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Programme**

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POLICY ISSUES

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EVALUATION POLICY (2016–2021)

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

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the focal point indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluation is essential and the current constrained budgetary climate makes it more important than ever.

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations (2014)

A strong evaluation function enhances WFP's credibility and reputation, and helps equip it with the evidence and knowledge to cope, adapt and succeed in a world of rapid change, increasing complexity and tough challenges.

Chair of WFP Evaluation Peer Review Panel (2014)

The 2014 Development Assistance Committee/United Nations Evaluation Group peer review of the evaluation function at WFP concluded that the principles and practice of independent, credible and useful evaluation, supported by the 2008 evaluation policy, are well-established in WFP, particularly at the centralized evaluation level. However, several aspects of the evaluation function remain under-developed, particularly at the decentralized programme level.

WFP's 2014–2017 Strategic Plan reflects the critical need to meet rising demand for evidence of impact. It commits to enhancing staff and country office capacities to evaluate results for accountability and continuous quality improvement, and promotes best practice for independent evaluation.

Recognizing the contribution evaluation makes to the evidence base for WFP's impact on the people it serves, this evaluation policy sets the vision and purpose of evaluation in WFP's contemporary internal and external contexts. WFP's contribution to ending global hunger will be strengthened by embedding evaluation into the heart of its culture of accountability and learning, ensuring that evaluation is planned for, and evaluation findings and lessons are comprehensively incorporated into, all WFP's policies and programmes.

Building on the strengths established by its predecessor, this policy reaffirms WFP's commitment to international evaluation principles, norms and standards, and sets the normative framework for WFP's selected evaluation function, which combines centralized with demand-led decentralized evaluation, to ensure that WFP is fit for the future. Its phased implementation will shift evaluation from being mostly the business of the Office of Evaluation to its being an integral part of all WFP's work.

DRAFT DECISION^{*}

The Board approves "Evaluation Policy (2016–2021)" (WFP/EB.2/2015/4-A/Rev.1).

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document presents WFP's revised evaluation policy, superseding all previous evaluation policies. It has been prepared in accordance with the Executive Board's decision on the response¹ to the recommendations of the 2014 peer review of WFP's evaluation function conducted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).
2. The policy reaffirms WFP's commitment to the value of evaluation in its performance management, accountability and learning² systems, complying with United Nations evaluation principles, norms and standards.³ It informs WFP staff and stakeholders of the evaluation function's purpose; its conceptual and normative framework; and the roles, accountabilities and standards for evaluation across WFP, including coverage, use and human and financial resource requirements. It supports WFP's mandate and strategic priorities,⁴ in alignment with the principles and aims of the United Nations.
3. The policy will be accompanied by an evaluation charter.⁵ Together, the policy and the charter constitute the governance framework for WFP's evaluation function within the wider oversight arrangements established by the Board. An evaluation strategy will provide a phased plan for implementing this policy, aligned with WFP's Management Plan.

II. CONTEXT

4. There have been significant changes in WFP's internal and external environments since approval of the 2008 evaluation policy. In 2014, the DAC/UNEG peer review and the wider Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) assessment of the evaluation functions of the United Nations system advised WFP to develop its evaluation function to meet the rising demand for accountability and evidence in the increasingly complex and diverse socio-economic contexts in which WFP operates. These changing expectations are reflected in other recent reviews of WFP's performance,⁶ while recent resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly⁷ emphasize the importance of strengthening national evaluation capacities and joint and system-wide evaluations, to support efforts to achieve the nationally owned Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁸ Similar calls for greater accountability and

¹ WFP/EB.2/2014/6-D/Rev.1. See also WFP/EB.A/2014/7-D.

² *Accountability* is the obligation to account for – and report on – work carried out and results achieved, using planned objectives and targets as the benchmark against which to assess performance. *Learning* informs operational and strategic decision-making through analysis of why certain results occurred or not and drawing of lessons to identify good practices, build on success and avoid past mistakes.

³ UNEG. 2005. *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System*. <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21>; *Standards for Evaluation in the UN System*. <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/22>.

⁴ “WFP Strategic Plan 2014–2017” (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/1); Zero Hunger Challenge; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

⁵ The charter will specify governance and roles in the evaluation function across WFP and the terms, authority and accountability of the Director of Evaluation.

⁶ Including by the Multinational Organisation Performance Assessment Network and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development.

⁷ United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 67/226 (2012) and 69/237 (2014).

⁸ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

effectiveness within and among agencies are echoed in the ongoing reform of the humanitarian system.⁹

5. In response to these trends, WFP has selected a new model for its evaluation function, which combines *centralized evaluation* with *demand-led decentralized evaluation*, in line with Strategic Plan commitments and related organizational strengthening initiatives. This model implies: i) maintaining the high quality of WFP's centralized evaluation function while applying a phased approach to developing a decentralized function over the life of this policy, with the Office of Evaluation (OEV) setting the framework of norms and standards, accountabilities and coverage; ii) enhancing capacity across WFP to meet stakeholders' requirements for accountability; and iii) strengthening its culture of learning, together with its partners, and facilitating evidence-based decision-making.

III. DEFINITIONS, CONCEPTS AND PURPOSE

6. WFP adheres to the United Nations definition of evaluation:

An assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, institutional performance, etc. It focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. It considers the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the interventions and contributions of the organizations of the UN system.¹⁰ An evaluation should provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of the UN system and its members.³

7. There are two categories of evaluation in WFP:

- i) Centralized evaluations: commissioned and managed by OEV and presented to the Board.¹¹ They focus on corporate strategy, policies or global programmes, strategic issues or themes, portfolios, operations and activities at the national, regional or global level.
- ii) Decentralized evaluations: commissioned and managed by country offices, regional bureaux or Headquarters-based divisions other than OEV. They are not presented to the Board. They cover operations, activities, pilots, themes, transfer modalities or any other area of action at the sub-national, national or multi-country level. They follow OEV's guidance – including impartiality safeguards – and quality assurance system.

⁹ <https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/>.

