus on evidence-based targeting and the provision of assistance to the most vulnerable – including women, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant people – in hard-to-reach communities. Appreciation was voiced for school meals and nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes; climate change adaptation and ecosystem resilience; resilient food systems; socioeconomic inclusion and livelihood restoration; risk management; capacity building; diversification of donor funding for activities at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus; and the reorganization of WFP structures.
173. Members noted the strong partnership with the Government, with one member urging WFP to enhance engagement with local governments. One speaker said that it was important not to substitute or replace the authorities, emphasizing the importance of appropriate handover strategies. Another member encouraged WFP to ensure that the growth in operations was matched with sufficient attention to oversight systems and internal control measures.
174. Members urged WFP to pay greater attention to the analysis of conflict dynamics and the use of conflict-sensitive approaches; the impact of rising food costs on food security; the effect of deforestation on resilience and food security; collaboration among the Rome-based agencies; lessons learned in similar contexts; and localization, including the systematic integration of local communities and authorities into decision-making processes and local ownership in the school meals programme.
175. Thanking members for their comments, the Country Director underscored the importance of working with smallholder farmers to further peace, describing WFP's collaboration with

FAO in that regard. On assurance, WFP sought to improve its data systems and strengthen community feedback mechanisms. It was also working to improve localization in areas where local production was insufficient to meet WFP's procurement needs. There were opportunities to strengthen the country's social protection system, and WFP was also engaging with other agencies to optimize the use of existing infrastructure to facilitate rapid emergency response by the Government.

176. Following the Board's approval of the CSP, the Vice-Minister of Multilateral Affairs of Colombia thanked WFP for being an invaluable partner in critical times, appreciating in particular its capacity to adapt rapidly to changing dynamics.

Evaluation reports (continued)

2024/EB.2/15 Summary report on the evaluation of WFP's emergency response to the prolonged crisis in the Sahel and other countries of Central Africa (2018–2023) and management response

177. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation, which found that WFP had responded rapidly to changing conditions and helped to strengthen national emergency preparedness and response capacity and social protection systems. However, despite effective implementation, WFP could only make limited contributions to the food security of populations affected by emergencies, owing to ration cuts, access constraints and a deteriorating food security situation. Management welcomed the evaluation and had started to implement its six recommendations.
178. Board members commended the multi-country approach of the evaluation and its dual focus on emergency response and resilience building; several members recommended that the approach be replicated in other regions. They welcomed the evaluation's findings regarding WFP's support for refugees and returning internally displaced persons; focus on gender issues and the inclusion of young people and minorities in interventions; strengthening of local capacity and resilience; and diversification of approaches in accordance with changing needs. One member asked about the similarities between these findings and those of the mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan for 2022–2025
179. Agreeing with the evaluation's recommendations, Board members emphasized the importance of clarifying WFP's systems for prioritizing the most vulnerable people and balancing the number of people assisted against the nutritional value of the assistance provided; and ensuring adherence to humanitarian principles, particularly when negotiating humanitarian access and engaging with governments and non-state actors. One Board member recommended strengthening country offices' capacity for such engagement; another recommended developing internal protocols for work in challenging situations.
180. There were calls for WFP to enhance its collection, analysis and use of data; continue to explore synergies and complementarities between emergency response and resilience interventions, in line with the humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach; refine the design and implementation of recovery and resilience-building support, including through innovation and greater engagement with local communities; strengthen capacity for anticipatory action and proactive risk management; and develop global and regional strategies for research, resource management and the sharing of best practices.
181. Reiterating points made in previous discussions, Board members emphasized the importance of strengthening approaches to gender and other cross-cutting issues, partnerships and localization.
182. Management thanked Board members for their support. The Director of Evaluation said that this evaluation and the mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan covered different time periods and units of analysis yet they had drawn similar conclusions regarding systemic

issues, for example, WFP's dependence on short-term, earmarked funding, the importance of partnerships, and the need for more evidence-based decision-making.

183. The Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations, highlighted the importance of linking WFP's integrated resilience programmes to national social protection systems and emphasized how localization can help WFP to address access constraints.

