



WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT KEY MESSAGES March 2015

WFP Desired Outcomes

WFP Key Messages:

- Humanitarian Effectiveness
- Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk
- Transformation through Innovation
- Serving People Affected by Conflict
- Disaster Risk Management
- Humanitarian Financing and Good Humanitarian Donorship

WFP Desired Outcomes

WFP has a keen interest in ensuring that the structure of the future humanitarian system is effective, efficient and fit for purpose. The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) is potentially an important catalyst for change, where WFP seeks three principal outcomes:

- Member States and other participants must arrive at a mutual commitment to safeguard principled humanitarian action, protect civilians in conflict and allow affected populations to access assistance.
- The financing architecture must be overhauled to overcome the divide between humanitarian action and development. New mechanisms are required to mobilize resources more predictably, and over a longer time frame. Such funding mechanisms would allow international actors to work more effectively with governments and local responders to enhance preparedness, rapid emergency response, resilience-building, and response to protracted crises.
- Humanitarian leadership must be competent, legitimate and accountable, drawn from relevant humanitarian backgrounds, while coordination structures must be flexible, inclusive and concentrated on the operational level and actors.

WFP Key Messages on Humanitarian Effectiveness

System Parameters

- The fundamentals of General Assembly resolution 46/182, which laid the foundation of the current humanitarian system, are still relevant: the need for coordination; the importance of a principled approach; the emphasis on national governments as first responder; and international support to strengthen capacity for preparedness, prevention and sustainable solutions.
- WHS should determine whether the current system based on these foundations is the most effective way of delivering coordinated assistance. The growing sophistication and complexity in how humanitarian assistance is organized must not become an obstacle to humanitarian effectiveness.
- The spirit of the Transformative Agenda – and the three pillars of leadership, coordination and accountability – should be carried into the WHS. However, the Transformative Agenda should provide leaner and more effective coordination structures which enable maximum operational effectiveness.
- General Assembly resolution 46/182 and subsequent adjustments have not generated collective accountability, neither for those affected by humanitarian crisis, nor those that support and sponsor humanitarian action. This is a significant weakness and is worthy of serious reflection at the WHS.

Operational Effectiveness

- Progress has been made in improving the performance of the humanitarian system at country level. The role of the Resident Coordinator (RC)/Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) has been strengthened. However, the RC/HC can only be effective as a leader if the other leaders within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) are also empowered to meet their responsibilities, and if all actors within the humanitarian architecture abide by their commitment to an effective joined-up response.
- WHS is an opportunity to optimize the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of coordination. The success indicator of coordination is the extent to which it facilitates the timely delivery of assistance that meets the needs of communities and individuals on the ground.
- There is a need to review the membership and configuration of inter-agency coordination fora based on operational and contextual relevance. A future model should be attentive to sequencing of humanitarian action, prioritizing action responding to life-saving needs in response to sudden onset crises and adaptable to slow-onset and protracted emergencies.
- Scale, cost-efficiency and innovation represent comparative advantages of certain humanitarian agencies in specific areas. Donors expect increased reliance on common services and WFP strives to provide the best possible common services for the humanitarian community. WFP will build on its role as cluster lead agency for logistics and emergency telecommunications, as well as on its United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) capabilities, to extend service provision to common delivery platforms for cash & voucher solutions.
- Considering the increasing demand, scale and volume of humanitarian response, common service providers need to critically examine rapid scale-up capacity required to maintain quality across multiple crises. For those with both a coordination and service provision role, it is worth examining whether these roles are better combined or separated in order to meet future needs.

Accountability to Affected Populations

- WFP fully supports efforts to engender greater collective accountability across humanitarian responses. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) provide a common basis to achieve this, but require greater efforts at country level. This means adapting the way assistance is provided based on an intrinsic trust in the affected people and recognition of communities' capacities and will to recover. Humanitarian staff need to be supportive not prescriptive, cultivating a spirit of solidarity, partnership and community cohesiveness.
- Donors can play an important role in supporting AAP, by prioritizing projects developed in consultation with communities, and publicly state that this is a prioritization criteria. WFP calls on donors and other decision-makers within the system to encourage and support flexible, iterative approaches to programme delivery based on inter-action with and feedback from communities.

