

DRAFT MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE WFP STRATEGIC PLAN (2008–2013)



Informal Consultation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review found that the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013) has positioned WFP to meet emerging and increasingly complex food security and nutrition challenges. More needs to be done, however, to mainstream and institutionalize these changes in the culture and work of WFP. Host governments, donor nations, partners and – most important – those served by WFP, expect and deserve WFP to be ready to deploy the full range of tools and approaches outlined in the Strategic Plan to meet urgent food and nutrition needs, improve emergency response, build resilience, and support national priorities and local capacity.

The Strategic Plan formalized reforms and approaches that had been ongoing in the field, and put WFP on track to better prioritize and deploy sustainable responses by providing targeted solutions rather than the “one-size-fits-all” traditional food aid approach. Many of the new tools and modalities – such as cash, vouchers, targeted nutrition products, regional and local purchasing, and forward purchasing – have already been integrated into part of WFP’s emergency response, giving it a broader set of tools in these settings. In addition, the food purchased today is much more nutritious, following recent scientific findings on nutrition; it is packaged in emergency-ready materials and targeted for special populations.

Development and deployment of these changes has occurred rapidly, particularly with regard to cash, vouchers, nutrition and Purchase for Progress. But many of the new approaches need to reach scale. For example, cash and voucher went from a series of pilots to reaching more than 3 million people in 2010. However, this remains just 3 percent of the 100 million people WFP reaches each year.

The plan has catalysed significant changes in WFP, from the development of new policies and internal systems and controls to updating programme guidance for use in the field and cultivating a culture of learning in testing new approaches. Further institutionalizing these changes and mainstreaming them into WFP’s responses and programmes will take time, dedication and a continued willingness to learn and adopt new ideas and approaches. In some cases this will also require new skills, which in turn calls for retraining of staff or hiring staff with different skill sets.

Mainstreaming will also require the continued support of nations and enhanced partnerships. Transfer of knowledge and supporting governments to develop their own capacity in emergency response, preparedness, and the deployment of food-based safety nets will need to continue to be a priority for WFP, as it is the only way to sustainably reach more people and make real progress in food security and nutrition.

There is a need to monitor and evaluate outcomes, as well as processes and outputs, over time in a way that is cost-effective and consistent across country offices. Funding flows, the short duration of many WFP projects, and country office staff profiles can limit WFP’s ability to deploy the full range of tools in a variety of settings, engage in deeper partnerships and support nations to build resilience. In addition, it will be important to assess the overall organization of WFP, which has remained largely the same since 2007.

These and other challenges to further institutionalization of the Strategic Plan are noted throughout the review and summarized in the last section, with suggested next steps.

RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW

1. This mid-term review provides summary findings and recommendations based on the first four years of implementation of the Strategic Plan. It has two objectives: i) to provide insights and recommendations for the final period of the current Strategic Plan; and ii) to highlight issues for the development of the next Strategic Plan.
2. The WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013), approved by the Board in June 2008, was intended to cover the years 2008–2011, but was extended to 2013 in response to a United Nations General Assembly resolution calling on the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WFP to “align their planning cycles with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including the implementation of mid-term reviews as necessary”.¹ Following this directive, the Board directed the Secretariat to present a mid-term review at the Annual Session in 2012.² WFP’s next Strategic Plan will cover the years 2014–2017 and will be submitted to the Board at the Annual Session in 2013.
3. The mid-term review drew on four inputs:
 - *Review of evaluations and literature.* These include evaluations, Annual Performance Reports (APRs), reports by the Inspector General, policies and project documents to highlight lessons learned and to suggest improvements for the future.
 - *Quantitative analysis of change in WFP.* The Policy, Planning and Strategy Division undertook a quantitative analysis to measure changes, using data from the APRs, standard project reports, WINGS II and other sources. A complete review of all indicators was not possible for 2007–2011, because, for example, some indicators had changed and reporting from country offices was uneven owing to time and staff constraints.
 - *Consultations.* Consultations with beneficiaries, governments, non-governmental organization (NGO) partners, WFP staff and outside experts aimed to obtain a range of views on the Strategic Plan.
 - *Country case studies.* Three case studies by an external organization provided insights into the Strategic Plan from the country perspective, with input from host governments, partners, local experts and WFP staff. Ecuador, Kenya and Pakistan were chosen for the studies to show the full range of WFP’s work in different contexts.

SUMMARY AND RATIONALE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2008–2013

4. The current Strategic Plan marks a significant change in WFP’s strategic orientation. It changed WFP from a food-aid agency, providing food directly to needy households, to a food-assistance agency, with a range of modalities for supporting nations, communities and households in increasing their access to food and nutrition security.

¹ A/RES/63/232.

² “Decisions and Recommendations of the Annual Session of the Executive Board, 2009” (WFP/EB.A/2009/16).

5. The approach outlined in the Strategic Plan took into consideration several developments and trends:
- *Country-led approaches.* Following the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, WFP's Strategic Plan emphasizes support for national priorities and plans. This re-positioning occurred ahead of the 2009 L'Aquila G8 summit, which highlighted country ownership as a critical success factor in building national food security after the 2007–2008 food price crisis.
 - *Greater flexibility through cash donations.* WFP's increasing proportion of cash contributions from donors opened up new opportunities for scaling up modalities such as cash, vouchers, local purchase and nutrition interventions.
 - *Focus on nutrition.* In view of scientific findings and support from nations, the Strategic Plan focuses on providing nutrition interventions rather than just calories for maximum impact; targeting vulnerable groups such as mothers, young children and people living with HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and other diseases. In particular, *The Lancet* series on maternal and child undernutrition showed the importance of good nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life from conception to 24 months. It estimated that a third of child deaths, and 11 percent of the global disease burden, is attributable to undernutrition.³
 - *Focus on livelihoods and resilience.* The Strategic Plan takes into account growing recognition that food aid must continue to focus on saving lives in the short term, but that interventions should also include saving and restoring livelihoods after emergencies and building communities' resilience to future shocks.
 - *Climate change and natural disasters.* The increased number, scale and impact of natural disasters, along with the expectation that this trend will continue, has intensified focus on working with nations on preparedness and resilience.
 - *Market-sensitive approaches.* Food aid in the past saved lives, but in the medium term to long term it could also have negative impacts on local markets and agricultural production. A toolbox based on market analysis that contains modalities such as local purchase, connecting smallholders to markets and using cash rather than food can mitigate these risks and, correctly applied, stimulate local economies.
6. With these trends as a starting point, the Strategic Plan set five Strategic Objectives that are consistent with WFP's mandate and reflect the changing nature of its response to food and nutrition insecurity, building on WFP's experience and comparative advantages. To achieve these goals, the Strategic Plan defined a set of tools to respond to critical hunger needs, with an overall goal of reducing dependency and supporting governments and the humanitarian community in working to find long-term solutions to hunger.

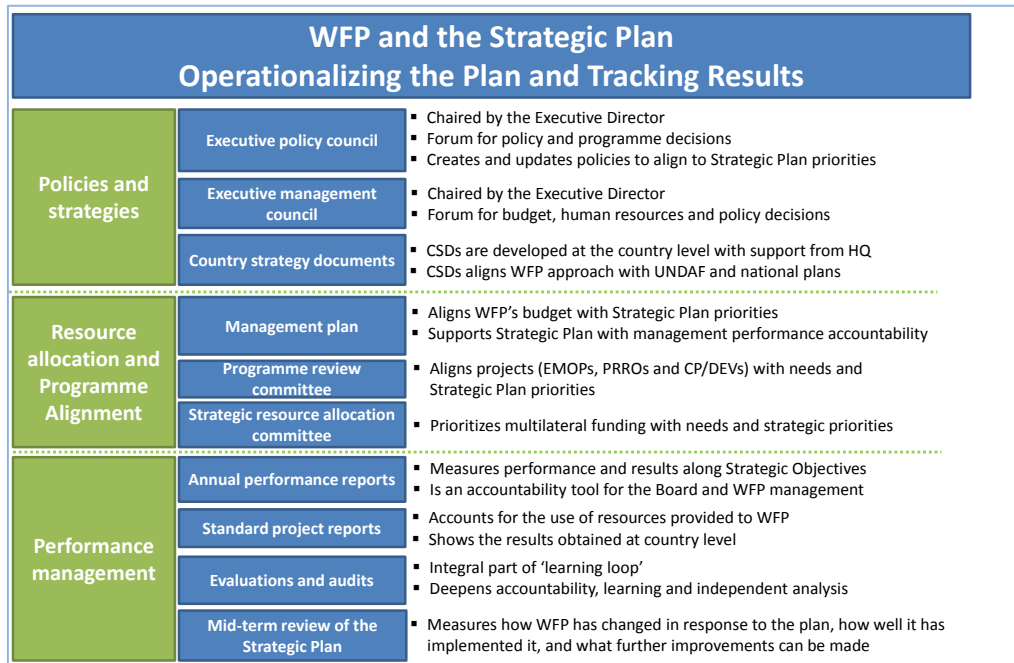
INTERNAL STRUCTURES TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

7. The change in approach in the Strategic Plan raised new issues for WFP. New systems and processes were developed to provide structure and coherence as it embarked on the changes (Figure 1).
8. The Executive Policy Council was established to decide on policy and programme issues relating to the Strategic Plan; the Executive Management Council was created as a forum for overall management of WFP, including performance and risk management, financial

³ Available at: <http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-undernutrition>

and human resource issues. Both councils are chaired by the Executive Director; they meet regularly to make decisions and approve documents to be submitted to the Board.

Figure 1: Internal Structures to Operationalize and Monitor the Strategic Plan



9. The Strategic Plan required updates to many of WFP's policies. Ten policies have been approved by the Board relating to implementation of the Strategic Plan in the field, including: gender, vouchers and cash transfers, school feeding, disaster risk reduction, nutrition, protection, HIV and AIDS, and capacity development.⁴
10. The country strategy document (CSD) process was developed to assist country offices in selecting the most appropriate programme responses to support national priorities in a way that is coherent with the work of other agencies and frameworks. The CSD is also intended to provide a vehicle for clearly communicating WFP's role in different country contexts to national authorities, United Nations agencies and other partners.
11. The Annual Performance Report (APR) is the corporate vehicle for tracking progress on the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives on an annual basis, as well as on the management results that underpin the efficient and effective use of resources. The APR measures progress on each of the Strategic Objectives, using a set of indicators that are part of the Strategic Results Framework (SRF). The SRF indicators have been adjusted and refined each year, reflecting new experiences and lessons learned, as well as country office capacity to report on the measures. These changes make comparing performance over the timespan of the Strategic Plan difficult.
12. In the next Strategic Plan it will be important to clearly define, as part of the plan, indicators to track performance by Strategic Objectives and Goals, and there should be a strong emphasis on stabilizing the indicators so that performance can be tracked over time. The indicators should be simple, be measurable within the existing means of country offices, and be closely linked to the corporate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems.

⁴ "Compendium of WFP Policies Relating to the Strategic Plan (2008–2013)" (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-B).

13. Although new systems were developed to support the Strategic Plan, the basic organizational structure of WFP was put in place before the plan was approved. As it embarks on the final phase of its current Strategic Plan, and develops a new plan for 2014–2017, an assessment of WFP’s structure will be needed.

