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Summary of the work of the 2022 first regular session of the Executive Board

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Draft summary of the work of the 2022 first regular session of the Executive Board

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Election of the Bureau and appointment of the Rapporteur

1. The 2022 first regular session of the Executive Board was held from 28 February to 3 March 2022. Due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Board decided to hold the session in hybrid format. In accordance with its rules of procedure the Board unanimously elected H.E. Mr. Md. Shameem Ahsan (Bangladesh, List B) as President.
2. The Board also unanimously elected H.E. Mr. Youssef Balla (Morocco, List A), H.E. Mr. Carlos Bernardo Cherniak (Argentina, List C) and H.E. Mr. Marcel Beukeboom (Netherlands, List D) as members of the Bureau and coordinators of their respective lists. The Board also appointed Mr Khalid Atlasi (Morocco, List A) Rapporteur for the session.
3. As there was no consensus among the members of List E on their proposed candidate, however, it was not possible to elect by acclamation the Vice-President of the Council and Bureau member for List E. Members of that list and other lists said that it would be inappropriate to appoint the Ambassador of the Russian Federation, as initially proposed by List E, because of his country's invasion of Ukraine. Some members of List E supported the candidacy of the Ambassador of Poland for that position.
4. Many Board members, including some speaking on behalf of lists and other groups of states, gave reasons for their objections, saying that the invasion was a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine in contravention of international law, including Article 2 paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter, and inconsistent with the aims of the United Nations and WFP. Members said that at a time of unprecedented humanitarian need the actions undermined the efforts of the global community to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by creating an avoidable humanitarian crisis to which WFP, as the world's largest humanitarian agency, would be required to respond.
5. Members called for the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to withdraw his candidacy and for his country to withdraw its troops from within the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine.
6. Other members disagreed, however, saying that past actions of other Member States had been equally problematic but had given rise to no objection by the Board. Members also said that it was important to avoid politicizing the work of the Board and called on all parties to seek a rapid solution to the conflict.
7. As there was no consensus with regard to which of the two candidates to appoint, it was decided to proceed with a secret ballot to be carried out in conformity with rule IX paragraph 11 of the Board's rules of procedure, in which the Board would choose between the Ambassador of the Russian Federation and the Ambassador of Poland.
8. Prior to the ballot, the Ambassador of the Russian Federation said that it would be the first time in the history of WFP that a candidate for the role of list representative had been challenged by members of other lists. Recalling that the Board employed a rotation system to ensure that all Member States had an equal opportunity to serve and be represented on the Bureau, he said that having a list E representative (Poland) and alternate (Hungary) who were both from Member States of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would undermine that principle. He therefore proposed a compromise by which the representative of Hungary or Poland would serve as the List E member of the Bureau and he would serve as alternate.
9. The proposal did not meet with approval and the vote proceeded, with 3 votes cast for the Ambassador of the Russian Federation, 23 for the Ambassador of Poland and 5 abstentions. The Ambassador of Poland was thus elected Vice-President of the Board and list E Bureau member.

Current and future strategic issues

2022/EB.1/1 Opening remarks by the Executive Director

10. The Executive Director said that an already complex global situation had been exacerbated by the recent military action in Ukraine. WFP was establishing response teams in bordering countries and was working with partners in preparation for significant activity within Ukraine. The crisis would have serious effects on the global supply of food, including for WFP operations: together, Ukraine and the Russian Federation produced 80 percent of the world's sunflower oil, 20 percent of its maize and 30 percent of its wheat; WFP procured 50 percent of its wheat supplies from Ukraine. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP shipping and commodity costs had already increased by between USD 42 million and USD 50 million per month. The Executive Director highlighted that internal analysis was being undertaken to assess the impact that the Ukraine crisis would have on WFP's costs, warning that they could rise by an additional USD 100 million–USD 500 million over the coming year. There would also be repercussions for other WFP operations that relied on Ukrainian wheat, such as those in Lebanon and Tunisia. WFP would require funding of about USD 450 million to feed people inside Ukraine over the following six months.
11. Worldwide, 276 million people were in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) phase 3, 4 or 5. WFP was feeding 120 million of those people, but its capacity to respond was hampered by funding gaps that were forcing it to reduce rations in Chad, the Niger, Yemen and other countries. Failure to feed hungry people created the risk of famine, destabilization and mass migration, which would require far more costly responses. In contrast, early intervention that helped communities to build resilience to crises prevented the need for emergency assistance in the future, and the Executive Director appealed to donors to provide the flexible funding that allowed WFP to provide such programmes. In Chad, for example, WFP had worked with a women's cooperative to establish a system of wells; in the Sahel, WFP had rehabilitated 270,000 ha of land, and worldwide the organization had rehabilitated 1.2 million ha and built 107,000 ponds, 81,000 km of roads and 26,000 km of irrigation canals.
12. Over the previous five years the total value of cash-based transfers distributed by WFP had increased from USD 800 million to USD 2.3 billion per year; the value of digital vouchers had increased from USD 9 million to USD 83 million per year; the proportion of women in the WFP workforce had grown from 34 to 42 percent, with the hiring of an additional 3,390 women; and the total funding raised had increased from USD 5.8 billion to USD 9.8 billion per year.
13. Thanking Board members for their support, the Executive Director warned that 2022 was going to be a very difficult year and urged them to advocate with their governments in support of his efforts to raise funding and increase the flexibility of contributions.
14. Board members, including those speaking on behalf of lists and other groups of countries, thanked the Executive Director for his efforts to raise global awareness of emerging humanitarian crises and the resources needed to respond to them. They praised WFP and its staff for their work in preventing famine and hunger and assisting the world's most vulnerable people, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.
15. Nearly all of the Board members who spoke expressed concern about the situation in Ukraine, with many calling for adherence to international humanitarian law, assurance of safe and unhindered humanitarian access for the provision of assistance to people in need and an immediate end to hostilities. Members welcomed the launch of a United Nations emergency response plan for Ukraine and called on all Member States to contribute

financially to the implementation of that plan and WFP's role in it. Several Board members said that the negative effects of the crisis on world grain supplies and prices would exacerbate funding and response gaps. They encouraged WFP to continue to monitor the situation and its implications for world food security and to provide more detailed analyses of the impact of the price increases on its operations.

16. The crisis had hit at a time when climate change, conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic were already causing increases in food prices and food insecurity around the world. WFP was now more relevant and needed than ever, and the organization was the partner of choice in many countries. Board members called for coordinated efforts, with all partners contributing according to their comparative advantages while seeking to avoid overlaps and redundancy. One Board member said that the current global situation presented an opportunity to set a new direction in delivering change and accelerating progress towards the SDGs; another said that it showed the importance of upholding the humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law and called on WFP to be a strong advocate in that regard; a third said that the focus of humanitarian and development work should be at the country level.
17. Following approval of the WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025 at the Board's 2021 second regular session, many Board members welcomed the related corporate results framework (CRF) to be presented at the current session, saying that the two documents provided a guiding framework for WFP's work in the coming years, facilitating effective implementation of the organization's mandate and orienting its action on the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. In particular, members praised the efforts to strengthen results-based management reflected in the new CRF through the linking of resources to activities and results. Board members said that the CRF was well aligned with wider United Nations policies and plans at the country level and would help to embed key performance measures on cross-cutting priorities such as gender and disability throughout WFP. Successful implementation of the strategic plan and CRF would require strong oversight, monitoring and accountability, combined with transparent communication with donors and the Board.
18. Several Board members praised WFP's efforts to integrate adaptation to climate change into its programming, including through forecast-based anticipatory action, the strengthening of national and local capacities and the inclusion of relevant outcome indicators in the CRF. Looking forward to the presentation of a new gender policy during the current session, many Board members welcomed the draft policy's focus on partnerships, including with local-level women's organizations, and its attention to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Members said that the policy must be aligned with WFP's protection and accountability policy and that more work was needed to integrate the prevention of all forms of abuse and misconduct into all areas of WFP activity, including among staff.
19. Many Board members said that growing needs and the increasing frequency of humanitarian crises emphasized the importance of WFP's dual mandate of saving lives and changing lives through various combinations of emergency response and activities that addressed the structural causes of hunger and malnutrition and built communities' resilience to crisis. Countries that were vulnerable to conflict, climate and other disasters needed WFP's capacity building support, technical assistance and service provision in areas that included early warning, malnutrition treatment and prevention, supply chain management, logistics and school feeding. Success would require a holistic and coordinated approach based on cooperation between WFP and other humanitarian, development and peace actors. One Board member said that the United Nations foods systems summit was an example of such an approach, while several others mentioned the school feeding coalition launched at the summit and expressed their countries' readiness to

