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Management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for El Salvador (2017–2021)

Background

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for El Salvador (2017–2021).
2. The evaluation was conducted between October 2020 and July 2021 and assessed WFP's strategic positioning, contribution to outcomes and efficiency in implementation, and the factors explaining that performance.
3. Taking a utilization-focused and consultative approach, the evaluation served the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informed the preparation of a new CSP for El Salvador.
4. The evaluation makes two strategic and four operational recommendations that address key issues for the next El Salvador CSP.
5. The response sets out whether WFP management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with each evaluation recommendation and sub-recommendation. It presents the planned (or completed) actions, responsibilities and timelines for implementation of those recommendations.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE SUMMARY REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EL SALVADOR (2017–2021)					
Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead (with supporting offices and divisions in brackets)	Management response	Actions to be taken	Action lead (with supporting offices and divisions in brackets)	Action deadline
<p>Priority: High Overall deadline: December 2022 Recommendation 1: WFP should harness its strategic position and reputational capital to position itself as a key development partner in the post-COVID-19 reconstruction.</p>	Country office management				
<p>1.1 Develop a plan for expanding and consolidating partnerships with high-level political and institutional stakeholders in the country, international cooperation entities and international financial institutions and monitor the plan's implementation with twice-yearly assessments of its continued relevance. (December 2022 and biannual assessments throughout CSP implementation)</p>	Country office partnerships unit (country office communications, programme, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units)	Agreed	1. The partnership action plan is being updated and WFP is engaging with international and national financial institutions, government institutions and international development cooperation entities. Completion of the sub-recommendation will be a goal of the partnership action plan, which will include related key actions and a key performance indicator.	Country office partnerships unit (country office – communications, programme, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units) Regional bureau management	December 2022

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1.2 Develop a communication strategy focused on WFP's ability to strengthen institutional capacity, aimed at conveying the results achieved for Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development overall targets under the country strategic plan for 2017-2021, and other WFP assets, such as its global recognition as the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize laureate. (December 2022)	Country office communications unit (country office partnerships, programme, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units)	Agreed	2. The communication strategy will be updated and aligned with the objectives of the partnership action plan and programme goals in order to show WFP's track record in achieving high-level results and recognition. The communication strategy will define results, activities, target audiences, metrics and costs.	Country office – partnerships unit (country office-communications, programme, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units)	December 2022
1.3 Together with the regional bureau, establish a dialogue with international financial institutions to promote projects in the Central American subregion and South-South cooperation projects. (December 2022)	Country office partnerships unit (country office programme and operation units, regional bureau South-South cooperation and programme units)	Agreed	3. The partnership action plan will be updated and completion of the sub-recommendation will be a goal of the updated plan, which will include related key actions and key performance indicators.	Country office – communications unit (country office partnerships, programme, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units, regional bureau management)	December 2022

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<p>Priority: High</p> <p>Overall deadline: June 2022</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Considering the Sustainable Development Goals in the post-COVID-19 reconstruction, the new country strategic plan should link its strategic outcomes, explicitly incorporate intervention modalities that are linked with the strengthening of national capacity and expressly capture the logic of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.</p>	Country office management				
2.1 Design the new country strategic plan theory of change to consider and reflect: the connections between the strategic outcomes and the principles of the triple nexus, translating them into activities; the connections between the capacity strengthening domains (enabling environment, organizational and individual); and the various modes of engagement with stakeholders (advocacy and political dialogue,	Country office operation and programme units (country office research, assessment and monitoring unit)	Agreed	1. The current theory of change for the CSP for 2022-2027, which is currently being revised, reflects the links between the strategic outcomes and the principles of triple nexus; the connections among the three domains of capacity strengthening; and the various modes of stakeholder engagement.	Country office operation and programme units	March 2022

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capacity development, knowledge management, direct assistance, inter-agency coordination and awareness-raising). Incorporate into the new CSP (February/March 2022)					
2.2 Strengthen internal coordination within the country office as well as monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure connections among activities and to shape interventions that progress synergically. (June 2022)	Country office management (country office operation, programme and research, assessment and monitoring units)	Agreed	2. The organizational structure has been modified in order to facilitate coordination among strategic outcomes and activities and the incorporation of coordination mechanisms – including monitoring exercises, mid-term reviews and decentralized and centralized evaluations – into programme decision making that promotes synergies in implementation.	Country office management (country office operation, programme and research, assessment and monitoring units)	June 2022