GLOBAL CONTEXT 2008–2012

14. The Strategic Plan was approved by the Board at a time of multiple crises such as the rising price of fuel, steep increases in the price of food, a global financial crisis and an economic downturn. These trends had a dramatic impact on hunger and raised the number of hungry people to over 1 billion as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The number of hungry people has decreased since this record high, but food prices remain volatile and the economic downturn is putting pressure on the budgets of many Member States.
15. For WFP, the number of hungry people was increasing just as the costs of feeding them – costs of food, shipping and fuel – were increasing. Factors such as climate change, the increasing scale and frequency of natural disasters, conflict, political upheaval and displacement all contributed significantly to the need for food assistance.
16. The period also saw a rise in insecurity and attacks on humanitarian workers, and a closing of safe spaces in which to reach people. According to a study commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), lethal attacks against humanitarian personnel have tripled in the past ten years to 100 deaths per year.⁵ WFP has been attacked in Afghanistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and other locations.
17. Complex environments pose numerous challenges for WFP such as ensuring that interventions “do no harm” through unintended consequences; ensuring the safety of staff and partners; and maintaining the integrity of programmes in high-risk environments. The single greatest risk, noted in the WFP Corporate Risk Register, is that WFP programmes may be unable to operate and that people may be left without access to food and nutrition.
18. WFP manages and responds to risks proactively. It works to enable front-line managers to enhance their understanding of the risk environment and to facilitate sustainable access to beneficiary populations. As part of the United Nations, WFP’s security risk management process identifies and analyses security threats and vulnerabilities and helps to develop and implement mitigation measures that facilitate rather than limit WFP activities.
19. WFP’s Inspector General praised the “renewed management interest in implementing enterprise risk management and the conscious recognition of the risks inherent in operating in extreme environments”, but also noted that enterprise risk management is not yet “fully implemented in all field offices and Headquarters units in WFP”.⁶

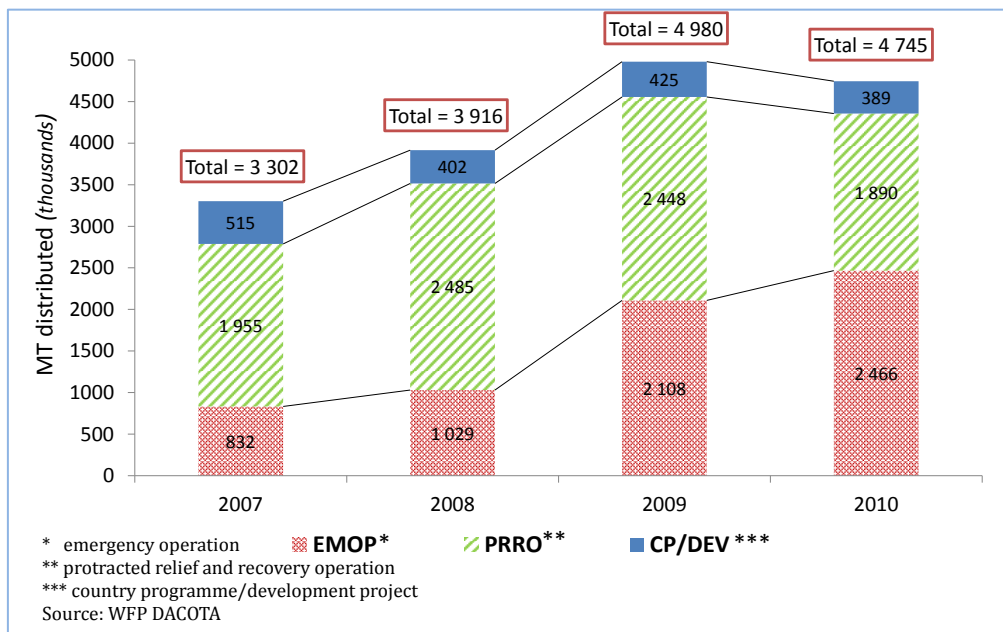
⁵ Egeland, J., Harmer, A. and Stoddard, A. 2011. *To Stay and Deliver*. New York, OCHA.

⁶ “Report of the Inspector General” of 2011 (WFP/EB.A/2011/6-E/1).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: SAVE LIVES AND PROTECT LIVELIHOODS IN EMERGENCIES

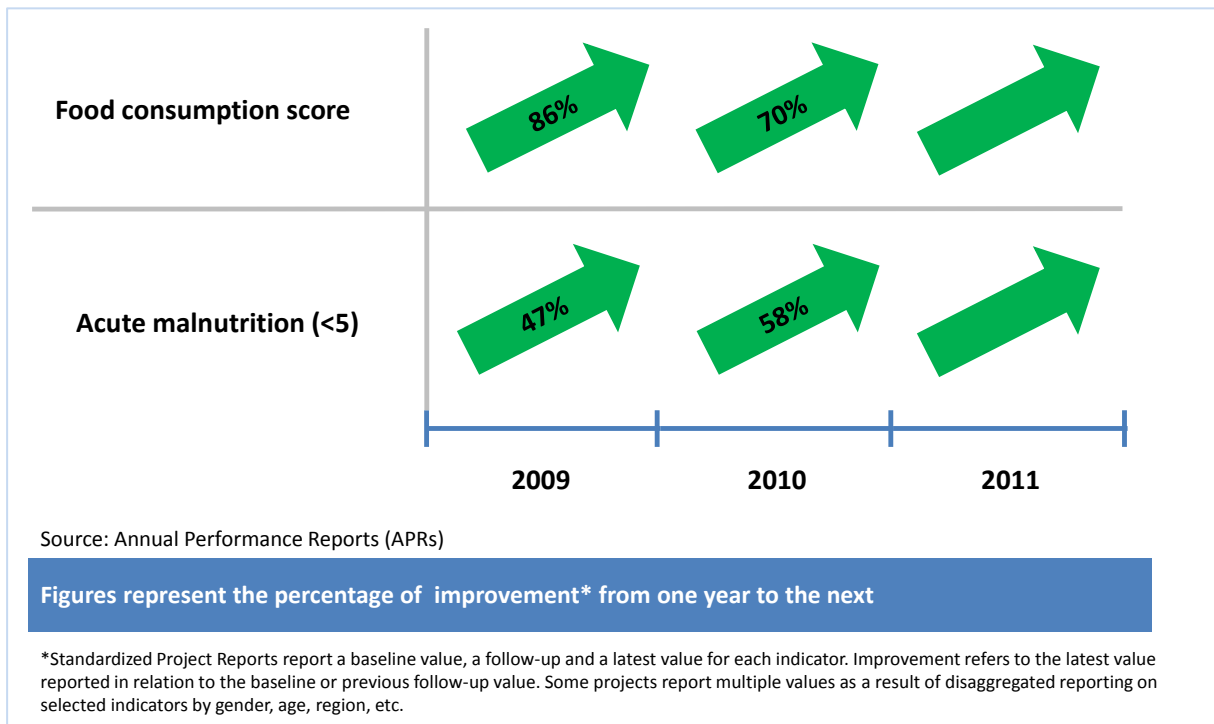
20. Strategic Objective 1 is to save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies. The period covered by the Strategic Plan saw a tripling of the amount of food going to emergency operations (EMOPs). Large-scale emergency responses were requested in Haiti, the Horn of Africa, Myanmar, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Sahel, and many other locations (Figure 2). This reflects growing emergency needs and WFP's continued focus on emergency contexts and what the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator has called "mega-emergencies".

Figure 2: Food Distributed, by Project Category



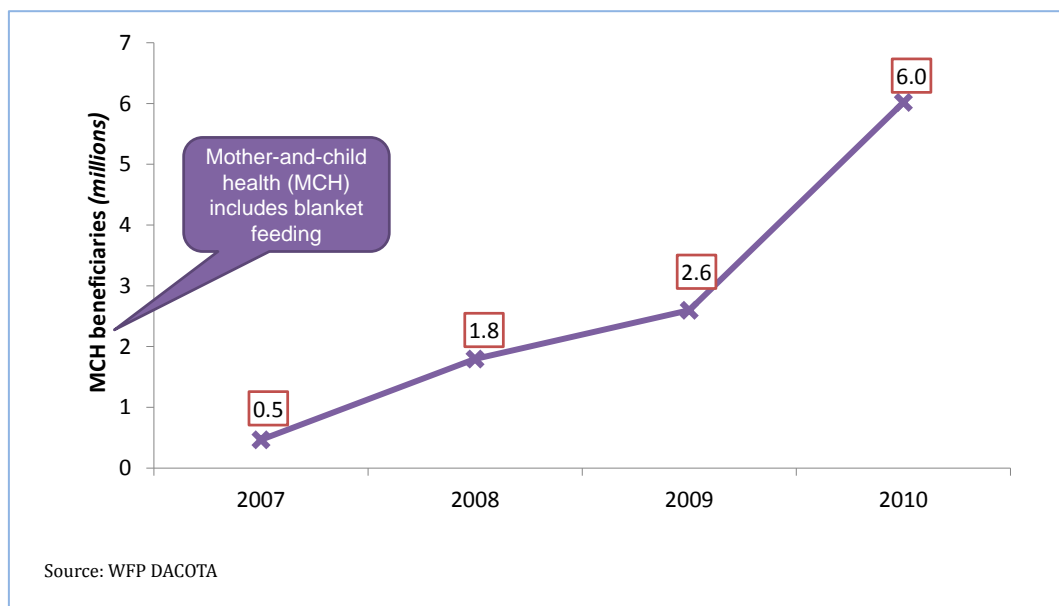
21. This table indicates that the organization has remained highly focused on emergencies. Although tonnage is one indicator of the focus of WFP's work, the Strategic Plan emphasized how WFP can sustainably meet food security and nutrition needs using a broad set of tools and modalities. The Annual Performance Report project indicators reported under Strategic Objective 1 show WFP's strength in responding rapidly to crises and protecting lives and livelihoods in the immediate aftermath of emergencies. The Annual Performance Reports show that between 2009 and 2010, progress was made in reducing the number of food-insecure people in WFP-assisted communities, and also in reducing acute malnutrition rates (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Strategic Objective 1



22. The tools and approaches outlined in the Strategic Plan have been deployed largely to support emergency responses. For example the Strategic Plan stated that “the nutritional quality of the food provided is instrumental in tackling high acute malnutrition rates in emergency situations and in reducing mortality rates linked to hunger”. Since the plan was approved, interventions targeting mothers and young children have risen 12-fold, reaching 500,000 people in 2007 and 6 million in 2010 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Number of Mothers and Children Assisted through EMOPs

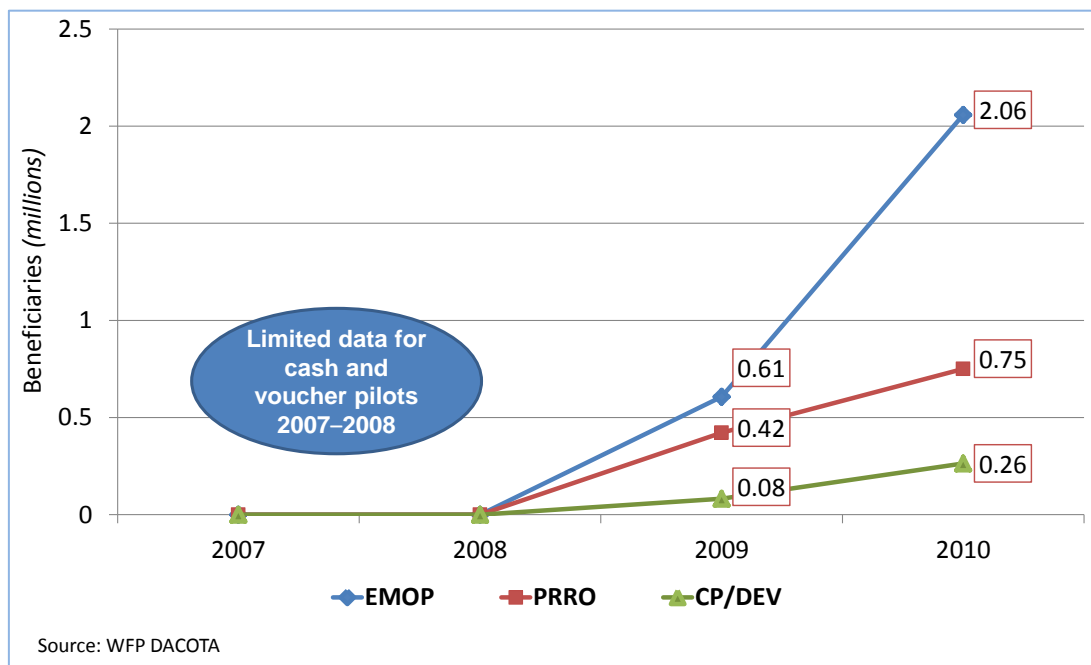


23. WFP’s response in Niger during the 2010 drought in the Sahel demonstrates the impact of nutrition interventions targeting the most vulnerable in an emergency. As global acute malnutrition rates rose to 16 percent and admissions of malnourished children to feeding centres doubled, WFP re-focused its interventions on young children, providing nutritious

supplementary food for moderately acutely malnourished children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women; and blanket feeding for children under 2 along with a protection ration for their households to reduce the risk that rations might be shared. This intervention resulted in a fall in the number of cases of moderate acute malnutrition and significantly reduced the number of moderately acutely malnourished children arriving at health centres; the sharing of rations intended for children fell by 41 percent after the protection ration was included.

24. In response to the 2010 floods in Pakistan, WFP distributed locally produced high-energy biscuits (HEBs) and ready-to-use chickpea paste called *Wawa Mum*, which WFP developed and produced in Pakistan. These nutritious foods did not require cooking or water, and enabled young children and mothers to get the nutrition they needed during the emergency.
25. Cash and vouchers have also been used extensively in emergencies – two thirds of WFP’s cash and voucher beneficiaries were reached through EMOPs (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Cash and Voucher Beneficiaries, by Programme Category



26. Cash and vouchers are important tools for reaching people when food is available in markets but unaffordable. Cash and vouchers support local markets and give beneficiaries a choice in what they can purchase.
27. When prices for staples such as maize and oil rose by 40 percent in Burkina Faso, WFP responded by deploying an ambitious voucher programme targeting women and enabling them to purchase maize, cooking oil, soap, sugar and salt. Interviews suggest that 80 percent of the value of the vouchers was used for maize, the staple crop, an indication that food needs were severe.⁷ Of the beneficiaries interviewed, 99 percent indicated that the programme gave them better access to food; 70 percent indicated that their nutritional status was better overall than before the programme.