- contribute experience, expert knowledge and other support to the expansion of school feeding programmes that improved access to nutritious food and fostered sustainable food systems.
20. Welcoming WFP's work in partnership with other United Nations and aid entities, several Board members urged WFP to strengthen its partnerships with local organizations, saying that such organizations knew the local context, were embedded in local communities and could provide structures that would remain after emergency responders withdrew. The involvement of local communities in the design and implementation of programmes, including those aimed at strengthening social safety networks and reinforcing resilience, would promote community independence, self-reliance and ownership of programmes. Tasks should be distributed among partners according to their respective strengths and mandates, and WFP could leverage its experience in fragile settings to encourage more development and peace actors to contribute to comprehensive and sustainable solutions.
 21. Many Board members referred to the growing funding challenges facing WFP, particularly in view of the financial challenges affecting donor countries following the COVID-19 pandemic. While there was general agreement across the Board that WFP should combine its humanitarian relief with development action, that action was often hampered by funding shortfalls and donor restrictions on WFP's use of contributions. Several Board members called on donors to maintain and increase their commitments to supporting WFP with increasingly flexible multi-year contributions. Members urged WFP to keep its resource use under constant review and to prioritize actions that met the most urgent humanitarian needs – focusing on those aimed at strengthening national capacities and creating opportunities for vulnerable people – and communicating its priorities transparently to donors. Member States unable to provide financial support could instead support development efforts in their own and other countries by sharing knowledge and expertise.
 22. Other aspects of WFP's work in which one or more Board members said they hoped to see continued progress included disability inclusion, workplace culture, school feeding, interagency coordination of cash-based transfer activities and conflict sensitivity. Two speakers said that the international economic sanctions placed on certain countries made it difficult for those countries to maintain their support for humanitarian action, and several others outlined their own countries' plans to contribute to WFP programmes.
 23. The Executive Director thanked the Board members for the positive comments, which would be responded to during the discussions over the following days, particularly with regard to the CRF and the gender policy.

Policy issues

2022/EB.1/2 WFP corporate results framework (2022–2025)

24. The Chief Financial Officer presented the corporate results framework for 2022–2025, which reflected the new strategic plan and WFP's focus on results-based management. Giving an overview of the CRF structure, the Deputy Director, Corporate Planning and Performance Division, highlighted aspects related to nutrition, environmental management systems, conflict sensitivity and the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) that had been recently revised in response to Board feedback.
25. Board members welcomed the streamlining of the CRF, its alignment with United Nations principles and its ambitious high-level targets. They endorsed the transdisciplinary and results-based approach, which expanded the focus to key cross-cutting priorities including issues related to gender, disability inclusion, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and PSEA and conflict sensitivity. They also welcomed the incorporation of quadrennial comprehensive policy review and common and complementary indicators and encouraged

WFP to continue to strengthen accountability and joint planning, monitoring and processes in order to achieve and measure collective and system-wide results.

26. Many Board members requested that in the future revised versions of the CRF be presented with their corresponding strategic plans. Various members called on WFP to report on impact indicators in its annual performance report, invest in data quality assurance systems, build partner reporting capacity and ensure its capacity to report on performance for needs-based and resource-based plans. One Board member said that WFP should include SDG 5 among its SDG indicators.
27. Several members welcomed WFP's commitment to better capturing results related to the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. Other key cross-cutting themes included gender equality, multilingualism, the prevention of misconduct and abuse, and disability inclusion. One member recommended that WFP incorporate a management results output indicator on forecast-based anticipatory action against climate shocks.
28. Board members sought further information on CRF baselines and targets, specifically on the development of indicators related to conflict sensitivity and environmental management system implementation. Management clarified that conflict sensitivity was one of eight environmental and social standards included under the new environmental and social sustainability framework. New indicators on the capacity of WFP and partners to better mainstream conflict sensitivity were being piloted. On the matter of environmental management system implementation, management noted that the WFP management plan included a key performance indicator that tracked country office implementation of environmental management systems; once validated data were available on baselines for that and other indicators, WFP would update the CRF targets.
29. Board members also asked when a revised CRF would be issued with planned additional indicators and requested regular updates on progress in CRF implementation and the development of system-wide indicators related to the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.
30. The Chief Financial Officer thanked Board members for their intense engagement in the development of the new CRF. He took note of the questions raised, which would be addressed bilaterally. The Board would receive progress updates on the development of new indicators, which would be incorporated into the CRF at the mid-term review stage.

2022/EB.1/3 WFP gender policy 2022

31. The Assistant Executive Director presented WFP's new gender policy, emphasizing that zero hunger could not be achieved without progress towards gender equality. In alignment with the new strategic plan, the policy set out to ensure that WFP addressed the differing needs, priorities, opportunities and experiences of the people it served, supporting food security and nutrition for all.
32. Board members commended WFP for the inclusive consultative process used to develop the new policy. They endorsed its commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women, noting the disproportionate impact of food insecurity on women and girls.
33. Board members encouraged WFP to work in partnership with the African Union, the Committee on World Food Security and others to accelerate progress towards SDG 5. They asked that WFP report on its efforts to achieve gender parity at all levels of its own workforce.
34. Thorough gender and protection risk analysis, adequate funding and technical expertise and greater accountability for implementation were cited as key to the successful

implementation of the new policy. Some Board members noted that the new policy had eliminated references to gender identity, life experiences and value systems and asked for information on how WFP would ensure that it addressed all aspects of diversity and intersectionality in its operations. One Board member called for greater visibility of women, in particular indigenous and rural women, in food systems. Several members said that there was a need for context-specific solutions and a focus on the implementation of gender equality initiatives in crisis operations.

35. Board members urged WFP to ensure that programme design continued to be informed by inclusive consultations with stakeholders, including increased collaboration and partnerships with women-led groups in decision making processes and as first responders in emergency contexts. They called for increased capacity to collect disaggregated data, including on intra-household dynamics, and a robust set of indicators on gender. They welcomed future consultations on the gender partnership strategy and other elements of policy implementation.
36. One Board member asked how WFP would measure the increased focus on sufficient funding described in the new policy. Another said that there was a lack of specific targets related to the planned percentage increase in gender equality delivered by the policy. More information was sought on partnerships for leveraging financing for gender equality initiatives, risk mitigation measures, funding requirements, particularly as a proportion of individual country strategic plan (CSP) budgets, and the implementation timeline for the policy.
37. One Board member encouraged WFP to consider adhering to the Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC).
38. The Director of the Gender Office thanked the Board members for their engagement in the consultation process. She reiterated WFP's commitment to integrating gender into CSPs; working with the other Rome-based agencies and strengthening partnerships with organizations such as the African Union, key humanitarian action organizations and local women's organizations; and continuing to work closely with WFP units responsible for protection and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Assistant Executive Director added that analysis played a central role in ensuring that solutions were tailored to the needs of women and men and acknowledged that WFP's increased budget allocations for regional and global expertise in gender were aligned with the evaluation recommendations. The organization would look closely at the OECD-DAC recommendation to see how best to engage.

Compendium of policies relating to the strategic plan

39. The Director, Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division, presented the compendium of WFP policies relating to the strategic plan, which set out WFP policies in four groups that corresponded to the structure of the latest strategic plan. As WFP's policy framework was constantly evolving, the compendium constituted a programme of work on policy, with policies updated to reflect best practice and lessons learned from the field as well as the new strategic plan. In support of a more comprehensive normative framework, WFP was also updating its 2011 paper on the policy formulation process, with regard to which it would consult the Board.
40. Board members praised what they said was the clear structure of the compendium, noting that policy updates and policy evaluations were part of the Board's programme of work. They encouraged WFP to strengthen its work related to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, saying that that would build resilience, improve disaster risk

reduction and address the root causes of vulnerability in a context-specific way. They welcomed the strengthening of WFP support for governments, in particular in relation to programmes and policies.