¹⁰ In humanitarian contexts, relevance and sustainability may be replaced by appropriateness, and coverage, connectedness and coherence are also considered (ALNAP. 2006. *Evaluating Humanitarian Action Using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-DAC Criteria*).

¹¹ With the exception of the current series of operation evaluations, for which an annual synthesis is presented.

8. Evaluation is an integral, complementary yet distinct element of WFP's oversight and performance management system¹² in that it uses findings from mechanisms such as appraisal, monitoring, reviews, audit and research (see Box 1) as part of the evidence base when independently assessing WFP's performance and results to support accountability and learning.

**Box 1: Distinguishing features of related performance
accountability and learning mechanisms**

- *Appraisal:*³ A critical assessment of the potential value of an undertaking made before a decision to implement.
- *Monitoring:*¹³ A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.
- *Review:*¹⁴ Periodic or ad hoc assessment of the performance of a programmatic intervention, or a specific aspect of a programme intervention, intended to inform decision-making and/or learning. A review tends to focus on operational issues and is typically managed internally, to enable timely decision-making and potential adjustments to an ongoing programme. Reviews do not have to conform to international norms or standards, or to publication requirements.
- *Audit:*¹⁵ The scope of internal auditing encompasses, but is not limited to, assessing the effectiveness, adequacy and application of internal control systems, governance and risk management processes as well as the quality of performance with respect to the achievement of WFP's stated goals and objectives.
- *Research:*³ A systematic enquiry to develop or contribute to knowledge that is not necessarily limited to a specific policy or intervention.

9. The evaluation function contributes to WFP being fit for purpose by providing its decision-makers and all stakeholders with independent assessment of results for accountability and learning to inform policy, strategic and programmatic decisions. Developing the evaluation function in line with the selected model requires a stronger and more integrated function across WFP.
10. Accordingly, the *vision* for this policy's theory of change (Figure 1) is that by 2021 evaluative thinking, behaviour and systems are embedded in WFP's culture of accountability and learning, enhancing its contribution to ending global hunger. Contributing to this vision, the *purpose* of the policy is to ensure that evaluation results are consistently and comprehensively integrated into WFP's policies, strategies and programmes.

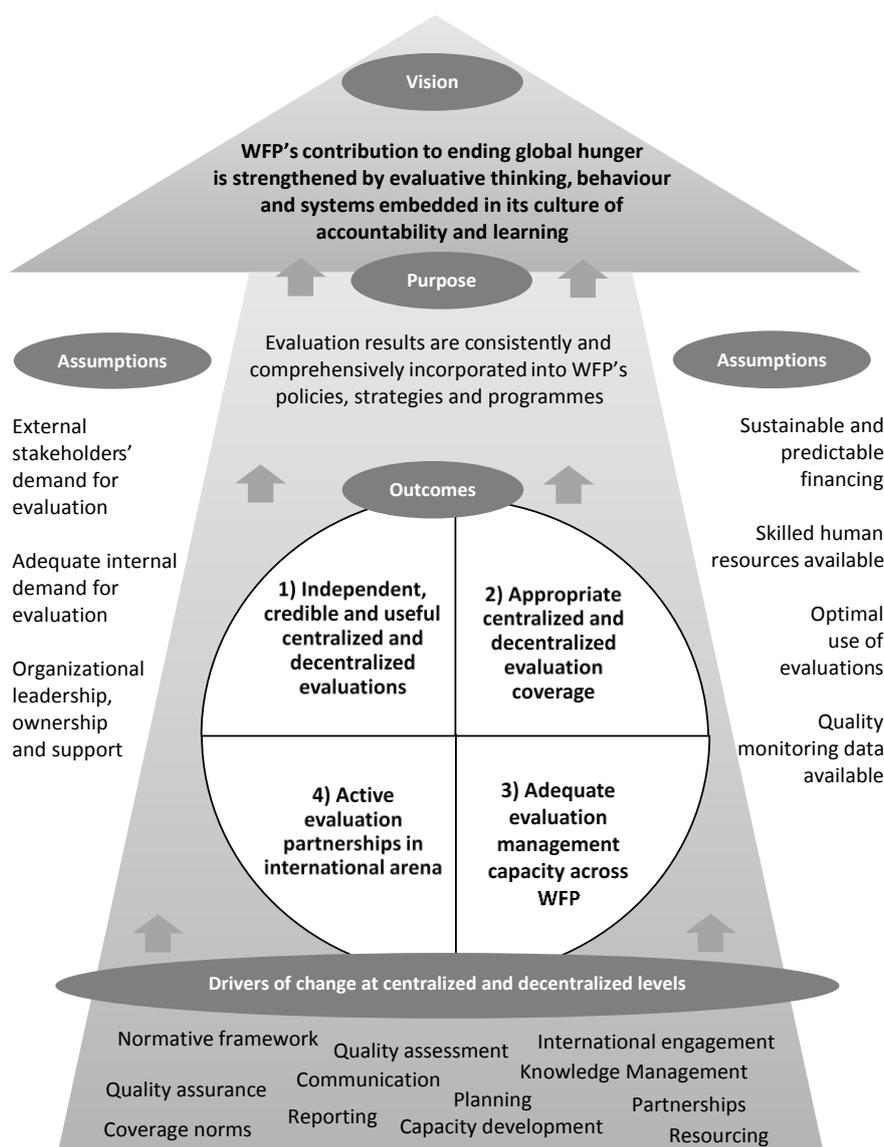
¹² Executive Director's Circular OED2014/014: WFP's Performance Management Policy – Performance Management in WFP: Towards Successful Implementation of the Strategic Plan (2014–2017).

¹³ OECD. 2010. *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*. <http://www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf>

¹⁴ WFP's Performance Management and Monitoring Division.

¹⁵ Executive Director's Circular OED2015/009: Charter of the Office of the Inspector General.