⁷ Omamo, S., Gentilini, U. and Sandström, S., eds. 2010. *Revolution: From Food Aid to Food Assistance*. Rome, WFP.

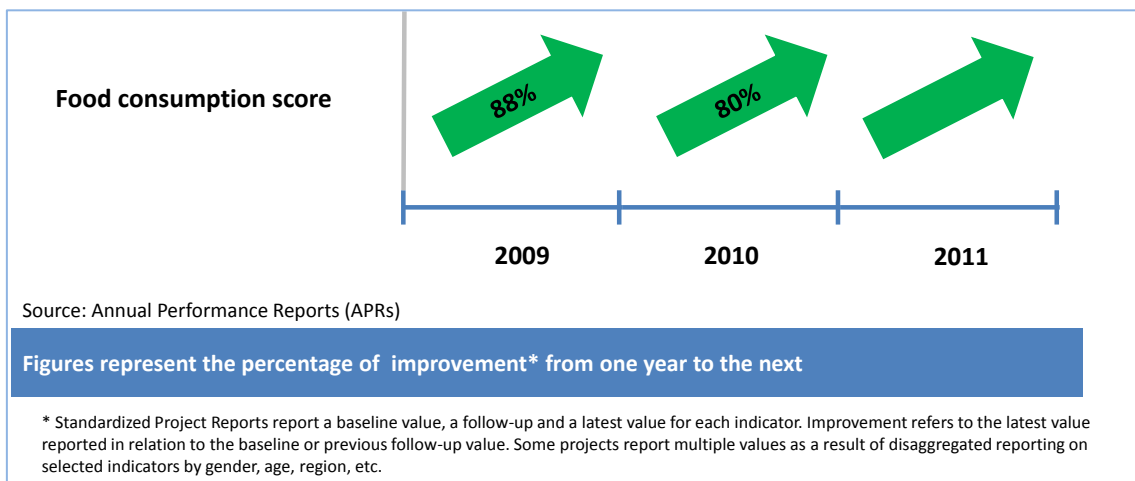
28. During the 2010 flooding in Pakistan, where food was available in markets, cash transfers were made as part of work programmes supporting early recovery, clearing of farmland and rebuilding of homes, helping communities to return home in time for the new planting season. Combined with the work of the Government and partners, this approach helped to avert a crop failure. As cash and vouchers continue to be used in emergencies as mechanisms to improve access to food, it will be important to have a strong cycle of evaluating and learning to ascertain whether direct or indirect food transfers are the most appropriate response for different emergency contexts.
29. Working through the cluster system is integral to WFP's emergency response. WFP is a leader on clusters in the United Nations system. Effective as of April 2012, WFP co-leads with FAO the new global food security cluster in addition to leading the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters, which are fundamental in humanitarian responses. The global food security cluster has been vital in areas such as the Horn of Africa, where partnership with United Nations agencies, local authorities and NGOs is essential.
30. WFP has taken advantage of Board-approved tools to improve emergency response. The Board has supported such expanded tools as the Immediate Response Account (IRA) and the Working Capital Financing (WCF) Facility, which reduce supply lead times and response times in emergencies. The IRA is a funding mechanism designed to meet immediate needs, particularly in the early start-up phase of an emergency operation, while the WCF Facility provides advance finance to projects based on forecasted contributions. Together these tools provide improved efficiency by reducing the gap between when resources are required and when a contribution is confirmed. In November 2010 the Board approved an increased ceiling for the WCF Facility from US\$180 million to US\$557 million, which includes US\$150 million for the Forward Purchase Facility Special Account.
31. The IRA allowed WFP to rapidly scale up operations along the Tunisian border with Libya to support people fleeing violence. The WCF Facility helped reduce delivery times – saving up to three months – in a number of critical operations. For example, when food crises arose in Chad and Kenya in mid-2011, WFP was able to respond and reduce pipeline breaks prior to donor contributions being received. In the Sudan, advance financing facilitated timely delivery and allowed for pre-positioning of food before the onset of the rainy season. The WCF Facility has also helped avoid pipeline breaks in Afghanistan.
32. A successful launch of the Forward Purchase Facility coincided with the emergencies in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. By the end of 2011, supply corridors for East Africa and West Africa had been established and WFP had procured 530,000 mt of food for relief operations, including 19,000 mt of nutritious products such as corn-soya blend *plus plus*, Plumpy'Sup and Plumpy'Doz. Eighteen country offices had purchased from the corporate stocks, and for 29 projects they gained an average of 56 days of supply lead time.
33. WFP has had considerable success in its responses to large-scale emergencies, but these experiences highlight the need to further enhance its emergency preparedness and response capacity. At the WFP Global Meeting in Madrid in 2010, country directors and senior management formulated a shared action plan highlighting ten priority areas in emergency response and preparedness.
34. On this foundation, in 2011 WFP launched its Preparedness Response Enhancement Programme (PREP), a three-year framework to enhance emergency preparedness and response capacities. The programme covers four areas: i) frameworks and strategic guidance; ii) emergency systems and procedures; iii) WFP's response capacities; and iv) humanitarian common services, external coordination and capacity development.

35. A central part of this programme focuses on a knowledge-management strategy to ensure that lessons learned are applied to improve future responses. Results to date include three lessons-learned exercises based on evaluations of WFP's responses in Haiti, Niger and Pakistan, the launch of a lessons-learned database to store and track implementation of recommendations, and the development of a toolkit to enable regional bureaux and country offices to conduct their own lessons-learned exercises. A major shift has taken place from ad hoc findings and recommendations to a systematic approach that feeds back into corporate systems such as revised response protocols and a new response and preparedness framework, currently under formulation.
36. Results have already been achieved by PREP, increasing delegations of authority to WFP's Country Directors to empower them to make decisions. The Forward Purchase Facility has been tapped to increase stocks of emergency nutrition products such as Plumpy'Sup, Plumpy'Doz and Supercereal Plus, and an emergency preparedness and response package has been rolled out in 19 countries to provide updated preparedness guidelines and strategies to minimize risk.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: PREVENT ACUTE HUNGER AND INVEST IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

37. Strategic Objective 2 is to prevent acute hunger and invest in disaster preparedness and mitigation measures. The Annual Performance Reports show that in 2010, 80 percent of projects reporting under Strategic Objective 2 showed improvement in food consumption scores to prevent acute hunger (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Strategic Objective 2



38. The Strategic Plan calls for measures “to support and strengthen capacities of governments to prepare for, assess and respond to acute hunger arising from disasters” and also to “support and strengthen resiliency of communities to shocks through safety nets or asset creation, including adaptation to climate change”. WFP's role in this objective is focused on supporting national governments through a broad range of partnerships which leverage WFP's expertise on vulnerability, food security and nutrition in a broader context focused on building resiliency and local capacity.
39. A major contribution WFP makes in this broader framework is through the vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) service. VAM supports preparedness, mitigation and response by analysing the food security condition of households most susceptible to natural

and man-made disasters. VAM undertakes baseline food security and vulnerability analysis studies, and emergency food security assessments when disasters occur; implements food security monitoring; and conducts thematic analyses on current issues such as the impact of high food and fuel prices and global economic shocks on the most vulnerable people.

40. During the high food and fuel price crisis of 2007/08, VAM undertook 40 market assessments, which informed WFP operations along with the work of national governments and partners. For the 2009/10 financial and economic shocks it developed an economic shock and hunger index to identify countries most at risk. VAM regularly conducts assessments to analyse markets, nutrition and urban vulnerability and has revamped its own toolkit to ensure that its analysis covers food assistance elements such as cash, vouchers, nutritious foods, local food purchase and smallholder engagement.
41. Partnerships and national capacity development are crucial to VAM activities. Almost all VAM work, including assessments, is undertaken in partnership with national authorities, United Nations agencies, national and international NGOs and/or academic institutions. In 2011 WFP and FAO developed their first joint strategy to improve information systems for food and nutrition security on the national, regional and global levels, which commits them to national and regional capacity development initiatives. In 2012, WFP, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and FAO launched a Food Security Information Network (FSIN), a global community of practice to improve data, analysis and information for effective evidence-based decisions for food security policies and programmes at the national level. FSIN will be the foundation for efforts to develop local capacity for responding to food insecurity.
42. WFP's role in supporting national governments and working with partners is outlined in the 2011 policy on disaster risk reduction and management.⁸ The policy outlines WFP's experience in this area and identified issues to pursue in the future, such as development of a WFP climate change policy. Responding to disasters and helping communities and nations to reduce the risk of disasters has been part of WFP's work from its inception, and is a fundamental component of Strategic Objective 2. In 2010, half of WFP's programmes – which reach 80 million people in total – addressed risks of natural disaster and the impact on food security.
43. For WFP, disaster risk reduction (DRR) means incorporating resilience-building into emergency responses and complementing this with targeted prevention and preparedness activities before a disaster strikes. This is an urgent issue as the number of people affected by natural and climate-related disasters, and the cost of responding, are increasing; there is also increasing consensus and political will to mitigate risks for the most vulnerable people and to help communities to build resilience before emergencies occur. Gender considerations are an important part of this in that women are often more vulnerable to natural disasters than men.⁹
44. Within the broader framework of supporting governments and working coherently with partners, WFP's comparative advantage in disaster preparedness and mitigation derives from its operational nature, field presence, experience in disaster management, local knowledge, early-warning capability and understanding of vulnerability.

⁸ “WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management” (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A).

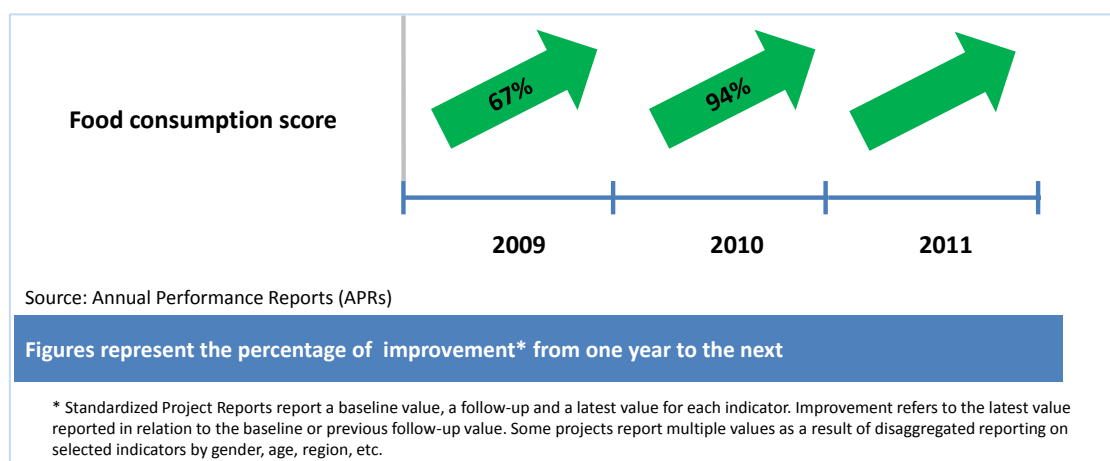
⁹ “WFP Gender Policy” (WFP/EB.1/2009/5-A/Rev.1), citing: Neumayer, E. and Plumper, T. 2007. The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: the Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy, 1981–2002. *Annals of the Amer. Assoc. of Geog.*, 97(3): 551–566.