41. Some Board members sought to understand how WFP determined whether a policy fell under the purview of management or the Board. They asked for more information on how accessible the library of policies was to WFP staff and highlighted the planned revision of WFP's policies on aviation and resilience as a priority. They also said that the compendium did not constitute an adequate response to their request at the 2021 second regular session for an analysis of whether the changes in the new strategic plan were addressed by existing policies, particularly in the areas of localization, protection, environmental sustainability, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and enablers such as partnerships, funding, technology and innovation. They requested that WFP present a document with such an analysis at the 2022 annual session with a decision for consideration by the Board.
42. The Director welcomed the Board's engagement and insights. Noting that deeper discussion of many of the points raised could take place at the planned consultation on policy formulation, he explained that corporate policies constituted high-level strategic documents that provided the basis for the internal strategies, guidance and training required to implement them. Work was under way on the policy topics raised by the Board, including drafting of the new aviation policy and implementation of the new protection policy.
43. He reiterated the close link between policy review and evaluation, noting that there were natural constraints on the speed with which evaluations could be produced and their insights integrated into WFP policies. The Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, added that the process for developing or updating a policy generally took at least two years.
44. She explained that policy development was also informed by WFP's engagement with the international humanitarian system such as through the operational policy and advocacy group of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee; the six priority areas identified by that group overlapped considerably with the priorities that had been highlighted by Board members.
45. Regarding the request for analysis, the Assistant Executive Director proposed that there be further discussion at the planned informal consultations on policy formulation, formal Board discussion at the Board's 2022 annual session and presentation of a policy document to the Board at its 2022 second regular session.

High-level event Africa Day of School Feeding

46. During the opening of the high-level event entitled "the African Union commitment to the school meals coalition, turning political commitment into concrete action", the Executive Director commended progress achieved in expanding school meals programmes; from 2013 to 2019 the number of children receiving school meals had risen from 38 million to over 65 million.
47. The transformative impact of school feeding was clear, with Harvard University studies showing that every USD 1 invested yielded an economic return up to USD 9 for communities. Outside government programmes, WFP was the world's largest provider of school meals and was firmly committed to working with partners to build a better future by supporting the health, development and education of children. The Transforming Education Summit to be held in the third quarter of 2022 would be a major opportunity to showcase the power of school feeding programmes, including those incorporating home-grown school meals.

48. Her Excellency Angelina Ndayishimiye, First Lady of the Republic of Burundi, highlighted the success of school feeding programmes in Africa, their benefits for young people and their positive impact on human capital and local economies. Remarkable progress had been achieved since the adoption of the Malabo Declaration in 2014; however, much more remained to be done to ensure that all children had food that was sufficient in both quality and quantity.
49. She welcomed the 2022 commitment of the member countries of the African Union to improving nutritional resilience and food security by strengthening agricultural, food, health and education systems in order to accelerate the development of human, social and economic capital. References to the importance of increasing school feeding interventions could also be found in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa as well as in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the 2014 Malabo Declaration.
50. Burundi shared the priorities set out in those instruments, introducing free education for all children in the basic school cycle and working with WFP and partners to implement a home-grown school feeding programme based on locally produced and purchased food. Across Africa, increased funding from national budgets ensured food and nutrition security for millions of children, with 80 percent of school meals funding coming from African countries themselves.
51. Despite impressive progress, even before the COVID-19 pandemic 60 million children living in extreme poverty had no access to school meals; the widespread closure of schools in response to the pandemic might drive that number even higher in 2022. Africa needed the support of partners to bridge the gap and ensure the continued implementation of sustainable national programmes.
52. In closing, she called on all member countries of the African Union to make school feeding a national priority, saying that school meals programmes had deep and lasting impacts that strengthened community resilience, reduced inequality and broke intergenerational cycles of hunger and poverty. She urged all countries and partners present to sign up to the global school meals coalition established at the 2021 United Nations food systems summit as a powerful opportunity to enhance country cooperation and create a sustainable institutional, political and financial environment conducive to fostering food and nutrition security for children in Africa and around the world.
53. Following the First Lady's address, Ms Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, moderated a roundtable with four distinguished guest speakers. In her introduction, Ms Guarnieri highlighted numerous examples of African countries investing heavily in national school meals programmes and their commitment to the provision of healthy, nutritious school meals as a means of generating economic growth, inclusive social development and prosperity for their people.
54. His Excellency Haladou Salha, African Union/New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Senior Technical Advisor to the group of Rome-based African ambassadors, described the evolution of the home-grown school feeding model developed under the leadership of NEPAD together with WFP and the United Nations Millennium Project Hunger Task Force in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). School feeding, when linked directly with agricultural development, stimulated local production through the purchase of locally produced and processed food for schools. It created stable demand for safe high-quality food, stimulated local production, supported the development of local skills and helped to combat malnutrition.

55. On the occasion of the seventh Africa Day of School Feeding, NEPAD had launched technical guidelines aimed at helping countries to better design and implement home-grown school feeding programmes. The successful implementation of such programmes depended on being country-led and supported by political will and sustainable financial commitments. Another key element for their success was the mutual accountability of all stakeholders, which required good governance, partner coordination and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
56. Ms Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), spoke of the grave impact of COVID-19-related school closures on children's education, health and well-being. UNESCO was leading a global push to prioritize education in post-pandemic recovery efforts, including through the organization of the Transforming Education Summit. The summit would take place in September 2022 and would be a unique opportunity to mobilize political ambition, commitment and action on SDG 4, as well as to position health and well-being, including food and nutrition, as core elements of a renewed vision for education.
57. The initial preparatory documents for the summit already included references to health and nutrition, with one of the action tracks focusing on inclusive, safe and healthy schools. Ms Giannini called on all participants to work together in preparation for the summit, including through country dialogues, which would provide a key point of engagement for partners of the school meals coalition.
58. Mr Maximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, FAO, reiterated FAO's commitment to supporting countries through the school meals coalition and engaging in partnerships to support school feeding stakeholders across Africa.
59. The FAO School Food and Nutrition Framework, adopted in 2019, set out a holistic approach to improving nutrition and transforming agri-food systems. As part of FAO's normative work, the organization had developed a global action plan for school food and nutrition for the next 5 years that sought to consolidate and guide FAO's synergistic efforts, setting out concrete priority outputs to be achieved by 2026. The plan established the way in which FAO would directly support the school meals coalition, that is, by providing accountability, through the development of an indicator for tracking FAO support for the coalition; technical support, by creating a global methodology for setting nutrition standards for school meals programmes; and knowledge sharing, through the development of an online platform designed to enable countries to exchange information and best practices on nutrition standards and food education.
60. FAO would also support a peer-to-peer initiative led by Germany and evidence generation through the research consortium led by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in areas such as the multisectoral returns of home-grown school feeding, the impacts of sustainable and inclusive procurement and the implementation of nutrition standards.
61. Mr Andrew Morley, Chief Executive Officer, World Vision, described the multiple benefits of school feeding programmes, from improved child nutrition, health and safeguarding to increased school attendance for boys and girls. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played a key role in implementing school feeding initiatives tailored to local needs by working closely with governments; in 2021 alone, World Vision had delivered school meals to over 600,000 children, 70 percent of whom were in Africa.
62. Board members commended the First Lady of Burundi for investing in and raising the profile of school feeding and for her passionate advocacy of its multiple benefits. They noted the significant political commitment of African countries in prioritizing school feeding programmes and their support for the school meals coalition.