Western Africa portfolio

2024/EB.2/16 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Mali (2020–2024) and management response

184. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation, which had found WFP to have been a key partner of the Government of Mali and the humanitarian community throughout the period covered. Management welcomed the evaluation as an opportunity for learning and had started to implement its five recommendations.
185. Thanking WFP staff for their work in Mali, Board members welcomed the comprehensive evaluation and its positive findings regarding WFP's achievements in adapting to a complex and changing operational environment through a combination of emergency response and resilience-building interventions, in line with national objectives and needs, and using innovative approaches. They applauded WFP's cost-saving measures, such as increasing the use of cash-based transfers and reducing the number of cooperating partners, although one Board member expressed concern that this had benefited large, international rather than local partners.
186. Echoing the evaluation recommendations, Board members emphasized the importance of refining targeting mechanisms to identify the worst-affected people, including nomadic and internally displaced persons; enhancing monitoring and evaluation measures and clarifying lines of responsibility, accountability and communication; strengthening partnerships, including with local actors, including through capacity-strengthening work with partners, greater alignment with national systems and priorities, and the use of multi-year partnership agreements; and fostering regional analysis and coordination to address urgent cross-border challenges.
187. Several Board members focused on protection issues and risk management, welcoming WFP's achievements in reducing the risks for its beneficiaries but expressing concern that the risks for cooperating partners remained high, and encouraging continued efforts in strengthening risk management and the systematic reporting of all protection incidents. Board members also urged management to improve the integration of emergency response and resilience-building interventions by clarifying the links between the two and making better use of partnerships and joint programmes with United Nations partners, including in joint fundraising efforts, and the opportunities offered by working across borders and at the triple nexus.
188. Taking note of the issues raised, management described the work being carried out to address them and appealed for greater attention and financial support for Mali and other countries facing similar challenges.

2024/EB.2/17 Senegal country strategic plan (2025–2029)

189. The country director presented the new CSP, which sought to strengthen resilience to climate and economic shocks and maximize sources of revenue for women and young people; improve sustainable access to nutrition and diversify sources of nutrition for vulnerable children; and improve policies and systems to address food insecurity and mitigate risks.

190. Board members welcomed the new plan, noting that it reflected lessons learned from the previous CSP and was aligned with national priorities and the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework. Support was voiced for particular aspects of the plan, such as the gradual shift by WFP from direct implementation to an enabling role; the focus on nutrition, resilience and value chains; efforts to improve the quality and reach of social protection systems; the promotion of private sector participation; the focus on capacity building and technical assistance; support for sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers and rural resilience initiatives, including a plan for the lean season and home-grown school feeding; the central role of women and young people; and the resource mobilization strategy.
191. Several members called for donors and development partners to increase their financial support for WFP in Senegal. Others spoke of the importance of flexible CSP implementation, the need for sustainable solutions that lifted people out of poverty and the potential for enhancing investments by evaluating the correlation between funding allocated and the direct impact on local communities. One member observed that South–South and triangular cooperation could play an important role in CSP implementation and called for stronger collaboration between WFP and other United Nations entities.
192. Regarding the strategy for handing over the school feeding programme to the Ministry of Education, one member expressed concern at the lack of coordination with other school feeding actors. She also urged WFP to pay particular attention to protection concerns in school feeding programmes in Quranic schools.
193. Thanking members for the comments, the Country Director assured the Board that WFP was working to improve coordination under the school feeding programme. He also stressed the need for close collaboration between WFP and the Senegalese authorities to ensure the successful implementation of these initiatives. The Regional Director thanked the Government of Senegal for its engagement in the CSP process and looked forward to working together on the implementation of the plan, including to update figures and references to national data and plans as required.
194. Following the Board's approval of the CSP, H.E. Daouda Ngom, Minister of Environment of Senegal, said that collaboration with WFP was crucial and that it was set to evolve to meet the huge scale of the challenges facing the country.

Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio

2024/EB.2/18 Summary report on the evaluation of the interim country strategic plans for the Syrian Arab Republic (2018–2025) and management response

195. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation of the interim CSPs, through which WFP had sought to transition to livelihood-focused activities while maintaining food assistance to the most vulnerable. WFP had responded to priority needs, but greater needs and scarcer financial resources as of 2020 had forced it to rethink its targeting. The school meal programme had led to greater attendance but not increased enrolment, owing to economic factors. WFP's provision of logistics and technical services had enabled partners to provide assistance, even in hard to-reach areas. The evaluation had identified scope for improvement in areas such as food-systems approaches; advocacy related to principled aid delivery; accountability to affected people, gender and inclusion; and fair and transparent targeting processes.
196. Welcoming the evaluation, the Country Director presented the management response, noting that WFP had already begun implementing many of the proposed improvements. Food security assessments had been sharpened, targeting criteria enhanced and community engagement strengthened, which had in turn enhanced assurance. Meanwhile, resilience programming was increasingly a focus, as exemplified by joint WFP–FAO