45. Impact evaluations of WFP’s work on DRR have been positive. In Ethiopia and Kenya, for example, there is evidence of significant increases in food security as a result of WFP’s work; and in Bangladesh the enhancing resilience project helped 30,000 households to move above flood levels and trained women in disaster preparedness. In Uganda, the Karamoja productive assets programme uses food assistance to meet seasonal food needs, while supporting productive assets such as rainwater harvesting structures that build resilience to drought and provide water for livestock and agriculture.
46. WFP is working with partners to test and refine tools to ensure that the most vulnerable people do not bear a disproportionate risk from natural and climate-related phenomena. WFP has helped the Government of Ethiopia to establish a weather risk management framework that combines early warning, contingency planning and capacity-building in support of the scaling up of the national productive safety net programme. In another programme supported by WFP, the R4 Resilience Initiative of Oxfam America and Swiss Re, cash-poor farmers are supported in paying for weather index insurance through an insurance-for-work scheme.
47. WFP’s policy identifies lessons learned with a view to taking DRR to a larger and more productive scale. This includes working with governments to encourage national ownership, ensuring the availability of ongoing and timely technical assistance for governments and partners, and building strong partnerships with organizations that can contribute different expertise.
48. In WFP’s policy safety nets and social protection are seen as critical vehicles for disaster risk reduction. One challenge for WFP is to ensure that projects supporting these aims are of duration sufficient to build local capacity and to achieve quality outputs that can be handed over to local ownership. Short timeframes and unpredictable funding have been barriers to this in the past. It will be important to integrate WFP’s programmes more fully into national priorities and United Nations common frameworks.
49. Climate change is likely to exacerbate vulnerability, accelerate environmental degradation and resource scarcity and increase the risk of slow-onset disasters. Governments have expressed concern as to these risks, and there is an increase in requests for assistance. New funding sources such as the Adaptation Fund and the Global Environment Facility provide an opportunity to support governments in preparedness and resilience-building work such as food for assets.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: RESTORE AND REBUILD LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS IN POST-CONFLICT, POST-DISASTER OR TRANSITION SITUATIONS

50. Strategic Objective 3 is to restore and rebuild lives and livelihoods in post-conflict, post-disaster or transition situations. The Annual Performance Reports indicate that WFP has made constant progress in improving food consumption in post-conflict, post-disaster or transition situations, providing food assistance for an increasing number of refugees, displaced people and returnees since the Strategic Plan was approved. It reached 12.3 million people in 2008, and more than 20 million in 2010. In 2009, 67 percent of Strategic Objective 3 projects reporting on “household food consumption score” showed improvements; this rose to 94 percent in 2010 (Figure 7). This work meets food needs, but also builds resilience in communities, which provides a foundation for stability and support for transitioning from conflict to recovery and beyond.

Figure 7: Strategic Objective 3



51. An essential part of this objective is to ensure that WFP operates constructively beyond the emergency phase to support resilience and post-crisis recovery in countries emerging from conflict, disaster or fragile situations. A report of the Secretary-General on peace building stressed the importance of work early on in post-conflict periods to provide basic services, create livelihoods and support resilience, noting, “Coordinated efforts by the World Food Programme and UNICEF have helped the reintegration of child soldiers through schooling, feeding and protection programmes”.¹⁰
52. WFP has for many years contributed to building resilience and stabilizing communities in transition contexts. A study found that food assistance in South Sudan, for example, had had a significant positive impact on reintegration and recovery for returnees.¹¹ WFP’s de-mining and repairing of roads in the area increased mobility and travel safety and facilitated the return of internally displaced people. A WFP study found that cereal prices had fallen by 50 percent in locations with new road access.
53. During the high food price crisis in 2008, WFP scaled up school feeding programmes for 5 million children and their families in 17 countries including Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In 2010, when ethnic violence engulfed southern Kyrgyzstan, WFP’s food assistance allowed displaced populations to return home and begin rebuilding their communities. After violence in Côte d’Ivoire related to elections in 2010, the work of WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to repair roads, bridges and airstrips to improve access to camps facilitated the movement of people and goods and helped to open trade corridors.
54. Finding ways in which WFP can maximize its constructive impact in building resilience, and contributing to recovery in these situations is a priority. Studies are under way to suggest next steps for approval by the Board.

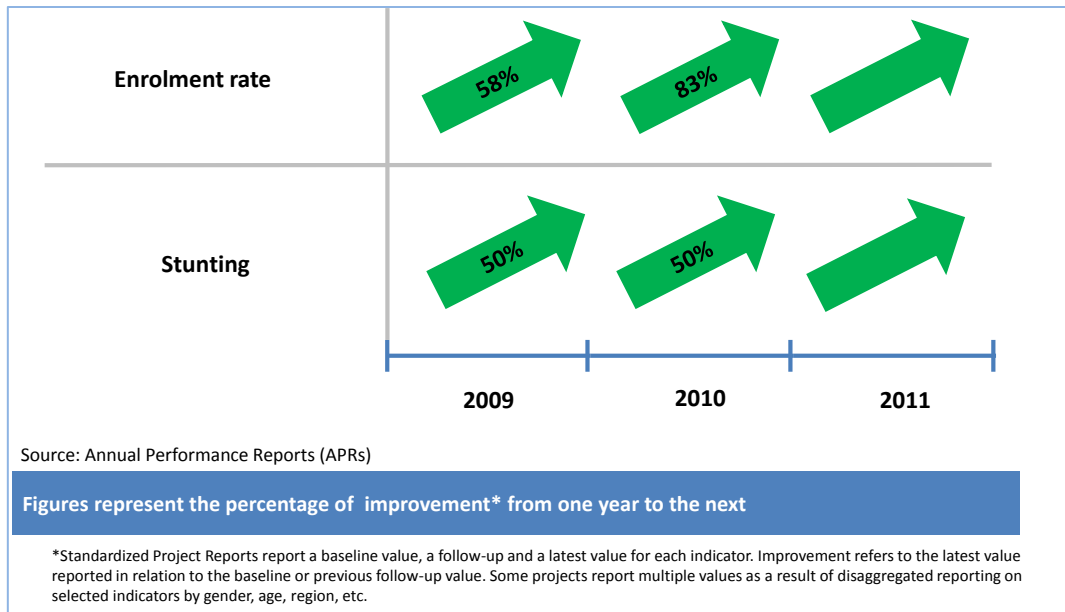
¹⁰ Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (A/64/866-S/2010/386).

¹¹ Bailey, S., and Harragin, S. 2009. *Food Assistance, Reintegration and Dependency in Southern Sudan*. London, Overseas Development Institute Humanitarian Policy Group.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: REDUCE CHRONIC HUNGER AND UNDERNUTRITION

55. Strategic Objective 4 is to reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition. The Annual Performance Reports show improvement rates for meeting Strategic Objective 4 have improved each year, with enrolment rates showing improvement in 83 percent of projects in 2010, and reductions in stunting rates in 50 percent of projects (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Strategic Objective 4



56. The Strategic Plan focuses on steps that will build resilience, calling for WFP to be “innovative in promoting and assuring the nutritional dimension of food assistance, recognizing that food security and undernutrition are major determinants of mortality, economic growth and prosperity, and also key aspects of the intergenerational cycle of hunger.” Following approval of the Strategic Plan, the Executive Director issued a nutrition improvement approach in September 2009 that articulated WFP’s new emphasis on providing the right food at the right time and the need to prioritize and enhance programmes focusing on the first 1,000 days of a child’s life.
57. In line with the nutrition improvement approach, WFP has increased the number of children under 2 receiving special foods from 55,000 in 2008 to 2.5 million in 2010. It has also improved the overall quality of food purchased. Micronutrient fortified Supercereals are replacing corn soya blend and special ready-to-use foods are being included in programmes to treat and prevent malnutrition among vulnerable groups (Figures 9, 10 and 11).

Figure 9: Children Under 2 Receiving Special Nutrition Products (thousands)

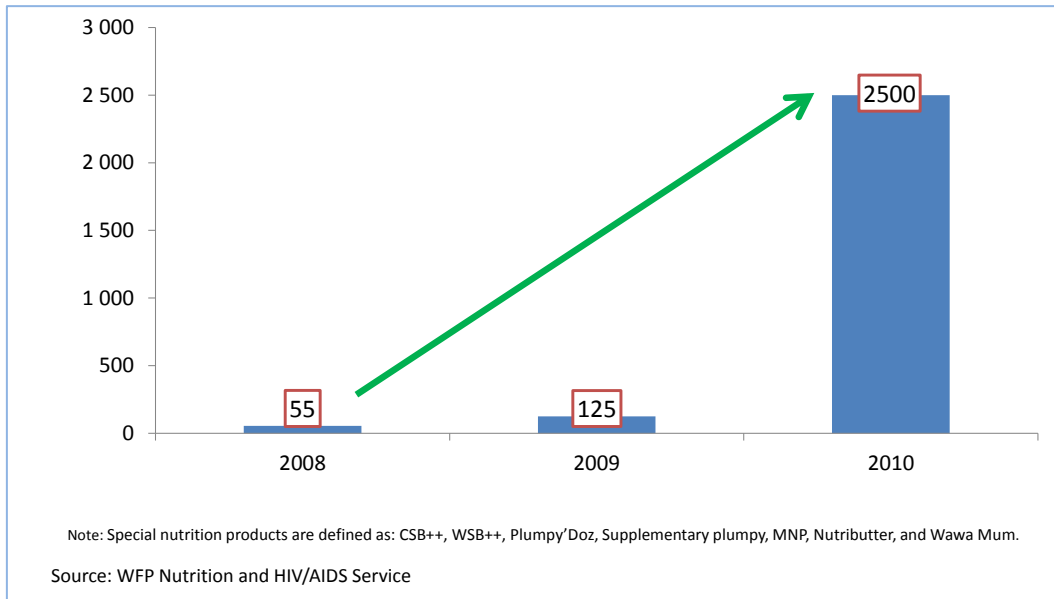


Figure 10: Improved Quality of Food Purchased

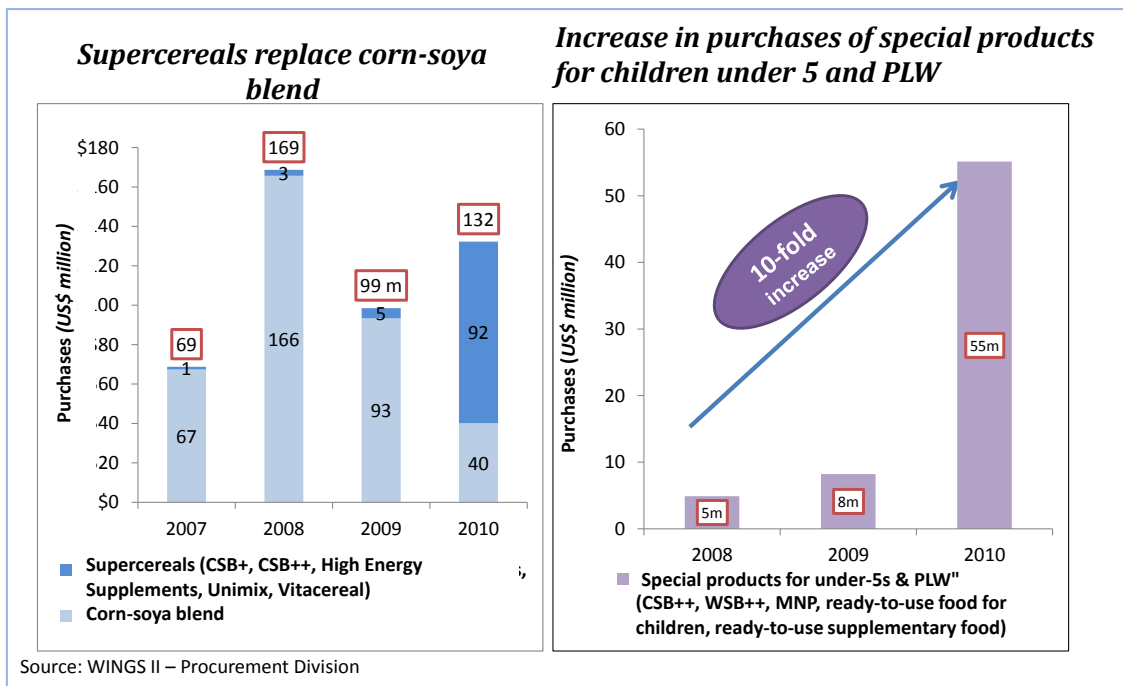
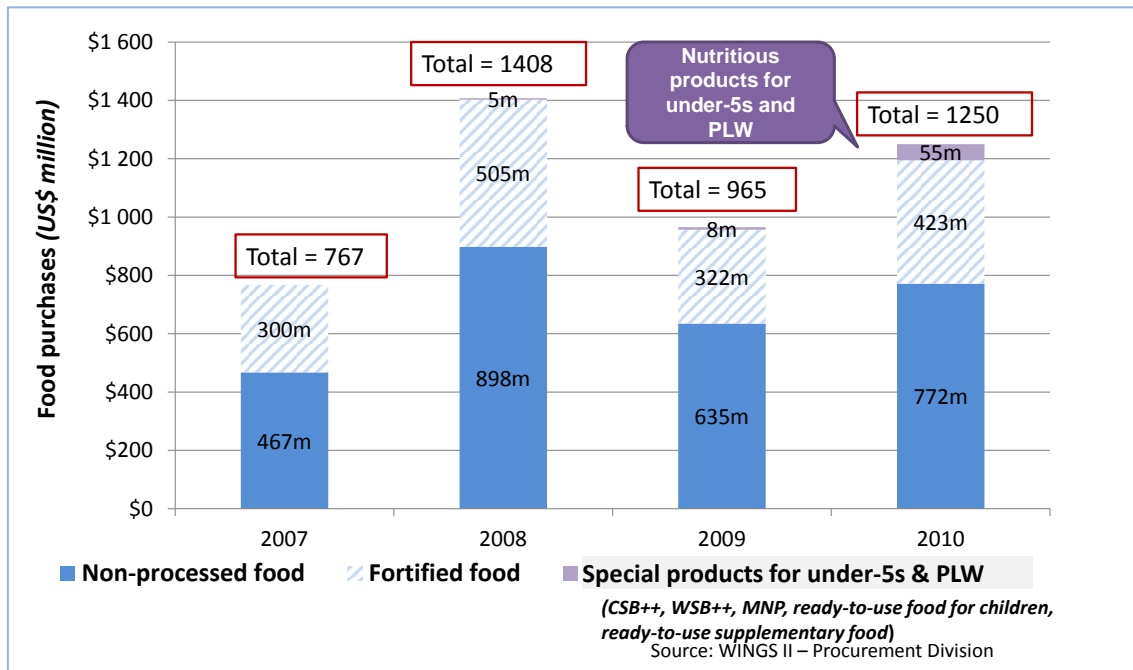