WFP Key Messages on Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk

- ***Managing risk and reducing vulnerability requires concerted, sustained efforts at scale.*** Efforts to build resilience need to be integrated into humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Reducing vulnerability should not be seen as solely a development concern. Investment in prevention, predictable early action, and resilience-building is cost-effective, averts humanitarian crises and promotes broader developmental outcomes for all. The benefit to cost ratios for early response and resilience-building actions vary between 2.3 to 1 and 13.2 to 1, depending on the country.¹
- ***Improving the quality and outcomes delivered through humanitarian programming is essential – especially in protracted food crises.*** The WHS should call for improved analysis, planning, partnerships, capacities and funding to deliver higher quality programmes and integrated emergency response able to meeting urgent needs and save lives, whilst generating greater recovery and developmental outcomes.
- ***Design, invest in and deliver programmes that address the underlying risk and causes of vulnerability that drive food insecurity and malnutrition.*** Resilience programming is hampered by linear approaches treating relief, recovery, rehabilitation and development as separate activities, and by financing that dichotomizes emergency and longer-term development assistance. The United Nations and Member States need to make a fundamental shift in approach in order to build the resilience of food-insecure communities. Investing in resilience saves lives, reduces costs and establishes solid foundations for sustained food security and improved nutrition. WFP is committed to placing people at the centre of planning, programme design and results management, while responding to the different gendered needs of the most vulnerable.
- ***Governments and communities are at the centre of humanitarian assistance.*** The international community must adapt to a changing context of government capacity. In many countries emergency preparedness, risk management, social protection and safety net systems are improving; often with support from the international community. WFP and international actors need to further increase direct investments in national systems and in augmenting government capacity, within government-led coalitions able to deliver effective humanitarian response at scale. This requires improving standards for context analysis, assessment, and coordination at different levels, targeting, programme design and delivery, as well as risk financing.
- ***The international humanitarian system needs to reinforce national systems, including disaster preparedness, management and social protection systems.*** Disaster response should be nationally-led. This means integrating international response into national safety net and social protection systems which have proven effective mechanisms to scale up action in response to a crisis. It also means focusing international efforts on

¹ Study commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID) on the Economics of Early Response and Resilience.

building national and local capacities for preparedness and early action. Where this is not possible, the international humanitarian system must be prepared to respond at all times.

- ***WHS proposals and the Post-2015 frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change and Sustainable Development should be mutually reinforcing.*** The WHS should highlight the need for actions in the areas of disaster risk reduction, preparedness, recovery, and climate change adaptation that reduce the need for humanitarian response and the financial requirements for emergency relief. The WHS should be a confirmation of the United Nations' commitment to achieving the Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC), with an emphasis on ensuring full access to adequate and nutritious food all year round. ZHC initiatives will also reinforce the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the emerging goal 2 which aims to eliminate hunger and achieve food security.

Transformation through Innovation

Transformative Innovation is for People

- Innovation in food assistance challenges not only the What (food, nutrition, products, cash & vouchers), but also the Why (our new understanding of needs), the Who (more effective beneficiary targeting and selection by activity), and the When (seasonality, etc.).
- Innovation needs to go beyond technical improvements to current operational shortcomings. It is natural for the United Nations to emphasize 'product' or 'process' innovations that improve the efficiencies of our traditional work. However, while these may be necessary tools of innovation, they are insufficient.
- The new model of food assistance begins with identifying the most appropriate solutions for people to meet their immediate food and nutrition requirements. It then draws on a wide range of material, financial, technical, policy, and analytic resources through public, social, and market partnerships to design interventions. Often the food assistance approach will not entail WFP delivery of any food.
- *Transformative innovation in the United Nations system should not just improve the products and practices of traditional core services, but explore new partnerships, divisions of roles and new service models to better solve client challenges.*

Transformative Innovation is about Outcomes at Scale

- There is a natural tendency to prize 'new or different' as the hallmark of innovation and to celebrate clever ideas, nifty devices and shiny technology rather than beneficiary impact and results.
- The emphasis on the front end of innovation – ideation and brainstorming – falls well short of transformational innovation, unless they translate into results measurable at scale.
- The United Nations' comparative advantage is in facilitating service delivery at scale. Scaling does not just require a catchy idea. It requires a conducive environment, repeated testing and fine-tuning ideas in practice, adjusting course based on carefully captured evidence, and updating legacy systems and organizational processes to enable new ways of working.