Figure 1: Theory of change



11. This purpose will be achieved through attainment of the following *outcomes*:

- i) Independent, credible and useful evaluations are embedded into the policy and programme cycle, with all evaluations managed in accordance with United Nations norms and standards and WFP's Evaluation Quality Assurance System (EQAS). This will create a conducive environment for all evaluations to be of good quality, publicly available, with systematic internal and external stakeholder involvement, thereby ensuring balanced and accurate findings that support relevant recommendations for optimal use in evidence-based decision-making. The enhancement of decentralized evaluation also provides opportunities for closer involvement of, and feedback to, cooperating partners and affected populations.
- ii) There is appropriate application of evaluation coverage norms to WFP's policies, strategies and programmes, either by OEV (centralized evaluations), or by other Headquarters divisions, regional bureaux and country offices (decentralized evaluations).

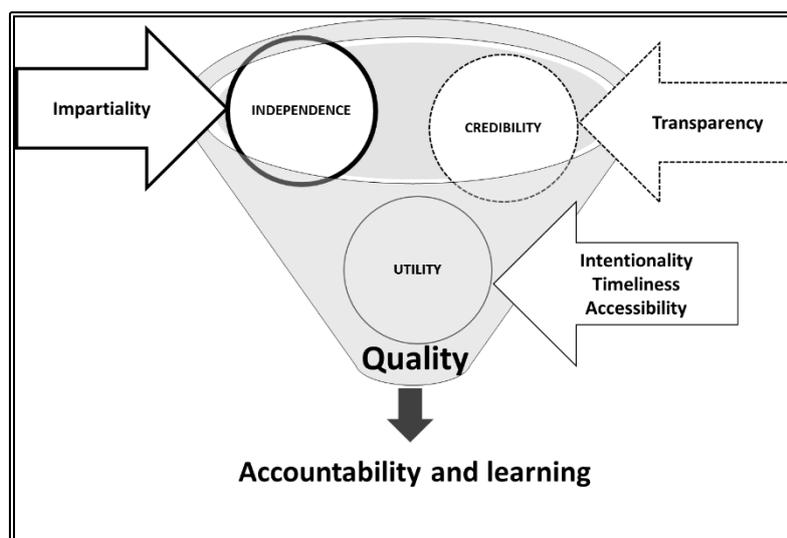
- iii) Capacities for evaluation are enhanced across WFP, with management arrangements that meet UNEG norms and standards.
 - iv) Best practices are developed and modelled in partnerships with other international humanitarian and development evaluation actors relevant to WFP's work.
12. Achievement of the policy requires application of several *drivers of change* that require investment and organizational support. The policy rests on several *assumptions* and will be seriously compromised if these are not realized. (Section VIII provides details on mitigation measures.)

IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Evaluation Principles

13. WFP's evaluation function is based on the UNEG evaluation principles³ of independence, credibility and utility. Application of these principles ensures evaluation quality, enhancing accountability and learning throughout WFP by increasing confidence in the independence and credibility of evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons for continual improvement of WFP's performance and results.

Figure 2: Evaluation principles



- *Independence* provides legitimacy to evaluation and reduces the potential for conflict of interest, which could arise if policy-makers and managers had sole responsibility for evaluating their own activities.¹⁶ Independence requires impartiality, so that evaluations are free from influences that may bias their selection, conduct, findings, conclusions, recommendations and reporting. WFP is committed to safeguarding the independence and impartiality of all its centralized and decentralized evaluations through the provisions specified in Table 1 and the roles and accountabilities in Section VII.

¹⁶ OECD-DAC. 1991. *Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance*. <http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/2755284.pdf>.

- *Credibility* is the extent to which evaluation findings and conclusions are fair, impartial and complete. Credibility is determined by the independence, impartiality, transparency, methodological appropriateness and rigour applied in evaluations. Adherence to WFP's EQAS ensures credibility, which is further supported under this policy by independent, transparent, quality assessment of completed evaluations.
- *Utility* is the extent to which evaluations are useful to decision-makers and stakeholders, informing policies, strategies and programmes and meeting accountability requirements. WFP is committed to enhancing utility by planning and conducting evaluations with clear intent to use their results; undertaking them in a timely way to inform decision-making processes; and ensuring the accessibility of evaluation results, making reports publicly available.

TABLE 1: INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY PROVISIONS		
UNEG norm	Centralized evaluation	Decentralized evaluation
The evaluation function is located independently from other management functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Evaluation heads an independent evaluation function within the WFP Secretariat • Evaluation budget is approved by the Board in the context of WFP's Management Plan; Director of Evaluation has full discretion and control over resources allocated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making on evaluation¹⁷ made by management as distinct from staff directly responsible for implementing evaluated interventions
The head of evaluation must have the independence to supervise and report on evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Evaluation has full discretion over evaluation selection, approval and issuance of evaluation reports to the Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms ensure that evaluations are free from undue influence and reporting is unbiased and transparent – e.g. external review of draft terms of reference (TOR), inception and evaluation reports
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All evaluations are publicly available • OEV ensures independent post-hoc quality assessment 	
To avoid conflict of interest and undue pressure, evaluators need to be independent of the entity being evaluated (evaluand)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All evaluations are conducted by independent consultants • Potential conflicts of interest are assessed prior to hiring of evaluation teams³ • All evaluators sign the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system 	
Evaluators must have no vested interest and have full freedom to conduct their evaluative work impartially		
The independence of the evaluation function should not impinge on the access that evaluators have to information on the subject of the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal provisions – the evaluation charter and the Directive on Information Disclosure – ensure that staff provide evaluators with access to information 	
Impartiality is the absence of bias at all stages of the evaluation process: planning, design and method, team selection, methodological rigour, data gathering, analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQAS • With due regard for confidentiality, evaluation design, process and reporting systematically take into account the views of all stakeholders • Analytical transparency is built into evaluation design, conduct and reporting • Coverage norms are applied • Mechanisms for assessing conflict of interest are used 	Provisions in addition to those for centralized evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decentralized EQAS (DEQAS) for transparent evaluation management • help-desk • OEV hotline for staff and evaluators • roles and accountabilities for evaluation integrated into: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) WFP's staff performance management system; and ii) the internal control assurance statements of directors

¹⁷ Decision-making (informed by Regional Evaluation Adviser advice for decentralized evaluations at country and regional levels) includes: evaluation selection, design, team selection, budgeting, TOR, inception and evaluation report approvals. Adjustments will be made for small country offices, including a larger role for the regional bureau.