63. Board members spoke of the wide-ranging benefits of school feeding for the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children; educational outcomes and school enrolment, attendance and dropout rates; beneficiary earning capacity, poverty reduction and economic growth; and gender equality. Home-grown school feeding programmes also stimulated agricultural development and increased agricultural incomes through support for local markets, farmers and food systems.
64. Several members urged countries to prioritize the resumption of school meals programmes following the disruption caused by COVID-19 and encouraged countries to include sustainable national school meals programmes as part of their work on the transformation of education systems through, among other things, Global Partnership for Education grant allocations.
65. Board members described the school meals coalition as an important multisectoral tool for supporting children and achieving the SDGs and endorsed the objective of the coalition to provide every child with access to a healthy and nutritious daily meal by 2030.
66. They welcomed the work of United Nations entities in connecting various sectors and called on WFP to use its experience and long-term vision to strengthen school feeding and address country-specific needs. Local and national efforts in school feeding were key to ensuring the sustainability of programmes. South-South and triangular cooperation could also play a valuable role as seen in the work led by the WFP centre for excellence in Brazil. Capacity building, investment in agriculture, technology transfer and fair financing were also cited as building blocks of a bright future for young people in Africa.
67. In her closing remarks, Ms Liesbet Steer, Director, Education Commission, applauded all who worked towards ending extreme poverty and unlocking the potential of every child. Saying that recent multiple crises had forced all countries to make difficult choices, she called for renewed investment in effective programmes such as school feeding and commended the strong political commitment and progress demonstrated by African countries.
68. She observed that successful school feeding programmes depended on national, subnational and multisectoral support in addition to the work carried out by United Nations entities, NGOs, research institutes and others; linking school meals and local agriculture was particularly powerful. The Education Commission and the Global Education Forum supported the school meals coalition through the establishment of a sustainable financing task force and by working closely with the school meals coalition research consortium and peer-to-peer initiative.
69. She added that with a funding gap of almost USD 6 billion for school health and nutrition programmes in low-income countries alone, it was vital to seek innovative financing solutions, improve the effectiveness of existing investments and support a transition to national self-reliance in school feeding.

Oral update on WFP's role in the follow-up to the United Nations food systems summit

70. The Director, Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division, reported that the United Nations food systems summit held in September 2021 had increased global recognition of the importance of food systems to food security, nutrition, climate change adaptation and peace, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations making food systems one of three priority areas for the United Nations Decade of Action for the 2030 Agenda.
71. At the global level, the summit outcomes would be coordinated by an inter-agency food systems coordination hub hosted at FAO. At the country level, government-led initiatives would continue to define and operationalize national pathways for food system

transformation. WFP had contributed to the development of the coordination hub through the high-level oversight group of selected United Nations principals and a food systems task force made up of entities from across the United Nations system. WFP was seconding a P-5 staff member to the coordination hub to serve as a national pathways engagement manager. The summit secretariat was winding down, and management of the related trust fund would move from WFP to the coordination hub in March 2022.

72. WFP had incorporated a food systems approach into its most recent strategic plan (under Strategic Outcome 4) and the second generation of CSPs. An internal task force had been established to ensure that food systems were considered in programme design and implementation throughout the organization. WFP country offices had engaged in the process for national food system pathways, 110 of which had already been completed.
73. Of the more than 30 coalitions launched during the summit, WFP had a primary role in five and participated actively in six others, promoting coherence among coalitions with the aim of supporting national pathway development and implementation. The Director encouraged Board members to engage as Member States in the coalitions.
74. Thanking the Director, Board members reiterated that they valued WFP's role in the follow-up to the summit, saying that it should be guided by the organization's strategic framework, mandate and existing resources. Board members said that the summit had created momentum that would help countries to transform their food systems. They urged WFP to contribute to that momentum by leveraging its operational knowledge of food systems in collaboration with the other Rome-based agencies, particularly at the country level. One member said that the governance bodies and strategic frameworks of the Rome-based agencies could be used to facilitate dialogue between Member States in discussions on which elements of summit follow-up WFP and each Member State should focus on.
75. Another member reiterated his country's view that Member State involvement in pre-summit planning and preparations had been inadequate. A third expressed her country's support for the approach of having the United Nations country teams coordinate United Nations system-wide activities for providing nutrition assistance, increasing the inclusion of young people, women and girls, addressing food security and climate change issues and introducing agricultural innovations that strengthened food systems. She also said that the United Nations resident coordinators were well positioned to work with host countries on the implementation of demand-driven solutions for national food systems.
76. Welcoming the school feeding coalition established as part of the summit, members urged WFP to promote the adoption of locally led models of education. Other priorities included strengthening the role of women in food systems; facilitating food fortification and biofortification; expanding cash-based transfer programmes and using related platforms to facilitate the provision of nutrition services; expanding school feeding programmes to improve nutrition and create markets for locally produced foods; improving governance at the national and international levels; and accelerating progress in the prevention and treatment of wasting, including through the global action plan on child wasting.
77. One member, speaking on behalf of a list, outlined some of the instruments and initiatives that countries and organizations in his region were using to promote the transformation of food systems.
78. Members asked for regular updates on the development and implementation of the coordination hub and the role of the Committee on World Food Security; an action plan and timeline for the hub's work at the country level (and WFP's role); and updates on the actions

taken by WFP and the other Rome-based agencies to achieve the planned outcomes of the food systems coalitions.

79. The Director, Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division, thanked members for their insights and confirmed that the Committee on World Food Security had been involved in the development of the coordination hub. With regard to Member State involvement in summit preparations, he noted that the summit had been convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. WFP would take all Board member input into consideration.

2022/EB.1/4 WFP evaluation policy 2022

80. The Deputy Executive Director introduced WFP's updated evaluation policy, which the Office of Evaluation (OEV) had developed in consultation with other WFP divisions and the Board. The policy reflected recommendations from a recent peer review of WFP's evaluation function presented at the Board's 2021 annual session, international norms and standards, recent policies and strategies and commitments made by WFP in the context of United Nations development system reform.
81. The Director of Evaluation said that rather than any substantial changes to WFP's evaluation function, the new policy introduced a revised theory of change, clearer institutional arrangements and more realistic evaluation financing targets. The focus of the policy was on enhancing the use of evaluation evidence throughout WFP and beyond and developing evaluation partnerships, including for the purpose of joint evaluations with other United Nations bodies and in support of national evaluation capacity development. A corporate evaluation strategy and regional evaluation strategies would be developed in 2022. The three-year rolling evaluation function work plan (within the WFP management plan) would form the implementation plan and budget for the policy. The annual evaluation report would continue to include a report on performance of the function.
82. Board members, including one speaking on behalf of a list, welcomed the new policy, which they said would contribute to good governance, efficiency, organizational learning and the achievement of the SDGs and WFP's strategic objectives for 2022–2025. They welcomed in particular the emphasis on the guiding principles of independence, credibility and utility; the plans for increasing partnerships and joint evaluations, particularly with other United Nations bodies; the increased use of thematic windows for funding impact evaluations that informed WFP and its partners on the effects of their programmes; and the commitment to aligning the evaluation of strategic plans, policies and programme impacts with the timeframes for reviewing and updating those plans, policies and programmes.
83. Turning to specific elements of the policy, two members said that the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation capacity at the country level should take into account local conditions and that the partners involved in evaluation must be truly independent and impartial. Several members said that the implementation of evaluation recommendations and the dissemination and use of evaluation evidence in the design and implementation of policies and programmes were critical. One member suggested that OEV and management work together to build a learning culture throughout the organization, with OEV providing consultative evaluation processes and high-quality evaluation products and management promoting the use of evaluation findings in evidence-based decision making, including by offering incentives for the use of evidence and building a culture of learning throughout the organization.
84. Board members requested additional information on the funding of the evaluation function and the mitigation of any funding gaps; the plans for carrying out joint evaluations with the other Rome-based agencies; and the ways in which WFP planned to engage its partners in

- disseminating and using evaluation findings. They asked OEV to provide regular updates on the risks mentioned in the policy and on the development of a new evaluation charter, a corporate evaluation strategy and regional evaluation strategies.
85. The Director of Evaluation took note of the points raised and said that a report on the follow-up to ten policy and strategic evaluations carried out since 2016 would be presented at the Board's 2022 annual session, while updates on implementation of the policy would be provided through the annual evaluation report, annual consultations on evaluation and the three evaluation newsletters that OEV issued each year. Support for national evaluation capacity development would continue to be rooted in joint evaluation practice and partnerships in response to interest expressed by national governments. Joint and system-wide evaluations were included in the OEV workplan and budget, and a new staff member, due to join OEV in May, would be responsible for developing WFP's engagement in joint evaluations.
86. The two Deputy Directors of OEV responded to points and questions raised by Board members. One said that OEV produced documents that were tailored to specific audiences, such as Member States and other United Nations bodies, and planned to increase the number of evaluation syntheses it produced. OEV's involvement in the evaluation function of the United Nations development system included participation in the United Nations Evaluation Group and in evaluations of United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. OEV sought cooperation with other United Nations entities on evaluations of country programmes and by sharing evaluation workplans with a view to promoting synergy and cooperation and avoiding overburdening United Nations offices in the field with multiple evaluations.
87. The other Deputy Director said that the costing of the evaluation function, presented as a floor and a ceiling, was expected to constitute 0.4 percent of WFP's forecast contribution income in 2023 and to reach 0.6 percent by 2026, reflecting variations in the programme cycle. To mitigate the risk of unpredictable and inadequate financial resources, OEV worked with all WFP divisions on systematic forward planning, budgeting and resource allocation. Shortfalls were covered by WFP's contingency evaluation fund, and OEV was working to increase flexible funding and the diversity of donors to the multi-donor trust fund for impact evaluations. OEV continued to monitor funding to ensure that financing for the evaluation function was adequate.