- *To be transformative, donors and agencies must focus not only on the exciting front end but also, and especially, on the disciplined back end measures needed for new ideas to generate results at scale.*

Transformative Innovation is Disruptive

- Where transformative innovation succeeds, systems, sectors, and industries change.
- If the humanitarian system is serious about transformation, it needs to accept and welcome new partners, divisions of roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities that cannot necessarily be nicely contained in legacy mandates, operational habits, or perceptions.

WFP and Innovation

- WFP will enhance system effectiveness through innovation and the provision of effective common services, including cash & vouchers, logistics and emergency telecommunications.
- WFP will continue to focus on innovations that improve the predictability, timeliness, and impact of humanitarian programming, through programmatic and financial tools, such as forecast-based preventative action, risk financing, micro-insurance, resilience programming, etc.
- WFP has a solid track record of bringing innovations to scale and will continue to pursue transformational innovations that deliver improved, demand-driven solutions.
- WFP will engage the humanitarian community in joint innovation initiatives that deliver better collective outcomes.

Serving People Affected by Conflict

Humanitarian Principles for Access and Proximity

- WFP reaffirms the importance of the humanitarian principles to facilitate access and proximity to affected populations. Humanitarian principles serve as an important foundation for humanitarian agencies seeking access to (and for) conflict and disaster-affected communities. However, not all State and non-state actors always protect or promote humanitarian principles in practice, particularly if these principles hinder the pursuit of political or national security objectives. The WHS should reaffirm the centrality of humanitarian principles and seek commitment from a wider group of actors to promote the principles in their efforts to assist crisis-affected populations.

Challenges and Ways of Overcoming Access and Proximity Constraints

- Access – based on adherence to humanitarian principles – and proximity to affected populations are essential for providing effective humanitarian assistance and promoting protection and accountability to affected people and are mutually reinforcing. On one hand, access helps facilitate direct contact with affected individuals and facilitate trust and acceptance for humanitarian actors. At the same time, direct contact and proximity to crisis-affected people enables access and helps ensure the quality of assistance and basic services. Yet physical proximity to affected populations is impossible when humanitarian access is obstructed or denied as a result of insecurity, political, logistical or institutional constraints related to capacity and funding.

- More needs to be done to facilitate access and promote physical proximity to affected populations.
 - Greater political commitment and action is needed from State and non-state armed groups to ensure full compliance with international law and avoid tying assistance to political objectives that distort perceptions of the neutrality and impartiality of assistance. Specifically, States should facilitate unimpeded access to all populations in need by putting in place simple and expeditious administrative and logistical procedures for humanitarian operations – or facilitating the transit of humanitarian assistance in the case of neighbouring States – avoiding tying counter-terrorism measures to assistance, and allowing humanitarians to negotiate access with non-state armed actors.
 - Humanitarian actors on their part need to intensify efforts to secure access through decentralized deployment, presence at the community level while also managing how they are perceived by different actors. Obtaining access is resource intensive. Humanitarians should invest more in context analysis, access negotiations including local acceptance, and participatory approaches to assistance. Finally, humanitarians need to act transparently with one another on the issue of access and to unite in opposition to unreasonable demands by governments and non-state actors, as well as other forms of politicization of humanitarian action.
 - The United Nations security management system should better acknowledge the diversity among its members in integrated settings (where there is a peacekeeping or political mission and United Nations Country Team (UNCT)) – and consider a flexible approach to security management that considers the different risk profiles of United Nations actors and facilitates access and proximity in a principled manner.