Other Principles

14. The evaluation function contributes to WFP's international commitments by considering in evaluation processes, as appropriate, the application of:
- i) *the United Nations Charter*,¹⁸ including the principles of equity, justice, human rights and respect for diversity;
 - ii) *the humanitarian principles*¹⁹ of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, respect and independence;²⁰
 - iii) *gender, protection and accountability to affected populations*:
 - gender equality²¹ – in line with the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UNEG guidance is applied in all WFP's evaluations;²²
 - protection²³ – WFP abides by universally shared values of equity, justice, human rights – including prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse – and respect for diversity;
 - accountability to affected populations²⁴ – as a principal of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), WFP made five commitments related to accountability to affected populations – leadership/governance; transparency; feedback and complaints; participation; design, monitoring and evaluation;
 - iv) *ethics* – in line with its Code of Conduct,²⁵ WFP also applies UNEG standards of ethical practice³ and Code of Conduct for Evaluators;²⁶
 - v) *principles for interventions in fragile situations*²⁷ – WFP's transition policy framework²⁸ commits to eight principles: understand the context; maintain a hunger focus; at a minimum, avoid doing harm; support national priorities where possible, but follow humanitarian principles where conflict continues; support United Nations coherence; adapt to dynamic environments; ensure inclusivity and equity; and be realistic; and
 - vi) *the Paris Declaration principles*²⁹ of country ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for development results, and mutual accountability.

¹⁸ United Nations. 1945. United Nations Charter, Chapter IX, art. 55 c). United Nations Conference on International Organization.

¹⁹ United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 (1991) and 58/114 (2004).

²⁰ WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C; WFP/EB.2/2014/4-E.

²¹ WFP/EB.A/2015/5-A.

²² UNEG. *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation*.
<http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980>.

²³ WFP/EB.1/2012/5-B/Rev.1.

²⁴ IASC. 2011. Task Force on Accountability to Affected People
<http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=content-subsidi-common-default&sb=89>.

²⁵ Executive Director Circular OED2014/016.

²⁶ The codes of conduct are signed by staff and consultants.

²⁷ WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/1.

²⁸ WFP/EB.2/2013/4-A/Rev.1.

²⁹ OECD. 2005. *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*.

V. ELEMENTS OF THE EVALUATION FUNCTION

15. The evaluation function comprises the normative framework and the sum of accountabilities applicable at centralized and decentralized levels required to meet the policy objectives. Responsibilities for evaluation (see Section VII) are therefore shared across WFP, following standards and impartiality provisions overseen by OEV. The main elements of the normative framework are described in the following.

Planning and Selection

16. Selection of what, when and how to evaluate takes into account strategic relevance, demand, timeliness for decision-making, risks, knowledge gaps, feasibility and evaluability, proportionality and complexity. This policy integrates evaluation more closely into WFP's policy and programme management cycle, with planning for evaluation occurring at two levels:

- *Centralized evaluation:* OEV develops its annual work plan setting priorities for evaluations and development of the evaluation function consistent with the established norms and available resources. To ensure impartiality, the plan is elaborated independently by the Director of Evaluation, in consultation with WFP senior management and other main stakeholders, and presented to the Board as part of WFP's Management Plan.
- *Decentralized evaluation:* Based on the coverage norms (see Table 3), initial decisions regarding evaluation will be made when a strategy or programme is being designed and approved, to facilitate resourcing and planning, without prejudicing additional subsequent demand.

17. For efficient use of resources, OEV will regularly consult relevant Headquarters divisions, regional bureaux and country offices to facilitate complementarity with other learning and accountability mechanisms (see Box 1), and between centralized and decentralized evaluations. The type, timing, approach and method of an evaluation should be appropriate to its intended use and to policy and programme requirements, while complying with coverage norms. Table 2 indicates the types of evaluation WFP currently conducts.

TABLE 2: EVALUATION TYPES	
Policy evaluations	Are embedded in WFP's policy framework ³ to assess policies' quality, implementation and results
Strategic evaluations	Assess global or corporate themes, programmes and initiatives, selected for their relevance to WFP's strategic direction and management
Country or regional portfolio evaluations	Assess the strategic positioning, performance and results of all of WFP's work in a country or region
Operation evaluations	Assess the appropriateness, performance and results of individual operations, helping to embed evaluation planning and use of results in the programme cycle
Impact evaluations	Assess the positive and negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended changes in the lives of affected populations in receipt of WFP interventions
Evaluations of corporate emergency responses	Assess corporate emergency responses, with particular attention to humanitarian context and principles, and the coverage, coherence and connectedness of the response
Joint evaluations: Given the benefits of a common approach for collective accountability and learning, any of these evaluation types may be conducted jointly with partners when appropriate. In the wider context of the United Nations and the SDGs, joint evaluations are increasingly relevant at the decentralized level.	

Coverage Norms

18. The policy sets norms for ensuring appropriate evaluation coverage across WFP. Under the selected model, there is a need to balance requirements for systematic and sufficient evaluation coverage corporately across the whole of WFP's work, with a demand-led approach at the decentralized level. Thus the norms indicated in Table 3 set minimum corporate expectations within which commissioning units have the flexibility to prioritize topics, interventions and timing in line with their programmes of work and stakeholders' needs.
19. While there are no minimum coverage norms for impact³⁰ or joint evaluations, the policy encourages these at the centralized and decentralized level as appropriate.