Figure 11: Expenditure on Special Products for Under-5s and PLW



58. As WFP scales up nutrition approaches, monitoring outcomes over time will become important. A recent evaluation notes that mother-and-child health and nutrition was not adequately monitored, with the result that the projects could not “conclusively demonstrate how the food and all the associated support had any effect on long term hunger”.¹² Showing results will be even more important as WFP seeks to become more effective in focusing on nutrition.
59. WFP has undertaken a rapid scaling up of nutrition-specific programmes and focused more on nutrition-sensitive programmes since the Strategic Plan was approved. The priority now is to integrate nutrition into WFP’s programmes and give it greater prominence in its work overall.
60. The Board approved a new nutrition policy in 2012 that formalizes WFP’s roles and responsibilities with respect to nutrition strategy and programming, drawing on lessons learned. The policy provides the framework for responding to the diverse and substantial challenges of scaling up and institutionalizing nutrition in WFP. The challenges include promoting the local development of nutrition products, improving packaging so food reaches beneficiaries intact, and developing expertise to engage stakeholders and host governments in capacity development and the development of national nutrition strategies.
61. One challenge noted in several studies in the importance of having access to staff with technical skills in nutrition. Another challenge in integrating nutrition into WFP’s programmes is related to the tonnage-based budgeting system in place since WFP was founded, which favoured heavier foods over lightweight nutritional products. Following a review of the financial framework and consultation with the Board, adjustments to internal systems are being made to establish a value-based budgeting framework. This must be supported by education and training for staff to ensure that the flexibility allowed by the Board-approved change is fully deployed in the field.

¹² “Summary Report of the Strategic Evaluation of WFP’s Role in Ending Long-Term Hunger” (WFP/EB.1/2012/6-C).

62. Strong partnerships will be critical in overcoming these challenges, from private-sector partnerships focused on research, funding and technical assistance for nutrition programmes to working with NGOs and United Nations partners to enhance the implementation of nutrition-specific programmes coherently and effectively. An evaluation noted ambiguities in perceptions of WFP's roles and responsibilities in nutrition.¹³ A recent update of WFP's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UNICEF clarified the division of labour, which has been working well in the Sahel. WFP signed updated MOUs in 2010 and 2011 with UNFPA and UNHCR, which emphasize the role of nutrition and define ways in which each agency can contribute.
63. WFP and other United Nations agencies are committed to continuing to coordinate and harmonize their efforts globally through mechanisms such as the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, the REACH partnership for ending child hunger, the Standing Committee on Nutrition and the cluster system so as to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in addressing the multiple causes of undernutrition in a complementary and holistic way. At the country level, the agencies will be developing joint strategies to assist governments on nutrition through REACH, the cluster system and United Nations frameworks.
64. The Strategic Plan acknowledged the severe impact of HIV, AIDS, TB and other diseases on hard-won development gains in a number of countries. Following the 2010 Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) Division of Labour, WFP is the convening agency for the integration of food and nutrition into the HIV response, and the co-convening agency with UNHCR for addressing HIV in humanitarian contexts.
65. WFP's policy on HIV and AIDS was approved by the Board in November 2010: the dual objectives are: i) to ensure nutritional recovery and the success of treatment through nutrition or food support; and ii) to mitigate the effects of HIV and AIDS through sustainable safety nets. The policy reflects scientific evidence on the relationship between HIV and food insecurity and the role of food security and good nutrition in prevention, treatment and care. In line with the UNAIDS Division of Labour and the UNAIDS strategy for 2011–2015, the policy aims to ensure that people living with HIV and those being treated for TB receive nutrition assessment, education and counselling and food and nutrition support.
66. WFP supports food and nutrition programmes with a package of treatment, care and support in many high-prevalence countries. In line with the Strategic Plan and the HIV and AIDS policy, WFP is providing nutritious rations of oil, sugar and fortified blended food for 1 million beneficiaries with HIV, AIDS or TB. The Strategic Plan positions WFP to play an important role in food and nutrition support for people living with HIV, AIDS or TB.

School Meals

67. School feeding is one of the tools for Strategic Objective 4. The Strategic Plan calls attention to the multiple benefits of school feeding such as supporting school enrolment and improving learning and nutrition, and explains its use in supporting farmers and local production of nutritious foods. WFP's school feeding policy, approved in 2009, emphasizes sustainability, the role of school feeding as a safety net and the multiplicity of benefits in relation to value transfer, gender, nutrition and education, and the values of

¹³ "Summary Report of the Strategic Evaluation – From Food Aid to Food Assistance: Working in Partnership" (WFP/EB.1/2012/6-A).

alignment with national policy frameworks, programme design and local production and sourcing.¹⁴

68. Each year WFP provides school meals for an average of 22 million children, half of whom are girls, in 70 countries. The school feeding programmes are tailored to national strategies and the resources available. There is an emphasis on supporting the transition to national ownership. WFP's role is evolving from that of direct implementer to provider of technical assistance and capacity development. Since 2008, programmes in Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Honduras, and São Tomé and Príncipe have been handed over to governments. WFP has remained involved in a number of these countries, providing technical assistance and programme support.
69. An important element of hand-over is developing local inputs for school meals. In Mali, for example, all food except for oil is procured in-country, with links to P4P and a new programme supporting local fortification of maize meal. In Afghanistan, work is under way to provide locally produced HEB for school meals programmes; in Afghanistan, Ghana, Indonesia and Madagascar micronutrient powder is added to school meals composed of locally grown foods to ensure adequate micronutrient intake.
70. A recent evaluation of WFP's school feeding policy found that it was "fully aligned with WFP's strategic plan and other key policies in tune with aid effectiveness concerns for national ownership, sustainability and results orientation."¹⁵ The report also noted the need to develop the social protection and capacity-development elements of the school feeding policy.¹⁵ Another evaluation noted that the cost per beneficiary tends to be low compared with other food assistance activities, but "the programme costs may still be seen as excessive from local government perspective."¹² This demonstrates the need to continue to achieve impacts and value across sectors.
71. These recommendations are part of a challenge noted in a WFP/World Bank report that observes that a major role for aid agencies is to maintain an investment in school feeding through the transition to national programmes.¹⁶
72. WFP is developing an action plan for implementation of the policy following findings from the school feeding policy evaluation. It is also working through the Centre of Excellence in Brazil to gather best practices from around the world in a South-South knowledge sharing exercise to incorporate school feeding into national safety-net programmes.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITIES OF COUNTRIES TO REDUCE HUNGER, INCLUDING THROUGH HAND-OVER STRATEGIES AND LOCAL PURCHASE

73. Strategic Objective 5 focuses on strengthening the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchase. The Strategic Plan calls for more country-led approaches, which is particularly relevant to activities under Strategic Objective 5. It supports countries in making the transition from WFP programmes to national ownership and in improving national food and nutrition security programmes.

¹⁴ "WFP School Feeding Policy" (WFP/EB.2/2009/4-A).

¹⁵ "Summary Evaluation Report of WFP School Feeding Policy" (WFP/EB.1/2012/6-D).

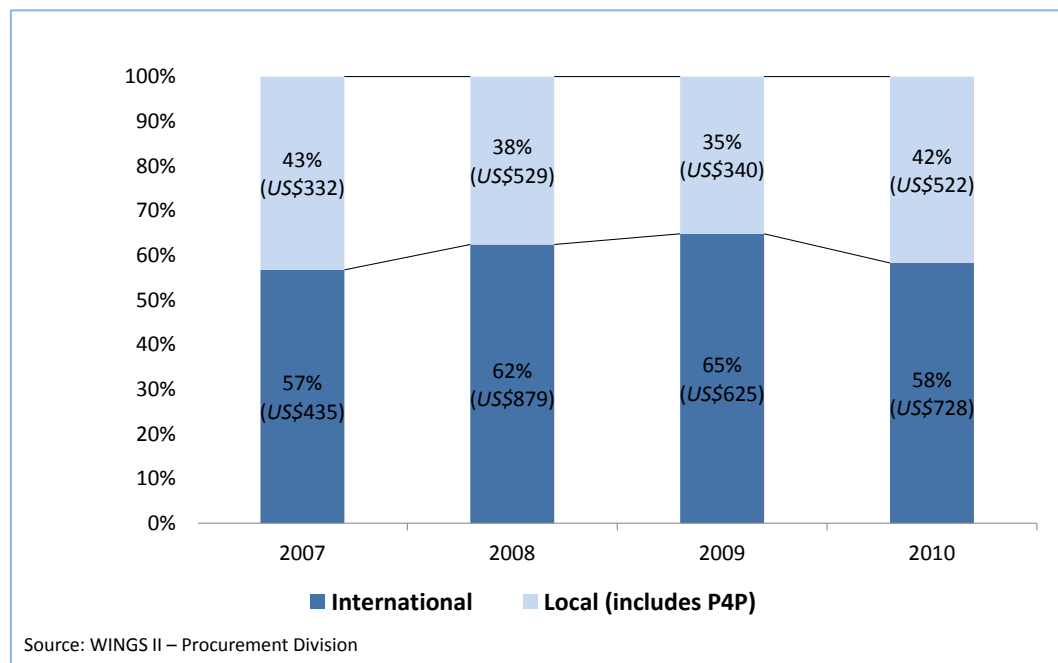
¹⁶ World Bank. 2009. *Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development and the Education Sector*. Washington DC.

Capacity development programmes are context-specific, often undertaken as individual activities, and have not been applied systematically across WFP. As a result, many capacity development activities have been under-reported in corporate M&E systems.

74. WFP has become increasingly involved in the development of the capacity of its government partners, whether under the umbrella of regional organizations such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), or in bilateral arrangements with governments. Examples include the two-year secondment of a senior WFP staff member (2009–2010) to support the NEPAD Secretariat; and of a WFP policy advisor to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.
75. Country offices in Africa interact with governments and partners under CAADP compacts and investment plans. WFP assists governments in Africa to develop capacity in Home Grown School Feeding programmes, a pillar of CAADP. WFP capacity development continues to be provided even where there are no food-based programmes; in Cape Verde WFP works as part of a United Nations joint programme with FAO, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) on a school feeding programme fully managed by the Government since 2010.
76. In Latin America WFP facilitated the development of a regional nutrition information-sharing platform, Nutri-Net, which established a network among governments, international agencies, universities and NGOs from the region. In Afghanistan, WFP partners with the private sector to establish local capacity for the production of nutritious biscuits for the WFP–government school feeding programme, and with a bank to disburse cash as part of a safety net pilot.
77. WFP is in the process of developing new guidance material to help country offices conduct capacity development work in a more systematic and strategic manner and to monitor progress. The Strategic Results Framework now includes a national capacity index that measures progress against quality standards adapted from a World Bank model; it includes alignment with national policies, community participation and ensuring stable funding. Capacity-development toolkits are being tested and refined and will be rolled out in 2013.
78. The Strategic Plan recognizes the role of procurement in building capacity. Each year WFP makes significant purchases in developing nations, but challenges in taking this to a higher level need to be addressed. In 2010, 42 percent of food assistance was purchased in recipient countries (see Figure 12). This constitutes a major shift from past practice. In the 1980s, for example, WFP purchased 10 percent of food from non-donor nations; in 2010, it bought from 75 developing countries and used 66 percent of its food budget in them.¹⁷

¹⁷ “Summary Report of the Strategic Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP’s Purchase for Progress Initiative (2008–2013)” (WFP/EB.2/2011/6-B).

Figure 12: Origin of WFP Food Procured (% and US\$ million)



79. This can create value chains and linkages between feeding programmes, safety nets, farmers and food producers, which in turn lays the foundation for further development of resilience and nationally owned social-protection programmes, in line with national priorities.
80. Creating these linkages is a major opportunity for WFP as it develops its safety-net programmes and enhances its role in advising and assisting governments in social protection. The Centre for Excellence in Brazil focuses on innovations in this area, and can make a significant contribution to leveraging the power of WFP’s purchasing, and the purchasing of governments and other entities around the world.