Alternatives to Sustained Access and Proximity to Affected Populations

- Physical proximity to affected populations is ideal. However, where access is impossible, more must be done to maintain proximity virtually. All parties that support humanitarian action need to understand the inherent risks of operating in complex emergencies and the opportunities to stay connected to affected populations through alternative proximity approaches. But more needs to be done to support the needs of vulnerable populations through virtual approaches to proximity until physical access can be re-established or maintained.
 - Within the humanitarian community, we need to experiment and learn from innovations in technology and programming to address or offset restrictions to physical proximity. These approaches must be realistic, scalable, dependable and appropriate for the context. For example, mobile and web-based technology can facilitate needs assessments, food security and programme monitoring, and communication about programmes and feedback from affected populations when aid agencies are unable to secure and maintain consistent access. The provision of cash or vouchers using e-cards, when appropriate, reduces the need for a heavy logistics footprint.
 - Donor governments should support more flexible approaches and financing that facilitates proximity to affected populations. Some donor governments give humanitarian agencies a maximum of flexibility and predictability possible but more

needs to be done by others to support the needs of vulnerable populations through virtual approaches while simultaneously allocating resources for strategies to secure or re-establish access.

- In extreme circumstances, remote management can provide an alternative means of providing humanitarian assistance where direct access and physical proximity are impossible as a result of insecurity or other obstacles. However, it is important to consider whether humanitarian actors are transferring security risks to their partners and whether the quality of assistance programmes can be maintained. In each situation, humanitarian actors will need to weigh these concerns with the need to respond to the humanitarian imperative.

Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Food Security

There is broad evidence of the fact that the exposure of people and assets in most countries in the world has increased faster than vulnerability has decreased, generating new risk and a steady increase in disaster losses, with significant socio-economic impact in the short, medium and long terms.

- Food insecurity and malnutrition are both severe consequences of disasters and key underlying risk factors driving the vulnerability of the poorest people and communities.
- The WHS must place prevention at the centre of international cooperation. We have to move from managing disasters to managing risk. In these efforts, we must focus on reducing the underlying risk factors.
- The WHS must promote partnership and coalitions at all levels, especially by supporting community leadership and capacity for local-level action. Safety nets and social protection systems have proven they can be effective vehicles to deliver risk reduction, resilience, food security, and nutrition outcomes at scale.
- The WHS must support better integration of disaster response, humanitarian and development interventions, building upon existing coordination mechanisms and initiatives in a number of contexts. Nowhere is the potential for greater impact by doing this clearer than in efforts to achieve food security and nutrition.
- WFP's recent experience in responding to natural and man-made disasters demonstrates the effectiveness of an operating model linking decentralized capacities to corporate support systems as well as to an ability to effectively and swiftly manage disaster response operations both internally and as part of a United Nations family.

Humanitarian Financing and Good Humanitarian Donorship

Improvements to the humanitarian financing architecture are necessary to produce transformational outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit. Humanitarian financing needs to be grounded in the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship (GHD). A reinvigoration of GHD principles and practices is essential for enhancing the effectiveness of humanitarian financing.

GHD Principle 6 calls for allocation of humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments. Under the Transformative Agenda, tangible improvements have been made to the humanitarian planning cycle, presenting donors with standardized and well-documented humanitarian needs overviews. WFP and partners have made significant investments in assessment capacity to underpin these efforts, thereby strengthening the basis for funding according to need.

Notwithstanding these improvements in generating humanitarian funding requirements, there is still extensive use of earmarking towards specific activities and locations, reflecting individual – as opposed to collective – donor policies and priorities.

Greater flexibility as well as predictability of funding would enable much more cost-effective management of resources and improved programming outcomes. GHD Practice 12 calls on donors to ensure predictability and flexibility in funding. Operational flexibility is key, particularly in rapidly evolving emergencies. Predictability of funding is equally important for planning effective humanitarian assistance, and for building partnerships with local actors.

Over the last decade, humanitarian actors have invested in and refined their approaches to contingency financing. This allows for planning based on forecasting models and projections that help anticipate the scale of financing required at times of peak need. WFP makes extensive use of internal advance financing to enable purchase of humanitarian goods, which is repaid with later contributions.

As the humanitarian community seeks to integrate resilience in programming in all stages of a crisis, it requires flexible, multi-year commitments. Investing in resilience building is cost-effective as it reduces the associated financial, administrative, and resource burdens of disasters. International resources could be invested much more strategically in enabling communities, governments, civil society and the private sector to anticipate and make provision for post-disaster needs. In the long term, humanitarians should work towards a more 'complementary' or 'consultative' system of international humanitarian financing. This system will complement financial services including insurance schemes, credit and savings, and will rely more on domestically mobilised resources.