Administrative and managerial matters

2022/EB.1/5 Appointment of one member to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee

88. The Chair of the selection panel established by the Board to review the reappointment to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC) of Mr Robert Samels, whose term on the committee had expired on 28 February 2022, reported on the work of the panel, which consisted of one member from each of the Board's electoral lists. Based on its review of Mr Samels' profile, input from the Chair of the IOAC and other materials, the panel had concluded that Mr Samels met the requirements for continuing to serve as a member of the IOAC for a second and final three-year term, from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2025. The panel therefore recommended that the term of Mr Samels be renewed, and the Board approved his reappointment.

Operational matters

Oral global overview of humanitarian needs and operational concerns and priorities

89. The Deputy Executive Director described the profound impact of conflict, climate shocks, the COVID-19 pandemic and soaring food and fuel prices on food security around the world. Over the past two years the number of acutely food-insecure people had doubled, and in countries such as Afghanistan, Yemen, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic acute food insecurity affected at least half the population. Constraints on humanitarian access were impeding the delivery of life-saving assistance in several countries; WFP had developed access monitoring tools to identify challenges and gauge their operational impact.
90. WFP had assisted 128 million people in 2021 and aimed to reach 137 million in 2022. Given growing humanitarian needs, it was vital that emergency response be delivered in a way that strengthened resilience at all levels. Anticipatory action had been shown to halve the cost of humanitarian assistance, and tools such as climate risk insurance could play a major role in preventing shocks from becoming crises.
91. Although funding had reached record levels in 2021, the increase in resources continued to be outpaced by need. The Deputy Executive Director encouraged donors to contribute to WFP's Immediate Response Account, which served as a critical life-saving tool in the face of the current challenges.
92. Board members expressed grave concern at the unprecedented scale of current humanitarian needs, with nearly 300 million people acutely food insecure in 80 countries. They noted that conflict played a major role in driving food insecurity, also contributing to growing challenges related to humanitarian access and the safety of humanitarian workers.
93. Several Board members urged WFP to reduce emergency needs by strengthening the resilience of households, communities and national systems, including through the creation of climate-resilient assets and capacity building for smallholder farmers. Noting that women and young people were among those most vulnerable to food insecurity, they encouraged WFP to focus on meeting the needs of marginalized groups and prioritizing protection concerns.
94. Partnerships were described as key to operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. One Board member expressed appreciation for WFP's work with the Grand Bargain Cash Coordination Caucus on the resolution of cash coordination challenges; others highlighted joint programming in the Sahel, including the joint WFP-UNICEF social protection programme in Mali, Mauritania and the Niger.
95. Several Board members commended WFP for its swift scale-up in response to the growing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine; one described the potential impact of the conflict on food security within the region and beyond.
96. One Board member encouraged WFP to engage in systematic prioritization and seek the most effective and efficient use of resources while also continuing to mobilize additional funding from traditional and non-traditional donors.
97. Board members asked for an update on the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) trust fund and for an indication of the percentage change in the volume of food required by WFP operations between 2021 and 2022.
98. The Director, Public Partnerships and Resourcing Division, explained that the UNHAS trust fund would combine a centralized approach, softly ear-marked funding and local fundraising. A funding mobilization strategy for the fund coordinated with other organizations would be drawn up.

99. Noting that management would provide the requested data on the increase in the volume of food distributed by WFP, the Deputy Executive Director emphasized that WFP had over the years been able to meet basic needs, thus preventing large-scale famine, and to a limited extent build resilience. It had not, however, been able to reduce need. Achieving that would require a greater focus on finding new and different programmatic and funding mechanisms, including ways to secure long-term sustainable funding for development work through international financial institutions such as the World Bank and other development banks.

Western Africa portfolio

100. The Regional Director for Western Africa warned that significant rainfall deficits, persistent insecurity, rising food prices and economic disruption were threatening to produce a major food security and nutrition crisis in the region in 2022. Over 38 million people were projected to be in IPC phase 3 or above during the 2022 June–August lean season, triple the number in 2018. Areas of particular concern included the Group of 5 Sahel countries, the Central African Republic, the Lake Chad region and the north-west and south-west of Cameroon.
101. In response, WFP had initiated advance planning and pre-positioning of commodities. In delivering its emergency assistance, WFP was seeking to align and channel its interventions through government social protection programmes wherever feasible. Working with UNICEF in Mali, Mauritania and the Niger, WFP had supported 1.8 million people in response to the impacts of COVID-19 through existing social safety nets. Scaling up resilience building activities was also key in mitigating the impact of shocks.
102. Anticipatory action and climate risk insurance should be promoted as ways to better manage climate risks and act as early as possible. Timely confirmation of funding was critical to facilitating early response and pre-positioning. The amount needed to support more than 21 million people was likely to exceed USD 2.1 billion; WFP faced a funding gap amounting to 69 percent of total requirements for February–July alone.
103. Board members expressed concern at the growing food insecurity and malnutrition in the region and the size of the funding gap. Focusing on the fast-growing crisis in the Sahel, one Board member called on all parties to adhere to the humanitarian principles and facilitate unrestricted access to all populations in need, recommending a broader adoption of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach, particularly in building resilience. An immediate response to humanitarian challenges and the provision of flexible multi-year funding would be key to preventing further deterioration in the Sahel.
104. Another Board member highlighted the impact of climate change in the Sahel. Despite national efforts to address the multiple food security crises, support from the international community was needed through WFP programmes and investment in value chains.
105. One Board member praised the joint WFP-UNICEF initiative to strengthen social protection systems in Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. Another asked how WFP planned to address funding gaps, including through improved cost efficiency.
106. The Regional Director welcomed the focus on funding needs, warning that the impending crisis was comparable to and potentially worse than that seen in the early 1980s. An exceptional response was needed from donors, and WFP was reaching out to non-traditional donors, host governments and international financial institutions. If shortfalls forced WFP to adapt targeting, people who were displaced or in hard-to-reach

areas would be prioritized; however, cutting the rations of any of the planned beneficiaries would have a grave impact on food security and the resilience of already vulnerable people.

107. On partnerships, he noted that WFP partnered with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development through the SDC3 project and that through engagement with six universities in the Sahel the organization had facilitated practical work experience for 80 master's degree students. Also, building on its very successful partnership with GIZ in the Niger on strengthening social cohesion, WFP was studying the potential for a similar initiative in Burkina Faso.
108. In closing, the Regional Director encouraged donors to fund bilateral programmes such as the Niger's national response plan.