TABLE 3: MINIMUM EVALUATION COVERAGE NORMS	
Centralized evaluation	Decentralized evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic evaluations providing balanced coverage of WFP's core planning instruments, including Strategic Plan elements and related strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of at least 50% of each country office's portfolio of activities³¹ within a 3-year period³²
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of policies 4–6 years after implementation starts³³ 	Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> before scale-up of pilots, innovations, and prototypes; for high-risk³⁴ interventions; and before third repeat of an intervention of similar type and scope
Country portfolio evaluations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> every 5 years for the 10 largest country offices (2 per year) every 10–12 years for all other country offices (7 per year) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of all corporate emergency responses, sometimes jointly with IASC 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centrally managed operation evaluations providing balanced coverage³⁵ 	
All country programmes	

20. In the interests of efficiency, where these evaluation coverage norms are met, national governments and other stakeholders are encouraged to use WFP's evaluations in fulfilling their own evaluation requirements.

³⁰ Impact Evaluations are usually conducted where a significant knowledge gap exists; when managed centrally they are undertaken in series across countries, on one of WFP's major activities or modalities.

³¹ In terms of USD value of resourced requirements and implemented through operations or trust funds.

³² In countries with only one development project or country programme, evaluations can be every five years.

³³ WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B.

³⁴ WFP/EB.A/2015/5-B.

³⁵ The current temporary series of centrally managed operation evaluations is expected to wind down as the decentralized evaluation function develops. Operation evaluations can also be decentralized.

Quality Management

21. *Quality assurance:* A high-quality evaluation requires a carefully planned and executed process that has been managed in line with WFP's EQAS, based on UNEG norms, standards and guidance. EQAS provides process maps, templates, checklists and technical notes for all evaluation types.
22. *Quality assessment:* The quality of all completed evaluations will be independently assessed against predefined standards, with results reported in the annual evaluation report. This will contribute to the transparency, credibility and utility of evaluations.

Use, Communication and Follow Up

23. Recognizing evaluation's contribution to knowledge and the evidence base, WFP is committed to strengthening learning by actively communicating evaluation results to all stakeholders and maximizing their use in policy, strategy and programme design.
24. Building on current products and processes, appropriate communication of results to diverse stakeholders and affected populations will be considered throughout the planning and implementation of each evaluation.
25. To bring evaluation insights closer to potential users, the evaluation repository will be enhanced to include decentralized evaluations. In collaboration with corporate initiatives for enhancing WFP's Internet, intranet and knowledge management, and international evaluation networks and platforms, accessibility and searchability will be improved.
26. Systems for approving policies, strategies and programmes will require the incorporation of evaluation evidence and plans for future evaluations. All evaluations and management responses will be publicly available.
27. The Board considers all centralized evaluations and their management responses.¹¹ Supported by regular engagement between management and OEV during the finalization of centralized evaluations and their management responses, WFP is committed to ensuring coherence between evaluation recommendations and management responses. Management monitors and reports to the Board on follow-up to central evaluation recommendations,³⁶ tracking actions and responses to determine implementation status and further action required. OEV synthesizes the findings of all centralized evaluations in an annual evaluation report presented to the Board, identifying systemic issues and making overarching recommendations.

³⁶ Through annual performance reports and annual reports on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations.

VI. PARTNERSHIP

28. The SDGs call for renewed partnerships among evaluation stakeholders. The enhanced decentralized evaluation function increases WFP's ability to build evaluation partnerships with governments, multi- and bilateral agencies, civil society, academia and other stakeholders at the national level. Its prominent position in the global humanitarian system also gives WFP a unique opportunity to collaborate with evaluation partners to facilitate global humanitarian effectiveness and accountability.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

29. Reflecting the wider contextual changes, there is increasing demand for system-wide³⁷ and inter-agency collaboration on evaluation. Joint and inter-agency evaluations offer increased coverage, cost-efficiency and understanding among agencies and partners at the corporate and national levels. Collaboration on evaluations will take place wherever appropriate, including among the Rome-based agencies and through the United Nations independent system-wide evaluation mechanism. OEV will also take a leading role in raising the profile, coverage and quality of humanitarian evaluation in partnership with the IASC inter-agency humanitarian evaluation mechanism, UNEG and others.

Evaluation Capacity Development

30. WFP will work with UNEG and partners to meet the commitments of the 2014 United Nations resolution on building national evaluation capacity³⁸ in line with the role of evaluation envisaged in the SDG framework.³⁹ Recognizing that the decentralized evaluation function will be the main route for this, OEV will support regional bureaux and country offices in: i) engaging with national governments and partners to strengthen demand for and learning from evaluation in WFP's areas of work; and ii) developing partnerships with national and regional evaluation institutions and experts to enhance both evaluation capacity and the pool of evaluation expertise.

³⁷ JIU. 2013. *Policy for Independent System-wide Evaluation of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System*. http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/julyhls/pdf13/policy_for_independent_system-wide_evaluation_of_operational_activities_for_development_of_the_united_nations.pdf.

³⁸ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/237 (2014).

³⁹ *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

VII. ROLES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

31. Achieving this policy requires a range of roles and accountabilities across WFP.

Executive Board

32. The Board exercises oversight of the evaluation function through the following roles.

<i>Normative framework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Approving this evaluation policy; safeguarding its provisions. ii) Approving the appointment, made by the Executive Director, of the Director of Evaluation. iii) Providing strategic guidance on the evaluation function through the annual consultation on evaluation and evaluation roundtables. iv) Fostering an evaluation culture as <i>members</i> of WFP's Governing Body and in the countries they represent.
<i>Oversight</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Considering annual evaluation reports,⁴⁰ which include progress on implementation of the evaluation policy and effectiveness of the evaluation function – both centralized and decentralized elements – and guiding management in policy implementation. ii) Considering all centralized evaluation reports. iii) Considering timely and substantive management responses to all the evaluations presented, and reports on follow-up action.
<i>Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reviewing OEV's work plan and priorities as set out in WFP's Management Plan.
<i>Resourcing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) As part of WFP's Management Plan approving OEV's budget. Reviewing trends in the human and financial resources dedicated to centralized and decentralized evaluations through the annual evaluation report.
<i>Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Considering use of evaluation evidence when approving new policies, strategies, programmes, management plans and other relevant documents. ii) Using evidence generated by evaluations in its decision-making.

⁴⁰ Decentralized evaluations and inter-agency humanitarian evaluations are reported on in the annual evaluation report only.