Purchase for Progress

81. The Strategic Plan called for “purchasing food locally to support national agricultural sectors, with a special focus on smallholder farming; strengthening local transport and communication services and networks through local purchases; and the procurement of other services in a way that ensures a positive spill-over effect on broader economic and market development.” P4P is WFP’s main innovation in pursuing this goal. A 5-year pilot was launched in September 2008 to connect smallholder farmers with markets through the power of WFP’s demand. Since the launch of the pilot in September 2008, more than 200,000 mt of food has been contracted in 20 pilot countries. Participants in P4P include 1,000 farmers’ organizations with a membership of 1 million smallholder farmers.
82. WFP’s role is to use its expertise in procurement and logistics and predictable demand to benefit farmers. WFP’s partners – among them FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, governments, NGOs and bilateral development partners – focus on productivity, yields, access to financial services and other supply-side support. On the demand side, WFP is experimenting with modalities such as direct contracts, modified tenders, warehouse receipts, commodity exchanges and forward contracts to help build the capacity of smallholder farmers in group marketing and accessing quality markets. WFP is also working to bring a nutrition dimension to P4P by linking smallholders with food processors and to produce HEB and ready-to-use supplementary foods in Afghanistan, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda.

83. Internally, P4P is an opportunity for WFP to revise its business practices to facilitate productive engagement with smallholder farmers so that the food is safe, WFP's procurement remains cost-efficient, and smallholders benefit from WFP's purchases.
84. The P4P programme is at a critical juncture as it comes to the end of the pilot phase in 2013. Its scope and potential have generated enthusiasm, and it has the potential to raise incomes among the rural poor – something that development assistance has been trying to do for 40 years – by stimulating local markets using WFP demand.
85. There are challenges and risks that must be considered. There have been many successes, but difficulty in achieving, for example, the gender target of 50 percent women participants; and the mid-term evaluation of the pilot noted that the farmers themselves bear much of the risk when they take out credit.¹⁷ Mitigating risks is a priority: the evaluation recommended retaining the focus on the original objective of learning, and urged that P4P remain at its current scale.
86. WFP's management must make significant decisions as to the future direction of P4P. Among the issues are: i) balancing the enthusiasm to expand the programme with the need to learn how to expand it responsibly; ii) engaging effectively with smallholder farmers as the programme transitions to the next phase; and iii) building on the partnership with the pilot partners. One of the main outputs of P4P will be learning from experience to inform the appropriate next steps, which will include mainstreaming lessons learned and new approaches within WFP, and providing a knowledge base for national governments to engage smallholders with their procurement systems.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Social Protection

87. The Strategic Plan called for “integrating assistance into national social protection strategies, safety nets help prevent duplication of effort and assist governments in developing sustainable food-assistance systems”. Having systems in place reduces the need for emergency response and allows for more effective and efficient response when it is needed.
88. Over the years WFP has gained significant experience in supporting governments in introducing or expanding safety net systems as part of broader social protection strategies. WFP's approach to safety nets gives a purpose and direction to capacity development, advising governments and deploying programmes for nutrition, disaster risk reduction, school feeding and connecting smallholder farmers to markets. A recent evaluation found that “WFP initiatives are increasingly expected to be through or coherent with national safety net systems”.¹⁸ Developing capacities to enable nations to assume ownership of their safety nets will entail robust reporting and M&E to measure the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of these interventions and ensure that future programmes are driven by evidence of impact and value for money.

¹⁸ “Summary Report of the Strategic Evaluation on How WFP's Country Offices Adapt to Change” (WFP/EB.1/2012/6-B).

89. Another challenge for safety nets is consistent and predictable funding. An external study notes the challenges relating to adequate and predictable funding, particularly in post-emergency phases.¹⁹ Stable, predictable funding is critical for supporting disaster preparedness, safety nets and supporting food and nutrition solutions. The period between relief and recovery is crucial for engaging in capacity development and safety nets.

Cash and Vouchers

90. Cash and voucher interventions that focus on access to food, and on improving nutritional status and household food security, have been a priority for WFP since the Board approved the Strategic Plan. They are not programmes in themselves but, rather, transfer modalities that can be used in emergencies, protracted relief and recovery programmes and country programmes; they can also be an important element in national safety nets and can be transferred under Strategic Objective 5 activities.

91. Cash and vouchers are suitable when food is available in markets but priced out of reach. The innovation is well suited to urban contexts, which may become an area of growing needs as more people move to cities.²⁰

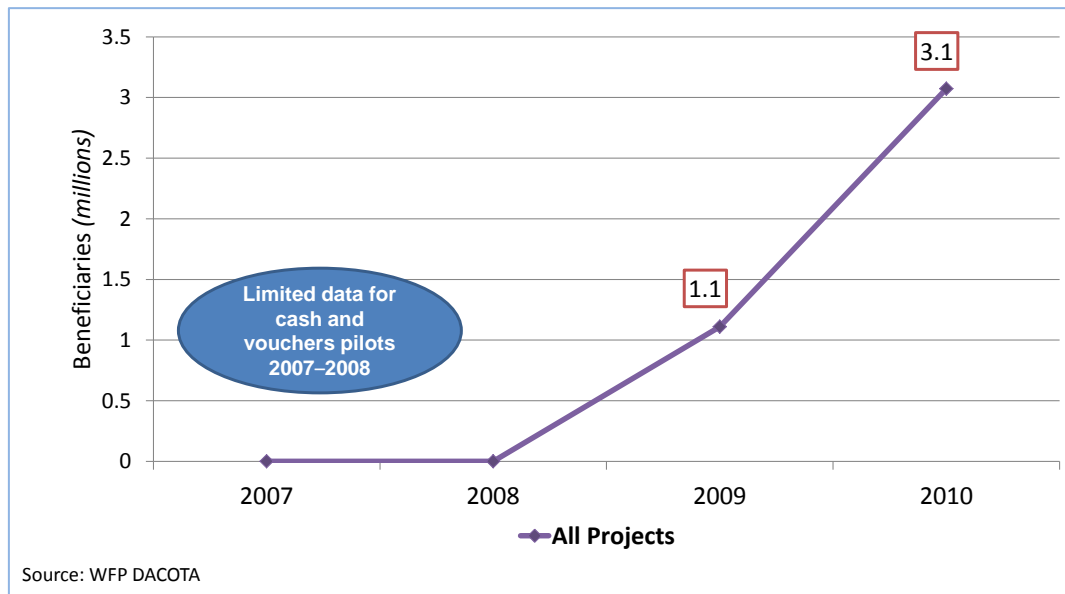
92. Depending on the design of the programme, cash and vouchers can have several benefits beyond their core function of improving access to food, including linking people to financial institutions, flexibility, supporting local markets, giving beneficiaries a choice in what to buy and helping to integrate displaced or minority populations into a community. Cash or voucher modalities are appropriate in a variety of settings. They were used in Burkina Faso and Pakistan during emergencies, in Kenya during the drought emergency and in a protracted relief and recovery operation, and in Zambia in a country programme.

93. WFP has significantly scaled up cash and voucher interventions from a small number of programmes in a few country offices before 2008, implemented as required, to reaching 3 million beneficiaries in 2010 (Figure 13). This scaling-up is supported by flexible cash contributions, and enabled by adjustments to WFP's financial framework, which aims to provide greater flexibility for country offices by providing either a tonnage-based or a cash-based accounting system.

¹⁹ Humanitarian Outcomes. Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Plan: Country Case Studies, 2012.

²⁰ The World Bank reports that "90 percent of urban growth is occurring in the developing world, adding an estimated 70 million new residents to urban areas each year." See: World Bank. 2009. *Systems of Cities: Harnessing Urbanization for Growth and Poverty Alleviation*. World Bank Urban and Local Government Strategy. Washington DC.

Figure 13: Beneficiaries Reached by Cash and Voucher Modalities (2007–2010)



94. WFP is still in the learning phase with regard to using cash and vouchers, and partnerships are playing a central role in this process. WFP is working with the World Bank to evaluate cash and food transfers in the context of school meal programmes in Cambodia and is partnering with IFPRI to design, implement and evaluate cash and voucher programmes in Ecuador, Niger, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Yemen. This work is an opportunity to improve programme design and implementation and to assess the evidence of impact.
95. Challenges remain to integrating cash and vouchers in WFP’s programmes. WFP continues to adapt its business processes from a system based on in-kind food assistance to one that gives country offices a toolbox of approaches such as cash and vouchers. The decision to use direct food transfers or indirect modalities through vouchers or cash must be based on strong contextual assessment, including market analysis, developing protocols and controls, managing risk, establishing partnerships and integrating the modality into national programmes and plans.²¹
96. These challenges have been noted, for example in an external study of three country offices that found “a number of examples where cash and vouchers could only be adopted through exceptions to existing regulations, causing delays and challenges in adapting systems to new tools”¹⁹ and in a report to the Board in 2011, which noted: “The practice of embedding cash transfer and voucher activities in WFP’s tonnage-based cost structure has led to difficulties in planning, comparative costing, management and implementation of those activities. It has also generated challenges for establishing benchmarks that can be compared across projects, evaluating performance and assessing impacts.”²¹
97. WFP launched Cash for Change to help to overcome these constraints by focusing on learning, and providing guidance and support to country offices. Cash for Change brings together expertise in finance, logistics, programme and policy to ensure a holistic approach. It will be a hub of innovation and support as WFP seeks to make cash and vouchers a standard modality for indirect food transfers in appropriate contexts.

²¹ “Update on the Implementation of WFP’s Policy on Vouchers and Cash Transfers” (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-A/Rev.1).

Gender

98. The Strategic Plan links gender and hunger, and notes the importance of gender sensitivity and equality, stating that WFP must be “mindful of the powerful link between gender and hunger; and WFP will continue working at programme, institutional and inter-agency levels to ensure gender sensitivity and equality in all its efforts”. The 2009 gender policy reflected these priorities and focused on creating an enabling environment to mainstream gender in WFP’s policies and programmes and to promote research and evidence-driven approaches. Staff capacity to do this remains a gap, and providing training for staff on gender analysis and integrating gender in the full scope of WFP’s work is part of the corporate gender action plan and a priority.
99. Reaching women is a critical component of WFP’s approach to gender. Eighty percent of food for training participants, 40 percent of participants in food for work and 50 percent of cash and voucher beneficiaries are women (Figures 14, 15 and 16).