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<p>Priority: High Overall deadline: December 2022 Recommendation 3: The new country strategic plan should continue adopting a gender-transformative approach, with relevant measures applied in the targeting of beneficiaries, in partnerships and in the implementation of inter-agency strategies.</p>	Country office management				
<p>3.1 Map the gender gaps, considering intersectionalities (socioeconomic status, age, territory, ethnicity, disability and gender identity), and incorporate measures to reduce such gender gaps into the theory of change and the design of the new country strategic plan, combining parity criteria with affirmative action and gender-mainstreaming institutional interventions and using gender marker indicators. Incorporate into the new CSP (February/March 2022)</p>	Country office gender focal point (country office operation, programme and research, assessment and monitoring units, regional bureau gender focal point)	Agreed	1. The country office has selected a gender and age marker code of 3 and will conduct a gender analysis based on primary and secondary data. The findings of that analysis will provide evidence for and clarify the CSP theory of change (in accordance with recommendation 5 from the decentralized thematic evaluation on gender).	Country office gender focal point (country office operation, programme and research, assessment and monitoring units, regional bureau gender focal point and programme policy officer)	March 2022

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3.2 Mainstream a gender approach in high-level advocacy by mapping key institutions and stakeholders with a gender equality mandate, establishing a dialogue and implementing gender-transformative actions with them. (December 2022)	Country office gender focal point (country office communications, partnerships, operation, programme and research, assessment and monitoring units, regional bureau gender focal point)	Agreed	2. WFP will coordinate with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and map other actors working on gender issues. It will identify issues of common interest and opportunities for and synergies in engagement and the implementation of gender-transformative actions.	Country office gender focal point (country office communications, partnerships, operation, programme and research, assessment and monitoring units, regional bureau gender focal point and programme policy officer)	December 2022
3.3 Incorporate a gender-transformative approach in working agreements with partners and in partnerships with development cooperation actors. (December 2022)	Country office gender focal point (country office partnerships, communications, operation and programme units, regional bureau gender focal point)	Agreed	3. WFP will revise field-level and other agreements and will integrate a gender-transformative approach into the work and activities included in new agreements.	Country office gender focal point (country office partnerships, communications, operation and programme units, regional bureau gender focal point and programme policy officer)	December 2022

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3.4 Ensure that the communication strategy of the country office gives greater visibility to the achievement of results for gender equality and women's empowerment. (December 2022)	Country office communications unit (country office gender focal point and research, assessment and monitoring unit)	Agreed	4. WFP will ensure that the communication materials shared with assisted populations, donors, governments and other relevant partners cover gender-sensitive and gender-transformative actions in ways that enhance the visibility of results relating to gender equality and women's empowerment.	Country office communications unit (country office gender focal point and research, assessment and monitoring unit)	December 2022
3.5 Develop a plan to ensure that the country office progresses on internal awareness-raising and capacity-building activities on gender equality and women's empowerment, making use of the recent addition of staff specialized in gender. (December 2022)	Country office gender focal point and human resources unit (regional bureau gender focal point)	Agreed	5. Supported by the regional gender focal point, the country office has started to implement a gender-transformative programme that includes an action plan and a programme of training for all WFP staff and cooperating partners, in accordance with recommendation 1 of the decentralized thematic evaluation on gender.	Country office gender focal point and human resources unit (regional bureau gender focal point and programme policy officer)	December 2022

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<p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Overall deadline: June 2022</p> <p>Recommendation 4: WFP should develop a strategy for enhancing the sustainability of its interventions under the country strategic plan.</p>	Country office programme unit				
<p>4.1 Incorporate consideration of conditions for sustainability and the scaling up of strategic outcomes into the new country strategic plan. Such considerations should include the availability of funding for continued action and the sustainability of achievements; commitment by government counterparts; high-level advocacy and political dialogue with the Government of El Salvador and the private sector; and strengthened partnerships within the United Nations system to promote inter-agency projects.</p> <p>Incorporate into the new CSP (February/March 2022)</p>	Country office partnerships unit (country office operation and programme units)	Agreed	1. The new CSP contemplates a food system approach that leads to sustainable results through action on a humanitarian-development nexus. The country office is engaging with development partners such as other United Nations entities, the Government and the private sector on joint projects and will continue to strengthen those partnerships.	Country office partnerships unit (country office operation and programme units)	March 2022