Eastern Africa portfolio

109. The Regional Director for Eastern Africa reported that an estimated 79 million people were food insecure in the region, where food security was deteriorating at an alarming rate. The number of refugees had tripled to 4.7 million, and 12.4 million people were internally displaced; assistance was falling far short of needs, however; at the Dadaab camp in Kenya 250,000 refugees had not received full rations since 2018. Despite record funding of USD 2.2 billion in 2021, the soaring needs in the region meant that WFP operations required close to USD 5 billion for 2022.
110. The Horn of Africa was experiencing its most severe drought in 40 years, and the failure of the next rainy season could leave up to 20 million people in need of assistance. WFP was investing in anticipatory action in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Burundi, working with regional and local governments on forecasting systems, risk insurance and advance transfers. Meanwhile, Ethiopia was witnessing two concurrent emergencies, war in the north and drought in the south. Over 9 million people were food insecure in Tigray, Amhara and Afar, and 83 percent of all Tigrayans were thought to be food insecure. Access continued to be insufficient in northern Ethiopia, and a WFP convoy had not entered the area since 14 December.
111. South Sudan was facing unprecedented hunger, with 8.3 million in need of assistance and parts of the population already in IPC phase 4 or 5. Most refugees in the region were from South Sudan and had been displaced by conflict and recurrent devastating floods. Across the border in the Sudan 9.8 million people were food insecure, and the number in need could double unless there was economic recovery and a good harvest in the first part of 2022.
112. Among positive developments in 2021, the Government of Eritrea had signalled an interest in working with WFP, following a hiatus of almost 15 years. WFP was investing heavily in climate resilience across the region, including with the World Bank. The organization had procured USD 250 million in food assistance in the region, and a recent study had found that every USD 1 spent by WFP for supply chain activities in eastern Africa generated a return of USD 2.3 for the economy; WFP had created 365,000 jobs across eastern Africa in 2021 alone.
113. One Board member expressed grave concern at the continued conflict in Ethiopia and called on all parties to ensure immediate humanitarian access. She added that the Horn of Africa drought underscored a need to undertake resilience building activities in complex settings. Another Board member commended WFP's work in the Horn of Africa and highlighted the difficult choices that WFP was facing, asking how the international community could work together to increase the visibility of the drought and increase donor support.

114. The Regional Director thanked the Board members for their support. He said that WFP would continue to advocate strongly for the vulnerable populations in the Horn of Africa and would encourage the governments of the region to raise awareness of the imperative need to act to alleviate suffering and prevent further food insecurity.

2022/EB.1/6 Burundi interim country strategic plan (2022–2024)

115. The Country Director for Burundi introduced the new interim country strategic plan (ICSP) for Burundi, saying that through the adoption of a food systems approach it positioned WFP to support the Government in achieving its food security goals. Through five strategic outcomes, the plan would ensure WFP's continued capacity to respond to humanitarian needs while strengthening institutions, scaling up nutrition support and facilitating national ownership to promote the sustainability of programmes. Greater use of CBTs and innovative digital technologies would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions.
116. Speaking on behalf of her list, one Board member highlighted the strategic shift introduced by the ICSP, saying that it was well aligned with national priorities and incorporated conflict and nutrition sensitivity designed to reduce needs in the long term. She welcomed the increased visibility of women and girls within the food systems approach, particularly in home-grown school feeding interventions. Support for young people and smallholder farmers was also appreciated. She sought further details on WFP plans to address gaps in the capacity of cooperating partners and invited the country office and regional bureau to share lessons learned and best practices related to cooperating partner management with other countries, particularly in Africa.
117. Another Board member endorsed efforts to improve the situation of returnees and IDPs and encouraged WFP to work with the Government to facilitate access to land in order to support integration. He recommended that WFP continue to prioritize home-grown school feeding programmes in partnership with government ministries.
118. Responding to Board member question, the Country Director said that for school feeding activities WFP worked closely with the other RBAs, international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank, and NGOs on the ground such as World Vision. The needs of young people had also been considered and reflected throughout the ICSP in resilience building activities, community support and nutrition interventions.
119. While WFP had been seeking to support integration through home-grown school feeding activities, which had positive impacts on education, nutrition and agriculture, the growing caseload of returnees had been an ongoing challenge. In fact, funding shortfalls could lead to a cut in rations for returnees and refugees by May. An increased focus on Burundi was therefore welcome, and it was hoped that it would support efforts to mobilize the resources needed to build on the progress achieved in recent years.

Resource, financial and budgetary matters

2022/EB.1/7 Utilization of the Programme Support and Administrative Equalization Account reserve

120. The Deputy Director, Corporate Planning and Performance Division, reported that 2021 had seen record allocations from the Immediate Response Account (IRA), WFP's internal funding mechanism used to facilitate rapid response to life-threatening emergencies; USD 220 million had been allocated to 49 country offices, with average monthly allocations reaching USD 18 million, a 17 percent rise from 2020. Consequently, the IRA balance was at a critically low level at the start of 2022, and management proposed that the Board approve an allocation of USD 30 million from the Programme Support and

Administrative Equalization Account (PSAEA) to enable WFP to continue to respond to unprecedented emergency need using the IRA.

121. Several Board members expressed support for the proposal. Observing that the transfer of funds from the PSAEA to the IRA was a practice authorized by the Board, one member said she was in favour of an efficient and effective use of WFP reserves in support of WFP's core mandate and to optimize the use of resources. She asked management to provide more details related to contribution income and PSAEA and IRA balances in future requests for transfers from the PSAEA to the IRA.
122. A number of Board members asked whether WFP envisaged further drawdowns from the PSAEA in 2022, given the global humanitarian outlook. One member asked whether there was a need to increase the amount of the current proposed transfer. Two others voiced appreciation for donors who contributed to the IRA and called on WFP to explore other innovative funding solutions that would enable the organization to continue to respond to emergencies.
123. Responding to Board comments, the Deputy Director took note of the request for additional information. WFP continued to monitor progress towards its target of raising USD 200 million for the IRA through a combination of direct contributions and transfers. She encouraged donors to contribute to the IRA directly so that further transfers would not be required. On innovative solutions, she thanked the Board for approving other advance financing mechanisms and the Global Commodity Management Facility, which were important tools in finding innovative solutions to funding shortfalls.
124. The Chief Financial Officer also appealed to donors for direct contributions to the IRA, saying that internal transfers were a mechanism of last resort. He emphasized that the IRA was the most efficient way of funding emergency operations and that its current funding level represented just USD 0.64 for every USD 100 of WFP funding. He clarified that the document on the proposed transfer for the current Board session had been written prior to the year-end closure of accounts and therefore did not include the financial data normally provided in support of requests for transfers from the PSAEA to the IRA, which were usually presented to the Board at its June or November sessions.
125. The Deputy Executive Director explained that while the balance of the PSAEA as of 31 December 2021 would be confirmed by the time of the Board's 2022 annual session the request for USD 30 million was considered to be conservative. He also noted that, given the current scale of crises and the potential for further funding shortfalls, further transfers to the IRA could be necessary by the time of the 2022 annual session in the absence of adequate direct contributions to the account.

Evaluation reports

2022/EB.1/8 Summary report on the strategic evaluation of WFP's use of technology in constrained environments and management response

126. The strategic evaluation of WFP's use of technology in constrained environments had found that the use of digital technologies had increased WFP's effectiveness, efficiency and adaptability in such environments, although certain technologies were less appropriate in highly constrained environments. The evaluation had concluded that WFP lacked an overall strategic vision for the use of digital technology in which people and protection were central concerns. WFP struggled to find the right balance between a centralized approach to technology ensuring efficiency, coherence and security and a localized approach allowing for adaptation and innovation. The evaluation further concluded that WFP had made important efforts to manage cybersecurity and data protection risks but was lagging in the implementation of guidance. Investment in the digital skills of staff and

cooperating partners was insufficient. In addition, there was no systematic process for monitoring the use and performance of technologies, and WFP paid only limited attention to the effects of technology on various groups. The evaluation made seven recommendations relating to matters such as governance, strategic approach, resource allocation, risk management, inclusion and capacity development.