The Executive Director

33. The Executive Director is accountable for the following.

<i>Normative framework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Safeguarding the provisions of this policy, particularly regarding coverage norms, resourcing, accountabilities and impartiality provisions for decentralized evaluation. ii) Issuing the evaluation charter. iii) Fostering a corporate culture of accountability and learning, embedding evaluation principles into management and decision-making. iv) Appointing, subject to Executive Board approval, a Director of Evaluation who is a professionally competent evaluator with no conflict of interest, for a single six-year term with no re-entry into WFP.⁴¹
<i>Resourcing</i>	i) As part of WFP's management and project planning processes, allocating human and financial resources across WFP to ensure evaluation capacity and coverage in line with the evaluation policy's provisions.
<i>Management response</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring that substantive management responses to evaluation recommendations are published when an evaluation report is considered by the Board, follow-up actions are implemented and progress on their implementation is reported annually. ii) Responding to the annual evaluation report, and ensuring that actions are taken to support a high-performing WFP evaluation function.
<i>Use</i>	i) Encouraging evaluative thinking, and drawing on evaluations to ensure evidence-based decision-making on policies, strategies and programmes.
<i>International engagement</i>	i) Supporting WFP's contributions to evaluation internationally, and – particularly as an IASC Principal – humanitarian evaluation.

The Director of Evaluation

34. The Director of Evaluation heads an independent evaluation function within the WFP Secretariat. She/he serves only in an advisory or observer role in committees or task forces established for management purposes. Through the Office of Evaluation, the Director of Evaluation provides global leadership, standard-setting and oversight of WFP's entire evaluation function and is accountable for the following.

<i>Normative framework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Leading implementation of the evaluation policy, ensuring adherence to UNEG norms and standards and application of latest evaluation practice. ii) Developing and leading implementation of the evaluation strategy. iii) Supporting the Executive Director's promotion of a corporate culture of accountability and learning. iv) Setting the normative framework for centralized and decentralized evaluations – norms, standards, safeguards for impartiality, guidance and expected coverage.
<i>Oversight</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Providing assurance on compliance with evaluation principles by all centralized evaluations. ii) Overseeing and reporting on the decentralized evaluation function. iii) Facilitating dialogue with senior management on the performance and further development of the evaluation function.
<i>Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Elaborating OEV's work plan in consultation with WFP senior management and other stakeholders, for the Board's consideration as part of WFP's Management Plan. ii) Ensuring an enabling framework for the planning of decentralized evaluations. iii) Ensuring regular consultations with regional bureaux and country offices, for complementarity between centralized and decentralized evaluations.

⁴¹ As an interim arrangement to ensure continuity, the term of the incumbent Director, which expires on 7 January 2016, shall be extended by one year. The single 6-year term of appointment will take effect from the entry into service of the next Director of Evaluation.

<i>Resourcing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Exercising full delegated authority over all human and financial resources allocated to OEV. ii) Proposing a budget corresponding to OEV's work plan, for the Board's consideration as part of WFP's Management Plan. iii) Supporting the development of a sustainable corporate financing mechanism for decentralized evaluations.
<i>Management response</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Engaging with management to advise on coherence between centralized evaluation recommendations and management responses.
<i>Management of centralized evaluations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Delivering quality evaluations. ii) Recruiting independent evaluation consultants. iii) Ensuring adherence to the Code of Conduct for Evaluators. iv) Submitting reports directly to the Board without prior clearance by WFP management.
<i>Quality assurance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Updating and disseminating evaluation methods and other guidance materials through EQAS to ensure that WFP evaluation practice meets UNEG and other relevant international standards. ii) Ensuring adherence to EQAS for all centralized evaluations and designing systems that support adherence to DEQAS.
<i>Quality assessment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring independent quality assessment of all completed evaluations in WFP.
<i>Capacity development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Setting up and implementing with stakeholders within WFP a comprehensive approach to internal capacity development for the decentralized evaluation function, coherent with corporate human resources and monitoring strategies.
<i>Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Publishing all centralized evaluation reports on the WFP website. ii) Ensuring timely and appropriate communication of evaluation results to support organizational learning. iii) Organizing the annual consultation on evaluation and evaluation roundtables.
<i>International engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Leading WFP's engagement in UNEG and other professional evaluation networks. ii) Supporting the efforts of UNEG and WFP to develop national evaluation capacity as relevant. iii) Promoting joint evaluations whenever appropriate.
<i>Reporting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Approving centralized evaluation reports for direct presentation to the Board without prior clearance by the Executive Director and WFP management. ii) Preparing and publishing the annual evaluation report, including reporting on progress in implementing the policy.

Regional Directors

35. The evaluation function is shared across WFP. Regional Directors have an important role in the decentralized evaluation function and in evaluations commissioned by country offices, being accountable for the following.

<i>Normative framework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring application of provisions for the decentralized evaluation function, including coverage norms and impartiality. ii) Taking appropriate action to strengthen decentralized evaluation with the support of OEV.
<i>Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Engaging in regular consultations with OEV and country offices to ensure complementarity between centralized and decentralized evaluations. ii) Ensuring that plans for decentralized evaluations are included in the design of strategies and interventions.
<i>Resourcing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring that resources are budgeted to manage independent decentralized evaluations and provide regional-level support.
<i>Management responses and follow-up actions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring that management responses to decentralized evaluations are prepared and made publicly available, and that relevant follow-up actions are undertaken.
<i>Quality assurance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Overseeing application of DEQAS.
<i>Capacity development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) With OEV, providing technical advice to country offices managing decentralized evaluations.

<i>Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring that new programmes and strategies prepared in the region are based on evidence from evaluations. ii) Ensuring that all decentralized evaluation reports are publicly available.
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Directors of Headquarters Divisions, Regional and Country Directors

36. Directors of Headquarters divisions, regions and country offices can commission decentralized evaluations. In addition, they are stakeholders in centralized evaluations. Accordingly, they are accountable for the following.