- community-level initiatives to restore water infrastructure for farmers in eastern parts of the country.
197. Board members commended WFP's capacity to adapt and to maintain assistance provision despite challenging operational circumstances. One member underscored the paramount importance of upholding the humanitarian principles and applying conflict-sensitive approaches. Members appreciated the findings of the evaluation, including that WFP had strong monitoring, assessment and mapping capacities and had increased its efforts in relation to accountability to affected people. One member observed that the lessons learned could be useful for other country offices.
 198. Particular recommendations were highlighted, including reducing general food assistance, improving targeting and clarifying the comparative advantages of WFP. One member endorsed the approach of combining humanitarian assistance with support for early recovery, with another requesting more details on how such an approach would be implemented.
 199. WFP was encouraged to continue coordinating with other food actors and local actors and strengthening its internal processes and those of its partners, notably for the protection of and accountability to affected people. One member sought further information on the effects of WFP interventions on household food security. Several members said that the unilateral measures imposed on the Syrian Government limited its ability to help those in need.
 200. In response to Board member comments, the Director of Evaluation clarified that the evaluation had found that WFP was conducting conflict-sensitive analysis, but the success of its programming was likely to be affected by funding shortfalls. The Country Director said that adherence to humanitarian principles was fundamental and that community feedback mechanisms and accountability to affected people formed the basis for programme design and the choice of strategic partnerships.

Eastern Africa portfolio

2024/EB.2/19 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Rwanda (2019–2023) and management response

201. The Director of Evaluation said that the CSP had been extended until 2025 in line with national development strategies. The evaluation found that the CSP was based on evidence and focused on the most vulnerable people. It highlighted various contributions, notably in school feeding and social protection, and made six recommendations. Management agreed with the evaluation findings and would use them to inform the design of the next CSP for Rwanda.
202. Welcoming the detailed evaluation report and response, Board members expressed satisfaction with the findings regarding the CSP's alignment with national priorities and development plans, and its focus on reducing hunger, mitigating the effects of climate change, strengthening smallholder farmers' access to markets, preparing for and responding to crises, providing assistance for refugees, and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. They welcomed WFP's effective collaboration with government entities, local communities and international partners, and its strengthening of national capacity in areas such as food security and nutrition, disaster risk reduction and management, and social protection. One Board member emphasized the importance of allowing governments to decide what capacity strengthening support they required from WFP.
203. Several members commended Rwanda's leadership in the School Meals Coalition for East Africa and its pioneering role in the global drive to provide school meals for all children

by 2030, as demonstrated by the scale-up of WFP-supported school meals interventions into a national programme with universal coverage and a home-grown school meals component. Regarding adaptation to climate change, one member recommended that, given the shortage of funding and opportunities for dedicated activities, WFP integrate awareness of climate change and its effects more fully into its programmes.

204. One member sought further detail on matters that included the percentage of refugees integrating into the Rwandan economy; the protection and support provided to vulnerable groups; and the feasibility of reporting on the impacts of WFP's interventions when the evaluation reported weak monitoring and evaluation systems.
205. Responding to this last question, the Director of Evaluation said that findings on impacts were derived from impact evaluations in specific thematic areas and that further details were available in the main evaluation report. Thanking Board members for their encouragement, the country director described the strengths of the school feeding programme and confirmed that WFP was supporting capacity strengthening in collaboration with the Government and other actors, including in school feeding, disaster risk management and shock-responsive social protection. He reiterated WFP's commitment to addressing the issues identified in the evaluation report, especially in terms of monitoring, disability inclusion, protection and the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

Southern Africa portfolio

2024/EB.2/20 Namibia country strategic plan (2025–2029)