127. Management agreed with all the recommendations and committed to implementing them in a cross-disciplinary way through measures including WFP's new information technology strategy; a review of governance instruments with expected improvements in monitoring, oversight and knowledge management; and strengthened partnerships with humanitarian actors, particularly in support of the Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda initiative.
128. Speaking on behalf of her list, one Board member welcomed the management response to the recommendations on risk management, guidance and inclusiveness and expressed support for the implementation of a new information technology strategy and stronger institutional channels for knowledge transfer. She urged WFP to protect confidential data and reduce technological risks, adding that training at all levels of the organization was key to the effective use of technology. She called for checks on the adherence of cooperating partners to data protection requirements and for adequate funding for monitoring.
129. One Board member expressed concern that WFP's rapidly expanding use of digital technology and data processing risked failing beneficiaries by excluding them from technology-related decision making, saying that she appreciated WFP's commitment to reviewing its policies, standards, guidelines and processes. Focusing on recommendation 2.2, she said that risks of misuse and protection concerns were inherent in the use of digital technology and that consequently there was a need for robust accountability and oversight mechanisms.
130. Another Board member said that data protection was an integral part of protection and security for beneficiaries and humanitarian personnel alike and warned of the risks posed by the growing commercial and political value of data. He called on WFP to reassess the potential risks of digital technologies and to adopt a more precautionary approach that prioritized the protection of people in need above efficiency and effectiveness gains. He welcomed the commitment to develop a new strategy by the end of 2022 and encouraged WFP to coordinate with the wider humanitarian community with regard to technology use, and he asked that WFP report on progress at the 2022 annual session.
131. Responding to Board member comments, the Chief Information Officer emphasized WFP's holistic approach to addressing the findings in the report. He noted Board member concerns related to data protection and cybersecurity, pointing to the potential of governance processes and cross-disciplinary collaboration to address some of those issues.
132. The Global Data Protection Officer said that WFP was already taking action on many of the issues raised by the evaluation by implementing a comprehensive privacy programme that encompassed the development of a privacy strategy, a consistent governance framework, training materials and risk mitigation and accountability mechanisms. Interagency alignment was also a key element of the Global Privacy Office strategic plan.
133. On the request for an update at the 2022 annual session, the Assistant Executive Director, Resource Management Department, suggested that Board members could be kept up to date informally and bilaterally on the implementation of the management response, with a formal update delivered at a later session.

2022/EB.1/9 Summary report on the evaluation of the WFP response to the COVID-19 pandemic and preliminary management response

134. The Deputy Director of Evaluation presented the findings of the evaluation of WFP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as laid out in the summary report on the evaluation. The report presented six issues for consideration, including adoption of an ethos of staff care, the role of WFP in COVID-19 recovery efforts and as a systems enabler, its global advocacy work and management arrangements for global emergencies.
135. Management praised the approach of the evaluation and welcomed its conclusion that WFP had provided a high quality strategic and operational response that was both agile and adaptive. Some of the considerations presented in the report had already been incorporated into the new strategic plan and the updated gender policy. Gatekeepers had been introduced to manage demands on regional bureaux and country offices, and WFP was committed to addressing the high human cost of the pandemic response paid by its staff, including through initiatives led by the Workplace Culture Department and an Executive Director circular on surge capacity.
136. Many Board members commended WFP for its swift response to the COVID-19 pandemic and paid tribute to the dedication of its staff. They noted that WFP had played an important part in the global humanitarian response through its common services provision.
137. Board members urged WFP to capitalize on the findings of the evaluation through the new strategic plan and by taking steps to optimize internal management processes, rapid response capacity and staff relations, including through increased use of long-term contracts and better performance management. One member said that WFP strategic plans should ensure preparedness for future pandemics. Another underscored the importance of plans and stress tests for ensuring resilient and adaptive systems, including financial systems, global and national strategic plans and managerial arrangements.
138. Board members highlighted the importance of partnerships and interagency collaboration. One member asked how WFP intended to build on its role as a systems enabler. Others said that it was necessary to improve coordination to avoid duplication of effort, prevent the release of inconsistent data by different agencies and clarify the division of responsibilities among partners, giving due consideration to interagency synergies.
139. Board members encouraged WFP to ensure that new policies on gender, operations in urban areas and cash-based transfers included appropriate guidance on social protection, and one member asked whether the 2021 social protection strategy provided an appropriate framework. They also called on WFP to advocate the integration of school meals programmes into national social protection systems as part of COVID-19 recovery efforts.
140. One member asked whether the recommendations of the 2020 strategic evaluation of WFP capacity to respond to emergencies needed to be reviewed in the light of the evaluation of WFP's response to COVID-19. Knowledge transfer and a focus on WFP's changing lives agenda were cited as key in the post-pandemic phase.
141. Two Board members praised the evaluation team and the evaluation approach. Others sought more information on the evaluation's retrospective development design, including benefits and shortcomings of the approach and how ongoing adaptations and their results had been assessed. One member asked for details of what needed to be improved in order to meet the next global challenge and recommended a clearer distinction in the evaluation report between WFP regular activities and the additional workload created by the pandemic.

142. More information was also sought on the results of the call-forward fundraising mechanism set up at the start of the pandemic, supply chain challenges and actions taken to address weaknesses in financing instruments for managing large funding inflows. One member urged WFP to be more transparent when communicating changes in funding requirements with donors.
143. Board members said that they looked forward to receiving a comprehensive management response at the Board's 2022 annual session, complete with timelines and details of the implementation of the items for consideration. They also requested a further update at the Board's 2022 second regular session that took into account the results of the interagency humanitarian evaluation of the COVID-19 response, the results of which were due to be published in September.
144. Taking note of the request, the Deputy Director of Evaluation reported that WFP was playing a very active role in the joint management group for the interagency humanitarian evaluation and in the first system-wide evaluation of COVID-19. She added that questions on the COVID-19 response had been integrated into CSP evaluations and that a summary of evidence obtained from those evaluations would be compiled for the purpose of assessing WFP adaptations over time.
145. Addressing Board member questions related to the evaluation approach, the Senior Evaluation Officer gave a detailed description of the retrospective developmental methodology chosen, which had enabled the evaluators to capture adaptation and dynamic environments while ensuring a rigorous and utilization-focused assessment of WFP's response. As the evaluation had built on and complemented the 2020 strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond in emergencies, OEV did not see a need to review or adapt the recommendations of the latter. For deeper insight into the findings of the evaluation, including detailed descriptions of programmatic adaptation and areas for improvement, Board members could consult the full evaluation report.
146. On the issue of partnerships, the Special Senior Advisor to the Deputy Executive Director confirmed that WFP would integrate the evaluation findings into its partnership reviews. The pandemic response had generated new collaborative models such as the One UN approach to Medevac and vaccine roll-out in the field, which WFP would build upon in the future.

Southern Africa portfolio

147. The Regional Director outlined the situation in Southern Africa, where the Regional Bureau aimed to better align WFP interventions with government priorities and to generate a more enabling environment for effective emergency response and sustainable livelihoods by boosting agricultural output and food systems, with the region's eight middle-income countries providing much of the necessary funding. Enhanced engagement with national governments and regional intergovernmental bodies included collaboration with the African Union on the creation of a platform for data and information sharing among African countries and the revision of the African Union's flagship Rural Futures programme. At the Third Africa Rural Development Forum convened in January by NEPAD in Kinshasa, WFP had been confirmed as a strategic partner in the African Union's development drive, and it was deploying experts to the secretariat of the Southern African Development Community in Botswana.
148. Conflict and insecurity were major drivers of food insecurity and hunger across the region, forcing people from their homes and disrupting agriculture and livelihoods. More than 50 million people were food-insecure, and 36 million were in IPC phases 3 and 4.