As commissioners of decentralized evaluations	
<i>Normative framework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Complying with the evaluation policy's provisions and safeguards for impartiality. ii) Meeting coverage norms.
<i>Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Including plans for evaluation in the design of interventions – consistent with the evaluation policy's coverage norms – and ensuring interventions' evaluability by establishing appropriate baselines, indicators and targets for expected results. ii) Including evaluation in office work plans. iii) Promoting joint evaluations whenever feasible and relevant.
<i>Resourcing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Budgeting adequately for the management and conduct of independent decentralized evaluations.
<i>Management of decentralized evaluations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Designing and managing evaluations in compliance with UNEG norms and standards. ii) Identifying, recruiting and managing evaluation consultants. iii) Ensuring consultants' adherence to the Code of Conduct for Evaluators. iv) Using competitive and performance-based procedures for recruitment.
<i>Management responses and follow-up actions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Preparing management responses and ensuring that they are publicly available. ii) Undertaking and reporting on follow-up actions.
<i>Quality assurance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Applying DEQAS.
<i>Quality assessment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reviewing quality assessment reports on completed evaluations and taking action to improve the quality of future evaluations.
<i>Capacity development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) With the support of OEV, strengthening staff capacities to manage decentralized evaluations.
<i>Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Using evidence from decentralized evaluations in preparing new policies, programmes, strategies and other interventions. ii) Ensuring that decentralized evaluation reports are publicly available.
As stakeholders of centralized evaluations	
<i>Support for the conduct of evaluations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensuring the evaluability of WFP's undertakings – establishing baseline information, performance indicators and targets for expected results. ii) Facilitating the evaluation process and providing access to required information. iii) Engaging in consultation on evaluation plans and providing feedback on evaluation products.
<i>Resourcing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) <i>Country Directors only</i>: Contributing financially to selected operation evaluations managed by OEV.⁴²
<i>Management response and follow-up actions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Preparing management responses to assigned evaluation recommendations, implementing follow-up actions and reporting on them.
<i>Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Using evidence from centralized evaluations to inform the preparation of new programmes, strategies and policies.

⁴² Executive Director Decision Memo, December 2015: Extension in time and revision of targets for the Executive Director Decision Memo 5/10/2012; Establishment of a Special Account for Operation Evaluations and Approval of Direct Support Costs Funding Modality.

VIII. RESOURCES AND RISKS

37. An effective evaluation function requires secure, predictable and adequate financial and human resources to attain and sustain balanced and sufficient evaluation coverage for accountability requirements and learning needs. In responding to the peer review recommendations, WFP recognized that sustainable financing and resourcing for evaluation are priorities, and management is committed to following a phased approach to implementing this policy.

Human Resources

38. Independence requires appropriate separation of evaluation from other functions (see Table 1) to avoid conflicts of interest, in addition to application of the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the United Nations system to generic job profiles for WFP evaluation staff and to contracts for evaluation consultants. Application by staff of behavioural independence and impartiality provisions must not have repercussions, including in their career advancement.

39. To be effective the evaluation function requires adequate skilled human resources:

i) *External specialists*⁴³ will be hired to conduct all the evaluations commissioned in WFP and certain evaluation-related tasks such as quality assessments of completed evaluations. OEV will develop and maintain a roster of individual evaluators and service providers from around the world.

ii) *WFP evaluation officers*:

➤ OEV's capacities will be enhanced to meet the needs of the augmented evaluation function, and will continue to be staffed by a 50:50 mix of: i) externally recruited evaluation specialists with high levels of proven competency and experience; and ii) current WFP staff with the required competency for evaluation, appointed in line with WFP's reassignment policy and required to serve a minimum of four years when assigned to an evaluation position. This mix ensures an appropriate combination of evaluation expertise and knowledge of WFP's operations and work environment.

➤ From 2017, an experienced evaluation officer will also be hired and posted in each regional bureau, reporting directly to management – the Regional Director or Deputy Regional Director – with technical reporting to OEV. These posts will be financed through the Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) budget for predictability, independence from programmes, and adequate staffing.

iii) *Other WFP staff*:

➤ WFP monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and programme staff and managers will receive the necessary training and technical support to fulfil their evaluation accountabilities.

➤ To reduce risk or bias, to the extent possible, M&E officers in country offices should report directly to management of the country office.

40. The decentralized evaluation function requires investments in staff capacities to commission, manage and use high-quality decentralized evaluations, through assigning additional professional human resources and building the skills of existing staff. In line with

⁴³ When recruiting evaluation specialists, WFP is committed to maintaining a balance between men and women from developed and developing countries while ensuring high-quality evaluations.

WFP's People Strategy, OEV will provide a comprehensive capacity development framework for decentralized evaluation, including online guidance, training and technical advice.

41. OEV will continue to ensure that its staff maintain appropriate technical skills to deliver high-quality centralized evaluations, engaging with relevant professional evaluation networks.

Financial Resources

42. The 2014 JIU assessment of the evaluation function in the United Nations system indicated that organizations dedicated between 0.5 and 3 percent of their expenditures to evaluation, depending on the mandate, size and role of the function in the organization.⁴⁴
43. Recognizing the character of WFP's work and its funding specificities,⁴⁵ WFP is committed to assigning 0.8 percent of its total contribution income to addressing the needs of its entire evaluation function. This target will be met progressively over the life of this policy, to match application of the coverage norms for centralized and decentralized evaluations and augmentation of OEV's responsibilities.
44. The budget for OEV's annual work plan is approved by the Board as part of WFP's Management Plan. It includes costs for oversight and reporting of the entire evaluation function; centralized evaluations; and managing the enabling framework for the decentralized evaluation function. All funds allocated for delivery of the work plan are managed by the Director of Evaluation. This financial independence applies equally to funds from the PSA budget and other sources.
45. For the decentralized evaluation function, a mix of funding sources is required: i) PSA for operationalizing the function at the regional level (see paragraphs 35 and 39); and ii) project funds and other sources⁴⁶ to cover the costs of decentralized evaluations. Aligned with WFP's financial framework, a sustainable financing mechanism will be established and adjusted as required to ensure allocations for funding evaluations selected in line with coverage norms and included in project budgets. The mechanism will include specific arrangements for small country offices and/or underfunded projects, and will smooth fluctuations in contributions.
46. Corporate reporting systems for budgets and expenditures will be adapted as appropriate to increase the visibility and transparency of budget allocations and expenditures for decentralized evaluation.