Figure 14: Food for Training Participants

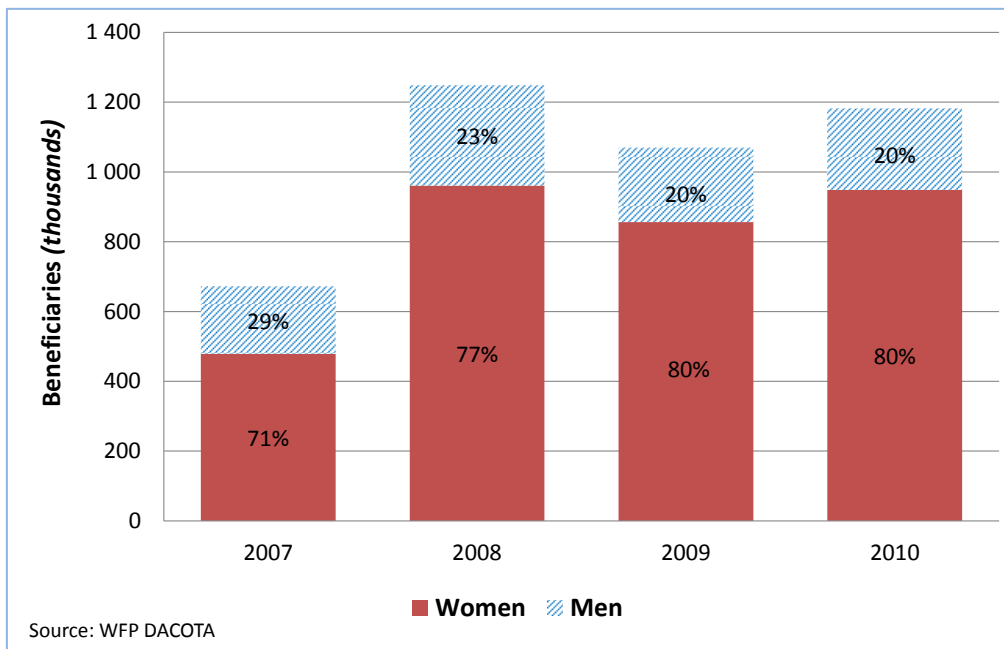
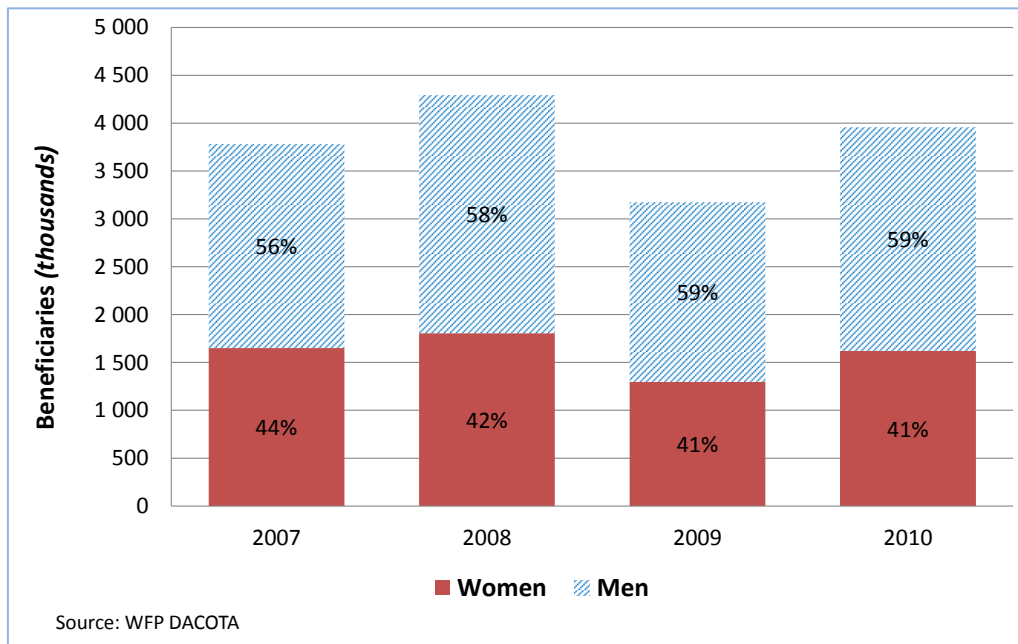
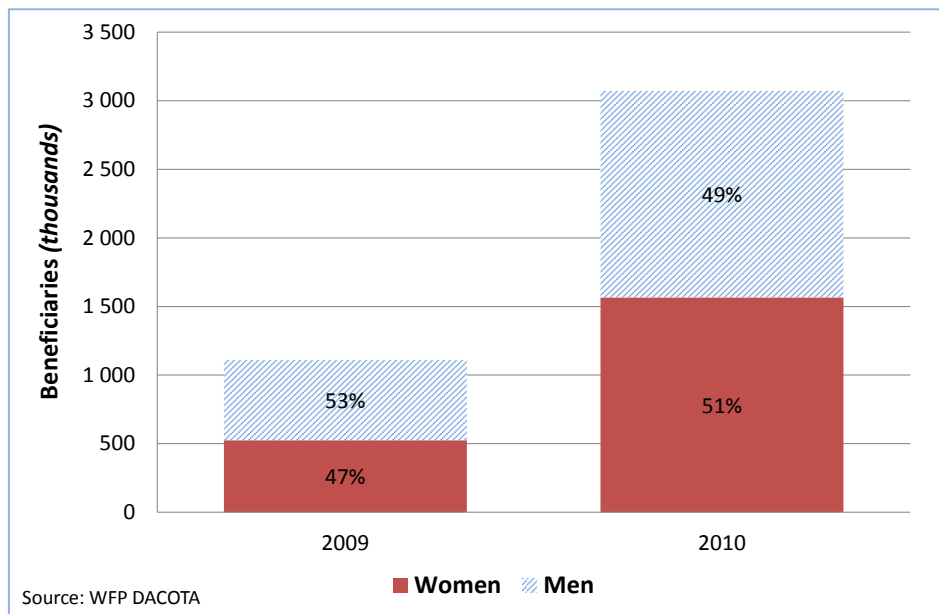


Figure 15: Food for Work Participants**Figure 16: Cash and Voucher Beneficiaries**

100. The Gender Innovations Fund was established in 2010 to help country offices to establish partnerships, particularly with governments, NGOs and communities, with a view to designing and implementing interventions contributing to positive gender relations and the empowerment of women for achieving food and nutrition security. Since then, the fund has allocated US\$2 million to support 30 projects. Projects at the policy level include the integration of gender into the nutrition strategy of the Government of Ecuador and the incorporation of gender and HIV into the annual vulnerability assessment of the Government of Swaziland. Examples of community-level projects include training and organization women in income-generating activities in Guinea-Bissau and the Philippines, and the engagement of men and boys in mother-and-child health and nutrition in Bolivia and Lesotho. These projects promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in WFP programmes.

101. The gender equality institutional assessment carried out by the Canadian International Development Agency in 2011 acknowledged WFP's strengths but also highlighted areas for improvement, such as reporting on WFP's results relating to gender equality and integration of gender into WFP's policies, projects and documents. The findings are consistent with the priorities of the Gender Policy Corporate Action Plan (2010–2011), which include:
- increasing knowledge and capacity among staff to carry out gender analysis and incorporate a gender perspective into policies, programmes and projects;
 - establishing an accountability framework to ensure adequate gender mainstreaming supported by tracking and reporting mechanisms; and
 - incorporating a gender perspective into operations at all stages of project cycles, with revised assessment and evaluation tools to support the process.
102. The positioning of gender as a priority in the 2012 Management Plan will support scaling up in this area.

PARTNERSHIPS

103. The Strategic Plan notes that WFP's success in its mission "will be maximized only if it is accompanied by other actors' efforts or integrated into a broader alliance". The expertise of partners will be essential as WFP seeks to increase its positive impact on beneficiaries' lives through its food and cash resources.
104. WFP has prioritized the updating of its operational agreements with United Nations partners since the Strategic Plan was approved. It has updated agreements or MOUs with UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNICEF and has been working with the World Bank on school feeding, climate change and emergency food reserves, and with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization on safety nets and social protection. WFP also has strong ties with organizations such as IFPRI and the Institute of Development Studies through ongoing joint research and evaluation initiatives.
105. The Strategic Plan opened the way for new partnerships to extend the reach of WFP's programmes by drawing on outside expertise. An example of the type of partnership towards which WFP is moving is P4P, which has 220 partnerships involved in the pilot, all contributing unique expertise, engagement and talents. These partnerships bring expertise in finance, agricultural development, post-harvest storage and handling and food processing. And P4P has created a consortium of 40 African universities – the African Economic Research Consortium – to analyse P4P with a view to sharing the knowledge of P4P with others; the data hub in Nairobi is placing the data and analysis in the public sphere.
106. WFP has entered into a partnership with the Institute of Development Studies that is similarly prioritizing developing innovations and sharing knowledge on gender mainstreaming in food security and nutrition programmes. The three-year programme began in 2010.
107. Nutrition is an area that is opening new avenues for collaboration with partners. WFP is working with nutritionists, health and private-sector partners to scale up its nutrition work. Half of WFP's United Nations partnerships are in the health and nutrition field. Most important, WFP's work in support of national strategies requires more work with ministries and local governments. For example WFP is working with the Children's

Investment Fund on a US\$35 million project to build capacity at the country level to improve results reporting and monitoring in nutrition interventions.

108. WFP's private-sector partnerships have brought technical expertise in logistics, nutrition, food production and packaging and supply chain management, and support for innovative programmes and approaches such as Project Laserbeam, which recruits food experts from multinational corporations to help in markets in Bangladesh and Indonesia, where they have not hitherto been engaged.
109. As WFP seeks new partnerships in deploying the range of tools and approaches, it will increasingly be assessed for what it brings to the partnerships. A recent evaluation of WFP's partnerships notes that it is perceived as "a valued and respected partner".¹³ A survey of three country offices found that that the Strategic Plan has resulted in "increased alignment with government at the level of central strategy".¹⁹
110. Several challenges to WFP's partnerships have been noted in reports. One notes a "relative lack of technical expertise to support participation in [nutrition] programmes; a relative lack of senior professional staff to undertake WFP's work and partner effectively with counterparts" and that WFP staff sometimes lack the time to manage partnerships. This is probably linked to the fact that WFP often has an operational staff profile in country offices rather than a profile for engagement in policy and programme partnerships at the senior level.¹³ It is an issue that WFP may have to address as it matches required skill sets with current staff abilities and knowledge.
111. Another barrier to partnership in the context of social protection and safety nets is that "the short duration of WFP's project cycle hinders a long-term approach". Partnerships often need more time and sustained support than WFP project cycles allow. Another evaluation found that partners did not "have confidence in WFP's long-term commitments due to its funding structure".²² This will be a challenge for partnerships and for supporting nations with social protection and disaster risk reduction programmes.
112. There have also been questions as to the kind of partner WFP is for national authorities. Many see WFP as an operational partner but not a partner for policy advice or social protection and safety nets. An independent report notes that in Kenya "the Government considers WFP to be a key implementer rather than strategic policy partner... Concerns were expressed that some of the work that WFP does at the national level duplicates that of other agencies."¹⁹
113. Three things are critical for meeting these challenges: i) training staff to engage productively in partnerships; ii) communicating more effectively on partnerships, both within WFP and to governments, United Nations agencies, NGOs and the private sector; and iii) ensuring incentives are in place for WFP staff to engage in and enhance partnerships. In addition, WFP's organizational structure may need to be adjusted to integrate partnerships more fully in WFP's work.

²² "Summary Report of the Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Role in Ending Long-Term Hunger" (WFP/EB.1/2012/6-C).

INTERNAL REFORMS TO SUPPORT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Monitoring and Evaluation

114. Monitoring and evaluation processes are a critical element of the new strategic direction of WFP. A recent evaluation noted that WFP's monitoring systems are often sophisticated but that they were designed to track food movements and beneficiary coverage rather than the effect of food assistance on long-term hunger. Another evaluation echoes this, noting that "WFP has largely focused on monitoring the outputs rather than the outcomes and impact of its support for livelihood recovery"; it also notes that WFP has "often made significant efforts to generate learning about livelihood issues". These concerns are shared by global leaders, who called for "better managing for results, monitoring, evaluating and communicating progress" at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November 2011. It is important to assess and measure non-operational roles such as advising governments, capacity development and support for integration into national programmes.
115. Enhancing the learning loop by improving monitoring, reporting, analysis and evaluation is a priority for WFP, which is incorporating lessons learned in its emergency response through PREP and updated programme guidance. It has also launched a new M&E strategy for 2011–2013 that includes: i) a revised Strategic Results Framework focusing on results attributable to WFP's interventions; ii) a new monitoring system; iii) updated standards and guidance in operations; and iv) staff training. WFP has instituted a policy-development cycle that identifies gaps and includes evaluations, as outlined in the policy formulation paper and in the annual compendium of policies relating to the Strategic Plan.
116. This work will improve reporting in the APR by tracking progress against the Strategic Objectives; it will also ensure quality reporting for the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review and will help to ensure that WFP's policies and programmes are driven by evidence of impact. The work can also help to build support for increased country ownership and for safety nets in host nations.
117. Structural challenges remain. One issue raised by independent reports is the challenges of reporting, partnering and capacity development in short-duration projects or when planning timeframes are too short. An evaluation on livelihood recovery notes: "Timeframes ... are often too short, and there is often pressure on WFP from donors and host governments to phase out relief and recovery assistance as quickly as possible... Recovery activities often need to be implemented simultaneously with relief interventions." And an evaluation of safety nets notes: "Problems that limit WFP's ability to provide effective social protection or safety nets include inadequate duration and amount of transfers; pipeline breaks due to annual funding cycles and gaps and delays in funding; and short-term or unpredictable transfers."
118. Where WFP has a longer planning timeframe, as in the Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions project in Ethiopia, results have been measured and reported more accurately, capacity development has been significant and the project has been clearly aligned with government priorities. Finding ways of measuring impacts and reporting results for long-duration projects could help WFP to secure more long-term funding. The Centre for Excellence in Brazil, which fosters South–South cooperation, is important for supporting long-term projects for capacity development and aligning safety nets with national plans and priorities.

Human Resources

119. WFP's most valuable assets are the dedication, resourcefulness and knowledge of its staff, who have been in the forefront of implementing the changes approved by the Board in the Strategic Plan.
120. Deploying a diverse set of tools, supporting national plans and priorities, working with United Nations, NGOs and other partners and engaging in capacity development requires diverse skills, from monitoring programmes and assessing impact to advising governments on food security safety nets. Many country offices have found it difficult to find the time and technical capacity to deploy the new tools and approaches because they have numerous operational responsibilities as well as the new ones relating to advising governments, developing new partnerships and supporting national plans. An evaluation found that the shifts called for in the Strategic Plan require new skills, and that the lack of those skills "has hampered implementation and scale-up of change initiatives".¹⁸
121. The Human Resources Division launched a strategy to support the Strategic Plan by providing for more learning and training for leadership development and a career framework for professional staff. A major element is to identify gaps in skills among existing staff. To address this, the Human Resources Division has commissioned a consulting firm to assess staff skills with a view to determining which skills need to be developed. This will be the basis for actions to fill the gaps and help staff to develop appropriate skill profiles.

Management, Accountability and Financial Controls

122. Scaling up new approaches requires updated and robust systems of management, accountability and controls. With the support of the Board, WFP has carried out reforms to enhance its internal systems and processes to provide a foundation for implementation of the Strategic Plan.
123. In 2008, WFP was the first United Nations agency to adopt International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), receiving an unqualified (satisfactory) audit opinion. In 2009, it upgraded the enterprise resource planning system in WINGS II, which provides for IPSAS-compliant financial reporting and more extensive coverage of WFP's business systems. This has resulted in more accurate and detailed tracking of financial and human resources at all levels, from Headquarters to sub-offices in the field. A review of the new platform estimates annual cost savings of US\$11.55 million.
124. A review of the WFP's financial framework was also launched in 2009 to enable implementation of the Strategic Plan. The review clarified WFP's programme categories, established a new system for prioritizing multilateral funding and made changes to the budgeting framework for WFP projects to facilitate non-food programmes.²³ These changes enhance the clarity and coherence of WFP's work; and the shift in the financial framework from a tonnage-based cost structure to one that can be based on tonnage or dollar value gives country directors greater flexibility in using food or cash-based interventions.

²³ "Financial Framework Review Options" (WFP/EB.A/2010/6-E/1), "Financial Framework Review" (WFP/EB.2/2010/5-A/1) and "Programme Category Review" (WFP/EB.A/2010/11/Rev.1).

RESOURCING

125. Since the Strategic Plan was approved, WFP has benefited from extraordinary generosity from Member States, even during challenging economic times. There were record donations in support of vulnerable people and nations in 2008, and continued elevated levels of support since that crisis year. A significant enabler of the Strategic Plan is the increase in cash donations. Since the plan was approved, cash contributions have increased by approximately US\$1 billion, giving WFP the flexibility to undertake a range of programmes and reforms.
126. The private sector has become a major donor to WFP, with contributions rising three-fold since the Strategic Plan was approved. The private sector also provides partnership, flexibility and encouragement to innovate and to try new approaches.
127. Multilateral funding is vital for WFP. The Strategic Resource Allocation Committee was created to prioritize and rationalize the allocation of its flexible funding.
128. Access to thematic funds will also support the Strategic Plan in terms of funding actions for climate change resilience, health, gender and agriculture support, which are critical to WFP's mission. Thematic funding such as the Gender Innovations Fund, the Adaptation Fund and the Global Environmental Facility could give WFP a longer time horizon for its work and helps to build resilience, partnerships and capacity so that emergency response needs are reduced during crises. Improvements in monitoring, evaluation and evidence of impact will position WFP to access more of these thematic funding opportunities.
129. A major challenge is the current funding model, which has remained largely unchanged since WFP was founded. The bulk of WFP's funding is tied to specific projects, which are generally of short duration. This can constrain partnerships with governments and NGOs, and can constrain the measurement of impact over time; it can also create challenges in capacity development. More predictable and flexible funding would enable WFP to be more effective in achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan, particularly the capacity-development objectives.
130. WFP's country strategies will constitute a means for addressing this issue. This approach will focus on WFP's mandate and core strengths and will align its programmes more closely with national strategies. This will deepen WFP's role and partnership potential, which in turn will provide a context for accessing stable, predictable funds with a focus on food and nutrition security and resilience-building.

FINDINGS

131. The findings and recommendations of this review are offered with a view to influencing WFP during the final year of the current Strategic Plan and informing the development of the next Strategic Plan.
132. **The Strategic Plan positioned WFP to meet growing and increasingly complex challenges related to food and nutrition security more effectively and sustainably.** There has been an alarming increase in food and nutrition insecurity in recent years. The changes called for in the Strategic Plan gave WFP's field staff more tools and greater flexibility to meet the challenges, particularly when responding to emergencies.
133. **The new tools and modalities open new possibilities for supporting national plans, capacity development and resilience-building.** The Strategic Plan positions WFP to

respond to the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda and the Busan Declaration, which call for support for national priorities and plans.

134. **The Strategic Plan leverages WFP's impact in the communities it serves.** Greater flexibility has enabled WFP to leverage food assistance programmes to better respond to emergencies, support safety nets, nutrition, smallholder farmers and disaster risk reduction priorities.
135. **The Strategic Plan has broadened WFP's knowledge-sharing and partnerships.** With its new strategic direction, WFP has entered new partnerships with a range of entities from national authorities to research institutions and the private sector. WFP is also more engaged in integrating food security and nutrition solutions into international humanitarian policies through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the G8 and G20 and other fora. This provides a strong foundation for continued expansion of partnerships with a focus on learning and sharing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

136. To fully implement and institutionalize the Strategic Plan, two aspects must be assessed at the outset. The first is whether WFP has the people with the right skills, particularly in the field, to do its work. The second is whether WFP is structured in a way that facilitates the new strategic direction and provides clear channels of accountability, responsibility, flexibility and transparency. Assessing these two aspects will contribute to addressing the other recommendations.
137. **Maintain and enhance staff skill profiles, particularly in country offices.** WFP's staff profile is good for an operational role in that it ensures the integrity of supply chains and the delivery of goods. But there is an increasing need to advise government partners on disaster preparedness, response, risk reduction and nutrition, and to obtain access to new funding; senior staff must devote significant time and technical expertise to these requirements. This should be addressed by providing additional training for staff and creating opportunities for them to build their skills and knowledge, and by giving country offices the flexibility to develop the staff profiles they need.
138. **Assess organizational structure of WFP.** Although WFP's core focus of fighting hunger and undernutrition remains the same, the Strategic Plan fundamentally changes the way WFP works to achieve this goal, from engaging in new partnerships to using a range of tools. This may require adjustments to the organizational structure, which has remained largely the same since 2007.
139. **Enhance and increase partnerships at every level.** The Strategic Plan has created space for new partners and partnerships, which have been established in a range of activities from nutrition to connecting smallholder farmers to markets. An evaluation noted that WFP is a respected partner, but called for: i) greater clarity and focus in its partnerships; ii) focused support for health and nutrition, including for building partnership skills among staff; and iii) the inclusion of partnerships in project planning, outcome measurement and evaluations. These recommendations should be implemented to ensure that WFP continues to have a coherent and effective role and to support the scaling up and institutionalization of the changes called for in the Strategic Plan.
140. **Continue to pursue financial reforms, focusing on country-level needs.** The flexible reforms to the financial framework approved by the Board in November 2010 need to be followed up throughout WFP. Adjustments to WFP's systems and engagement with

country-office finance and budget officers must remain priorities to ensure that country offices have the flexibility to deploy a range of tools and modalities.

141. **Improve reporting on impact, efficiency and results.** WFP's reporting focuses on the integrity of the supply chain and delivery to beneficiaries, with an emphasis on processes and outputs. Impact, efficiency and results reporting will require M&E that is both affordable and adequately funded, and a reporting system that enables reports by different country offices to be compared. WFP's new M&E strategy will be critical in implementing these changes. The Strategic Results Framework for the next Strategic Plan should build on lessons learned from the current results framework and the work of other United Nations agencies.
142. **Improve capacity development.** Studies have noted that WFP managers have limited time and technical expertise for capacity development. This work is sometimes very effective, but it is not always applied systematically across WFP and reporting on the activities and their impacts has been inconsistent. WFP has therefore deployed a capacity-development toolkit and matrix for country capacity development. The improvement of staff skills, funding allocation and continued guidance for country offices, are strongly recommended.
143. **Address funding model constraints.** Most contributions to WFP are earmarked for specific projects, which constrains operational flexibility and reduces planning horizons. Several member states have recognized this and have moved recently to flexible, multi-year commitments. More unrestricted, multilateral and multi-year contributions are critical to enable WFP to improve measurement and tracking and to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its programmes.
144. **Address the challenges of short project duration by further integrating WFP programmes into national plans and strategies.** Most of WFP's funding is allocated to relatively short projects. Evaluations and other reports have found that short project duration can create challenges for building partnerships, particularly for safety nets, nutrition, support for capacity development and hand-over. To overcome this, WFP should integrate its programmes more fully into national plans and United Nations common frameworks at the country level. The country strategy documents, which support the roll-out of the Strategic Plan in country offices, articulate a clear and coherent role for WFP in national and United Nations country teams, and can help to build support for longer-term projects.
145. **Improve the roll-out, change processes and accountability framework in the next Strategic Plan.** To improve the development and implementation of the next Strategic Plan, this review recommends that WFP:
 - include a range of WFP staff and stakeholders in the development of the next Strategic Plan;
 - clearly define for staff and partners the implications of the Strategic Plan and what might change in the future;
 - include an implementation plan with indicators for measuring progress;
 - include a plan of action for internal changes and adjustments to support the Strategic Plan; and
 - develop a policy, programme guidance and evaluation cycle plan that supports the changes.

ANNEX: RISK MATRIX FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN (2008–2013)

Risk Sphere	Risk description	Causes	Effects	Mitigation actions currently in place	Mitigation actions needed
Institutional	Inability to fully align and support nationally owned hunger solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding model • Short project duration • Insufficient availability of staff expertise and skill set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP not considered as relevant partner to support government hunger solutions • Diminished sustainability of programmes that are not aligned or supported by government or United Nations partners • More limited capacity for engaging in partnerships and hand-over 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country strategy process rolled out in many country offices further aligning WFP programming with national and United Nations priorities • Change of financial framework from tonnage-based to value-based programming • Deployment of toolkits and guidance to support stronger partnership and capacity development • See staff skill-set at risk #4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue advocating for more flexible and longer-term funding • Continue country strategy process to define WFP's role and programme response in country more clearly • Train staff to enhance partnerships • See staff skill-set at risk #4
Institutional	Inability to demonstrate fully WFP's strength and results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E inadequate for the scope and scale of WFP's work • Lack of dedicated funding for M&E • Lack of training to help managers enact strong performance management systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP may be unable to demonstrate that it is meeting its objectives in a cost-efficient and cost-effective manner, affecting donor willingness to fund WFP activities • Reduced opportunity to learn and improve programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E studies at the country, regional or corporate level • Various forms of data entry tools used by country offices and relayed to Headquarters • Use of the corporate M&E tool (COMET) • Performance and risk management frameworks in place • Adoption and implementation of IPSAS • IT's One Truth project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt new M&E strategy in 2012 • Unified corporate programme monitoring system to be rolled out in 2013 • Performance and Risk Management System to be rolled out in 2013 • Identify ways to ensure adequate budgeting for country-level M&E • Global reporter platform to be rolled out in 2013



ANNEX: RISK MATRIX FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN (2008–2013)

Risk Sphere	Risk description	Causes	Effects	Mitigation actions currently in place	Mitigation actions needed
Institutional	Gap exists between policy and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some incomplete understanding of operational context to support choice of most appropriate tools • New tools not fully institutionalized • Resource constraints for new tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong evidence of the transition from food aid to food assistance may not be available in WFP. • Most appropriate tool not always deployed. • It may be difficult to scale-up new components and tools in line with the intended strategic shift. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP is mainstreaming new tools and pilot approaches by developing policy and programme guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan (2014–2017) to include implementation road map, with milestones (2013) • Continue country strategy process to help country offices to identify most appropriate programme response based on comparative advantages and in line with Strategic Plan (2014–2017) • Future policies to include corporate indicators to measure the achievement of projects designed in line with the new policy (2012) • Wider documentation and dissemination of best practices
Programmatic	Existing expertise and skill sets not adequate to accelerate scaling-up of new initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP is in a transition period from food aid to food assistance, developing and implementing new tools and approaches. • WFP operates in a highly decentralized manner where decisions on the use of new tools are taken as close to beneficiaries as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes and new tools may not be designed and implemented optimally. • WFP management and control structures may be unable to keep pace with the scaling up, leading to poor results and inefficient use of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review job profiles and match them to candidate profiles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of requirements for staff skill sets to enable WFP's transition to a food-assistance agency (2012) • Skills-building programme offered to programme staff



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

APR	Annual Performance Report
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EMOP	Emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HEB	high-energy biscuits
IT	information technology
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
IRA	Immediate Response Account
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PREP	Preparedness Response Enhancement Programme
TB	tuberculosis
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
WCF	Working Capital Financing
WINGS II	WFP Information Network and Global System II