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4.2 Include contextual risks beyond WFP's control that could affect the sustainability of interventions in risk assessments conducted regularly by the country office and conduct twice-yearly risk assessments during the term of the country strategic plan, in line with the annual performance plan cycle. (June 2022 and biannual risk assessment report throughout CSP implementation)	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office operation and programme units)	Agreed	2. The country office risk register will identify mitigation actions for risks that could affect the sustainability of interventions.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit and support services (country office operation and programme units)	June 2022
4.3 Develop a road map for scaling up pilot projects and strengthening partner commitments in terms of resources and timelines. (December 2022)	Country office programme and operation units (country office partnerships unit)	Agreed	3. The scaling up of pilot projects is included in the new CSP. The country office will continue to engage with partners and advocate the scale-up and adoption of pilot projects while the programme and partnerships units collaborate on the development of a road map.	Country office programme and operation units (country office partnerships unit)	December 2022

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<p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Overall deadline: June 2023</p> <p>Recommendation 5: Promote the results-based management approach in programme management, in the internal management of the country office and across the country office organizational culture.</p>	Country office management				
<p>5.1 Ensure that the theory of change of the new country strategic plan clearly identifies the causal chain and its intermediate and final effects, setting out the rationale for the activities, taking into account the expected outputs.</p> <p>Incorporate into the new CSP (February/March 2022)</p>	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office operation unit, gender focal point and programme unit)	Agreed	1. The theory of change for the CSP is aligned with the corporate results framework. The theory of change includes impacts, intermediate outcomes, immediate outcomes, outputs and activities and sets out the main assumptions underlying the achievement of immediate outcomes.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office operation unit, gender focal point and programme unit)	March 2022

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5.2 Ensure that the new country strategic plan includes specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound indicators, in addition to the corporate indicators used to track the capacity strengthening strategy and advocacy and political dialogue. (December 2022)	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office programme and operation units)	Agreed	2. The country office included corporate SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) indicators in the CSP logical framework. It is piloting implementation of a social cohesion indicator and will define a capacity strengthening indicator in collaboration with the regional bureau.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office programme and operation units)	December 2022
5.3 Strengthen the link between evidence generation, design and decision making in implementation by involving monitoring and evaluation staff in decision making processes. (December 2022)	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office programme and operation units)	Agreed	3. Country office management has adopted an evidence-based decision making approach developed with the involvement of monitoring and evaluation staff. Regular meetings between programme and monitoring and evaluation staff will aim to ensure that the evidence generated from studies, assessments and evaluations helps management to make timely and informed decisions.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office programme and operation units)	December 2022

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5.4 Use the information generated by WFP field monitors to develop a country strategic plan with greater integration among strategic outcomes, facilitating feedback loops and corrective measures. (December 2022)	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office programme and operation units)	Agreed	4. Monitoring and evaluation staff have participated fully in the formulation of the new CSP.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (country office programme and operation units)	December 2022
5.5 Establish agreements with implementing partners and with the Government of El Salvador to incorporate adaptive planning into interventions, generating results-based management capacity among partners. (June 2023)	Country office research, assessment and monitoring and partnerships units (country office operation and programme units)	Agreed	5. An internal knowledge management strategy is being designed. It includes objectives that guide the dialogue on results-based management with government and other actors, and will be a key tool for evidence-based decision making.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring and partnerships units (country office operation and programme units)	June 2022

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Priority: Medium Overall deadline: January 2023 Recommendation 6: Develop a resource mobilization strategy with medium- and long-term horizons.	Country office partnerships unit				
6.1 Establish, through a participatory process, a phased resource mobilization strategy, monitor its progress (with measurable milestones or checkpoints) and determine intermediate and final outcomes. (December 2022, with follow ups throughout CSP implementation)	Country office partnerships unit (country office research, assessment and monitoring, operation and programme units)	Agreed	1. The country office will establish a broad-based resource mobilization strategy in line with the partnership action plan and will monitor its implementation based on key performance indicators.	Country office partnerships unit (country office research, assessment and monitoring, operation and programme units)	June 2022
6.2 Set up a team, including senior management, responsible for monitoring the resource mobilization strategy and conducting regular analyses of cost-effectiveness scenarios. (January 2023)	Country office management (country office partnerships, programming, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units)	Agreed	2. Regular meetings with senior management will be used to monitor implementation of the partnership action plan and be complemented by the activities of a resource management committee.	Country office management (country office partnerships, programming, operation and research, assessment and monitoring units)	January 2023