Risks

47. The theory of change in Figure 1 identifies several assumptions for an effective evaluation function. Should these fail to materialize sufficiently, there is a risk that the function will be unable to achieve its intended outcomes and purpose, which will affect the achievement of corporate strategic objectives and management results related to processes, systems, accountability and funding. The risks identified are mainly programmatic – hampering

⁴⁴ The evaluation policies of the United Nations Children's Fund, UN-Women, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culture Organization and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs all set targets of between 1 and 3 percent; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations sets 0.8 percent; and the International Fund for Agricultural Development 0.9 percent.

⁴⁵ e.g. voluntary, in-kind and twinning contributions.

⁴⁶ Including multilateral funding, trust funds and grants.

WFP's improvement of effectiveness through evidence-based information – and institutional, related to reputational loss. The risks for the evaluation function, their levels as defined in WFP's Enterprise Risk Management Policy⁴⁷ and mitigating actions are identified in Table 4.

TABLE 4: RISK ANALYSIS	
Risk	Mitigating measures
1. Low external and/or unpredictable demand for evaluation from stakeholders (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of evaluation planning into WFP's programme cycle • Advocacy for increasing stakeholders' use of, and support to, WFP's evaluations
2. Low internal demand for evaluation (high)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring good-quality evaluations • Raising awareness of the utility of evaluations and coverage norms • Inclusion of evaluation evidence and planning for evaluation in the project review process • Reporting on the application of coverage norms • Integration of roles and accountabilities for evaluation into WFP's staff performance management system
3. Insufficient organizational leadership, ownership and support (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board reviewing key performance indicators for the evaluation function, making decisions, and conveying expectations and guidance on improving performance • Top management's fostering of a corporate culture of accountability and learning that embeds evaluation into decision-making
4. Sub-optimal use of evaluation (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management ensuring the systematic consideration of evaluation findings in new policies, strategies and programme design • OEV commenting on the use of evidence • OEV/other units ensuring relevance, timeliness and quality of evaluations
5. Inadequate human resources – skills and staff (high)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEV/other units providing a capacity development framework for decentralized evaluation – guidance, training, technical advice • Putting regional evaluation advisers in place
6. Unpredictable and inadequate financial resources (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate commitment to assigning 0.8 percent of contribution income by the end of the policy period • Sustainable financing mechanisms for progressively meeting coverage norms • Phased approach to application of the decentralized evaluation function
7. Limited quality monitoring data (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management's commitment to improving the corporate monitoring system and capacities • Partial compensation through primary data collection and triangulation of information by evaluation teams • Planning of evaluation at the start of the project cycle to facilitate the identification of monitoring requirements

⁴⁷ WFP/EB.A/2015/5-B.

IX. IMPLEMENTATION, OVERSIGHT, REPORTING AND REVIEW

Policy Roll-Out and Implementation

48. On approval of the policy, roll-out will be supported by a communication plan for embedding understanding of the policy's vision and objectives and of evaluation roles and accountabilities across WFP.
49. The evaluation strategy will link the evaluation policy to WFP's Management Plan, with performance indicators for monitoring the overall evaluation function. It will complement WFP's corporate monitoring strategy and approach to programme reviews, as part of a coordinated approach to strengthening the evidence base for decision-making, performance management, learning and accountability for results.
50. The strategy will detail management arrangements and implementation plans for the policy's provisions on development of evaluation capacity; resourcing, selection, coverage, conduct, reporting and use of evaluations; and adherence to quality and impartiality standards. It will follow a phased approach taking into account the availability of resources: during year 1, guidance, quality standards, training materials, rating and reporting systems for decentralized evaluation will be developed and tested. Along with the roll-out of guidance and systems developed in year 1, a sustainable financing mechanism and human resource requirements will be operationalized progressively from year 2.

Oversight and Reporting

51. As requested by the Board at its Second Regular Session in 2014, in collaboration with management, OEV will develop a set of key performance indicators to support the Board's oversight of evaluation across WFP. The annual evaluation report is the primary instrument for reporting on the entire function, and includes common findings from centralized evaluations, quality assessment of all evaluations, progress on key performance indicators for the evaluation function, and OEV's performance against its work plan.
52. Priority will be given to function performance indicators that facilitate the Board's strategic oversight and provide information on progress towards the achievement of the policy's intended outcomes and purpose. Some of these indicators are integrated into WFP's overall management results framework; others will require changes to WFP's corporate systems and will therefore be introduced over time. In line with WFP's response to the peer review, areas of reporting include the following:
 - i) *Embedding the evaluation function in WFP*: Progress in establishing the institutional framework, systems and processes for ensuring a sustainable, independent and impartial evaluation function, including evaluation capacity and competence.
 - ii) *Resourcing of the evaluation function*: Trends in the human and financial resources dedicated to centralized and decentralized evaluation.
 - iii) *Evaluation coverage*: Numbers, types and geographical scope of evaluations completed across WFP compared with coverage norms.
 - iv) *Quality of evaluations*: Analysis of the quality assessments of completed evaluations.

- v) *Learning and use of evaluation*: The extent to which evidence from evaluations is used in policy, strategy and programme design; the accessibility of evaluation evidence; and public transparency.
 - vi) *Effectiveness and efficiency of evaluation partnerships*: Numbers and types of joint evaluations, engagement in system-wide evaluation initiatives, and other collaborative ventures.
53. OEV and the Office of Internal Audit will coordinate so that evaluation coverage and use of recommendations are appropriately considered in country office internal audits when relevant.
54. The recognized mechanism for evaluating evaluation policies in the United Nations is the DAC/UNEG external peer review. Such a review is planned for 2020, to inform the development of the next policy.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEQAS	decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System
EQAS	Evaluation Quality Assurance System
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TOR	terms of reference
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group