206. Management presented the CSP, which was in line with national priorities and plans and aimed to respond to immediate needs while strengthening the systems that promoted food security, social protection and resilience. The design of the CSP was informed by recent evaluations, consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, and lessons from successful capacity-strengthening initiatives. It was centred on the provision of technical assistance and capacity strengthening support under the four pillars of disaster preparedness, social protection, human capital development, and resilient food systems.
207. Board members welcomed the long-term vision of the CSP and its focus on strengthening food security, social protection and preparedness in line with the strategic objectives and plans of the Government of Namibia, WFP and other international and regional organizations. Several members applauded the inclusive and collaborative approach to the development of the CSP based on active engagement with the Government, local communities, bilateral partners, the private sector and civil society.
208. Board members found the CSP's emphasis on resilience building and sustainable development to be appropriate for a country facing the effects of El Niño and climate change, and approved of the plans for strengthening the Government's capacity in anticipating and responding to shocks through, for example, early-warning and emergency preparedness activities. Recognizing that the strengthening of smallholder farmers' knowledge in and resources for withstanding climate shocks was crucial to the improvement of food security in the region, Board members welcomed in particular WFP's plans to promote the integration of regenerative agronomic practices and indigenous knowledge into food systems, including through the creation of low-cost agricultural infrastructure. Several members underlined the value of regional cooperation and South–South and triangular cooperation arrangements in addressing climate change through the strengthening of food systems and the development of strategic food reserves, skills, strategic partnerships and sustainable financing.
209. Board members welcomed WFP's plans to draw on its global expertise in expanding the coverage of home-grown school feeding programmes in partnership with the Government. The involvement of local smallholder farmers and farmer associations in providing diverse

and nutritious food for the programmes would bolster farmers' livelihoods by providing a market for their produce and help to ensure that vulnerable people, especially women, children and displaced persons, had access to adequate nutrition. One Board member encouraged WFP to enhance its efforts to strengthen the inclusiveness of its programmes.

210. Management thanked Board members for their encouragement and support and described some of WFP's work with Member States in Namibia. They commended the Government of Namibia for its leading role in strengthening early warning and disaster risk management, and its engagement in the formulation of the Pact for the Future at the recent United Nations Summit for the Future.
211. Thanking WFP for the CSP, Namibia's Minister of Agriculture and Land Reform expressed his Government's appreciation of the organization as a strategic partner and looked forward to continuing to collaborate closely on efforts to achieve zero hunger by 2030, including through the joint mobilization of domestic and international resources.

Administrative and managerial matters (continued)

2024/EB.2/21 Appointment of one member to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee

212. Following a brief presentation by the Chair of the panel tasked with selecting a new member of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee, the Board approved the appointment of Ms Laura Born of the United States of America for a three-year term, commencing 1 March 2025.

Summary of the work of the Executive Board

2024/EB.2/22 Summary of the work of the 2024 annual session of the Executive Board

213. Thanking the Rapporteur for the 2024 annual session of the Executive Board for preparing the summary of that session, the President noted that the draft document had been distributed to Board members in October.
214. The Board approved the summary.

Verification of adopted decisions and recommendations

215. Following the President's introduction of the agenda item, the Rapporteur confirmed that the decisions and recommendations presented in the draft compilation of decisions and recommendations adopted by the Board at the current session corresponded to those that had been agreed during the session. The final versions of the adopted decisions and recommendations would be posted on the Board's website by the next working day, and a draft summary of the discussions that took place during the session would be circulated for comment in due course.

Closing remarks by the Executive Director

216. The Executive Director thanked the President for chairing the Board's discussions, the Executive Board Secretariat for preparing for and managing the session, and Board members and observers for their valuable ideas and insights during their discussions with management.
217. She shared Board members' admiration for the dedication of WFP's staff in serving vulnerable people in challenging environments and reiterated management's recognition of the duty of care for staff safety and well-being. Board members could contribute to that safety by using their influence to ensure that the principles of international humanitarian law were respected in all settings.

218. Highlights of the session had included the approval of a new management plan, which would guide the work of WFP, equip it with the tools it needed, and reinforce the change management process, including through the establishment of a single, integrated global headquarters supporting country offices from the central and regional levels. New policies on climate, resilience and school meal programmes laid the groundwork for the development of the next strategic plan, and ongoing implementation of the new global assurance framework would strengthen accountability throughout WFP, helping to build the trust of donors and partners.
219. The Executive Director looked forward to continuing her collaboration with the Board on their shared mission of saving lives and changing lives around the world.

Acronyms

CSP	country strategic plan
EBS	Executive Board Secretariat
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICSP	interim country strategic plan
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IOAC	Independent Oversight Advisory Committee
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IRA	Immediate Response Account
ISC	indirect support cost
IT	information technology
OBD	Office of the Ombudsman and Mediation Services
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OEV	Office of Evaluation
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OIGI	Office of Investigation
PSA	programme support and administrative (budget)
PSEA	protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
SD3C	Joint Programme for the Sahel in Response to the Challenges of COVID-19, Conflict and Climate Change
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSDCF	United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework