

Informal Consultation with the Executive Board April 26th, 2018
Talking Points from the Nepal Country Office
Nepal CSP 2019-2023 Concept Note

1. We currently stand at a watershed moment in the history of Nepal: Over the course of the past few months Nepal has ushered in a government with a solid two thirds majority and a mandate to govern for five years. Even more importantly, these elections signal the beginning of a transformation from a unitary to a federal system of government which is, at last, fulfilling promises made during the 2006 peace process which ended the divisive and bloody 10-year Maoist civil war. Possibly at no time in Nepal's history have there been better prospects for eliminating hunger across the country. This CSP is being designed to seize this opportunity.
2. Three defining characteristics of Nepal account for it being one of the slowest countries in the Region with respect to progress on key FSN indicators:
 3. Access and isolation is a major factor - Nepal is home to 8 of the world's 10 highest mountains, and only 43 % of people have access to all weather roads and immediate access to markets and basic social services. This drives social exclusion, inequity and labour migration which has risen from 2 to 30% of GDP in past 15 years.
 4. Furthermore Nepal is one of the most natural disaster-prone countries in the world. WFP has undertaken 4 EMOPs for unrelated emergencies over the past 4 years and the Government, WFP and partners are in a perpetual state of either preparing or responding to humanitarian disasters.
 5. But the largest barrier to development has been the political churn that has seen more than 27 governments take power in Nepal in 25 years – few with a mandate or an expectation to govern for more than 1 year - which has made efforts to strengthen the capacity of national systems incredibly challenging and largely ineffective.
 6. But the future is bright. New Federalism is devolving authority and resources to Communities to enable them to take ownership of their own development. The years ahead will be an intense period of re-structuring and the GoN is looking to development partners for much needed support and guidance. If the government remains stable, this represents an enormous opportunity for Nepal to realize its aspirations of achieving the SDGs as well as 'lower middle income' status by 2030.

7. Conducted in late 2017, the Zero Hunger Strategic Review was perfectly timed to illuminate the needs of Nepal in this new context of stability and federalism – and this has subsequently shaped the WFP Nepal Country Strategic Plan. The proposed strategy re-examines WFP’s role in the country. It includes some key elements of the past but now leans toward transitioning to government ownership; working in partnerships; and ratchetting-up the inclusion of marginalized groups including the disabled.

8. I would like to briefly touch on our proposed strategic outcome on Policy Coherence (SO 5) which is a key shift for WFP in Nepal and has been designed to support government to make good on its commitment in the Constitution to deliver on the Right to Food – and to do so in the new context of a federalized state.

9. The CSP will strive to bridge the gulf, highlighted by the ZHSR, between the agriculture and health and nutrition which work in silos in Nepal and it will promote an approach to Food Security which is neither ag-centric or nutrition-centric—for a holistic multisector approach that addresses SDG2 across all its Strategic Results.

10. It will also respond to the multiple national policies and frameworks that the ZHSR noted, in one way or another, address food and nutrition security, - but which lack coherence and which need to be realigned to work under the new federal system; as well as the pressing need to capacity strengthen new local governments – especially the 14,000 elected women - whose role will now be central to eliminating hunger.

11. In closing, I would like to recognize and congratulate the Government of Nepal for undertaking the ZHSR, for their commitment to the Right to Food and for their strong determination to achieve this through the framework of the Agenda 2030.

12. I would also wish to reiterate WFP’s strong commitment to accompany them through this process