149. In northern Madagascar, hit by devastating storms and cyclones in January and February, WFP had provided food assistance for thousands of people evacuated prior to the storms and had distributed pre-positioned food and cash-based assistance to thousands more in their immediate aftermath. As cluster lead it had provided the Government and partners with information technology and logistics support, while WFP-operated UNHAS flights had been undertaken to assess storm damage and provide airbridges to and from hard-hit, hard-to-reach locations. In the south of the country, three years of drought, compounded by COVID-19 and the recent floods and storms, had left 1.6 million people at crisis levels of food insecurity, including 300,000 children suffering acute malnutrition. Food assistance from WFP and others was averting humanitarian catastrophe.
150. In southern Angola, where the worst drought for four decades had left 1.6 million people in IPC phases 3 and 4, WFP planned to work with the Government on capacity building and technical assistance.
151. In Mozambique, 1.9 million people were experiencing crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity, mainly in Cabo Delgado and other northern provinces sheltering internally displaced persons. Despite humanitarian access and funding challenges, WFP had reached nearly 1 million people in December and planned to reach 1.2 million people each month in 2022.
152. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo 26 million people were acutely food-insecure, and many were internally displaced. WFP had reached 6.3 million people in 2021 and planned to support 8.6 million in 2022. Nearly 30 percent of the food distributed in 2021 had been procured locally from smallholder farmers, but violence in the east of the country had intensified, with attacks on camps of internally displaced persons and the kidnapping of aid workers.
153. The Regional Bureau's exploration and use of technological innovations included the establishment of a drone hub in Johannesburg aimed at improving emergency preparedness and response.
154. The Regional Director thanked donors for their support for WFP's emergency responses in the region. Current fundraising efforts focused on increasing resources for resilience building work and encouraging private sector entities in the region and beyond to enter into partnership with WFP.
155. Board members thanked WFP for its efforts to address the most pressing food and nutrition insecurity challenges in the region, and they welcomed the Regional Bureau's enhanced engagement with national governments and regional intergovernmental bodies. They encouraged WFP to continue to support regional food systems by addressing the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, particularly women; boosting food production, including by focusing on innovation and employment for young people; developing institutional capacities in climate change adaptation; and contributing to the prevention, mitigation and resolution of conflict by addressing the root causes of hunger.
156. With regard to specific interventions, members applauded the provision of humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons in and around Cabo Delgado in Mozambique and the provision of food supplies for military personnel in Madagascar. One member urged WFP to adopt vulnerability-based targeting in Mozambique more rapidly than currently planned; to shift to half rations for people in IPC phase 3 in southern Madagascar as recommended in the most recent national humanitarian plan; and to continue to coordinate activities and to collaborate with other United Nations entities in Mozambique.

157. The Regional Director took note of the comments, reporting that full rations had been maintained in southern Madagascar following recent cyclones and that the situation would be reassessed once the extent of the damage had been assessed. In Zimbabwe, WFP was working with FAO and other partners to develop resilience programmes that took advantage of local potential.

2022/EB.1/10 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Zimbabwe (2017–2021) and management response

158. The Director of Evaluation presented the evaluation of the CSP for Zimbabwe for 2017–2021, which found that CSP implementation had been generally successful, with WFP responding rapidly to a deteriorating food security situation and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Regional Director for Southern Africa and the Country Director for Zimbabwe thanked the Director and her team for the evaluation, saying that they agreed with the five evaluation recommendations, which had informed the design of a second-generation CSP for Zimbabwe, which would be presented at the Board's 2022 annual session.
159. One Board member took the floor to thank the Director for the evaluation and applaud WFP's promotion of humanitarian principles and commitment to investigating and responding to any reports of interference in the targeting process in Zimbabwe. Referring to specific findings from the evaluation, the Board member expressed concern about the lack of a clear understanding of gender equality within a food systems framework and the failure to adequately mitigate the safety and personal security risks associated with giving women cash. She urged WFP to address those issues, including by expanding the evidence base on gender issues within the framework of national food systems.
160. The Director of Evaluation said that her office was opening an evaluation "window" on cash-based programming and gender that would assist in addressing the concerns expressed by the Board member. The first impact evaluations in that window would be available later in the year. The Regional Director reaffirmed his commitment to learn from the evaluation.
161. Thanking WFP and its Board members for their support for his country, Mr Simon Masanga, Permanent Secretary of Zimbabwe's Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, said that food security, nutrition and social protection were high priorities for his Government, which had fully invested in its productive collaboration with WFP. He went on to say that the Zimbabwean Government welcomed WFP's direct delivery of food assistance and had taken note of the evaluation findings.

Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio

162. The Regional Director for the Latin America and the Caribbean region said that one of the greatest risks facing the region was the invisibility of the many crises it faced, which often received little global attention given the multitude of humanitarian emergencies in poorer parts of the world. The regional migration crisis, the climate crisis and rising inequality were also emphasized as risks for the region in 2022. Deteriorating conditions in the region had left 14 percent of the population (or 86 million people) in extreme poverty and 75 million people in the countries where WFP operated, food insecure.
163. In 2021, WFP had assisted 7.4 million people with direct transfers, purchasing locally 81,000 mt (93 percent) of the food it had distributed, including 4 percent from smallholder producers, especially women; it aimed to increase purchases from smallholders to 10 percent by the end of 2022. Innovations included the establishment of a nutrition hub in partnership with the Government of Colombia and a study of migration in north Central America carried out with the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank. Following the United Nations food systems summit in September 2021, 14 countries had published road maps for the transformation of their

food systems and ten had joined the School Meals Coalition established at the summit. Ten countries had been involved in South-South cooperation projects and exchanges of experiences. In 2022, WFP planned to serve 8.2 million people and would need USD 776 million.

164. Climate disasters in the first two months of 2022 had included floods in Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras and an earthquake and tsunami in Peru. To mitigate the effects of such crises throughout the region, WFP was supporting 340,000 people with community-based activities in climate-resilient agricultural practices. In the Dominican Republic, WFP and the Government had launched a forecast-based financing initiative, while a podcast produced by WFP and the Government of El Salvador provided information about crop planting and harvesting times.
165. WFP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic had included increased provision of logistics services such as food procurement in Guatemala, non-food procurement in Nicaragua and transport and warehousing in Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras and Peru. WFP planned to increase the number of country offices providing services from one in 2020 to ten by the end of 2022.
166. In the Caribbean subregion the multi-country office based in Barbados was testing tools and policies aimed at strengthening WFP's role in changing lives in middle-income countries, and the Regional Bureau was preparing for La Niña and the hurricane season by establishing a network of regional and national food suppliers and pre-positioning non-food response kits in selected countries with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency.
167. In Haiti, 4.3 million people (44 percent of the population) were food insecure. WFP planned to reach 1.4 million people but increased instability, gang activity, flooding and fuel shortages were creating access and security issues. WFP had used barges to transport 600 mt of cargo for 18 humanitarian partners, and UNHAS had transported 4,000 passengers and 51 mt of cargo for 100 organizations.
168. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and climate shocks in Cuba, WFP had approved the use of internal resources of USD 1 million for the purchase of powdered milk and needed an additional USD 2.3 million to maintain distributions of powdered milk for children and rice for elderly people and pregnant women over the following six months. WFP was also providing cold chain, transport and storage facilities for the Government's COVID-19 vaccination campaign.
169. In Central America, La Niña was exacerbating drought in the Dry Corridor, while flooding was being reported in various areas. With forecasts of 7 million food-insecure people in 2022, WFP was expanding the coverage of its programmes, focusing on school feeding, job creation for young people, cash-based transfers and resilience building. Support for 26 smallholder cooperatives and 6,500 smallholder farmers, mainly women, including the donation of refrigerated storage containers shipped to Cuba from the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot in Panama, provided a good example of the implementation of WFP's new gender policy and a local source of food for WFP operations.
170. Migration was a major challenge in many South American countries, and in 2022 WFP planned to assist 2 million migrants and refugees in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru – 500,000 more than in 2021. The Regional Director emphasized the solidarity of countries hosting migrants, including through measures for their inclusion in social protection programmes such as Colombia's temporary protection statute. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela WFP was providing school feeding for 1,000 schools and food rations for 110,000 beneficiaries, with plans to reach 850,000 people by the end of the year, expanding to 11 states.

171. People of indigenous and Afro-descendant ethnic groups were among the most food-insecure in the region, accounting for 30 percent of the extremely poor. WFP's engagement with these groups included a nutrition survey of indigenous people and pilot projects on the identification and strengthening of ancestral products, involving 100,000 people in Colombia.
172. The overview ended with the screening of a video on WFP's innovative work on climate change preparedness and response in the Caribbean.
173. Many of the Board members who spoke were from countries in the region. They expressed their countries' approval of WFP's approach and echoed the Regional Director's call for more attention to the region's needs, which were often hidden behind the macroeconomic indicators of middle- and high-income countries. One member said that the recent focus on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus reflected global recognition of the benefits of development work in preventing future crises, meaning that emergency response should no longer be viewed as the only entry point for WFP operations in a country.
174. Board members praised WFP's partnerships with governments and private sector entities, which had made the organization a key partner in addressing food insecurity and malnutrition and generated good results and new sources of resource mobilization. Welcoming WFP's disaster preparedness activities and provision of emergency food assistance for migrants, members said that priorities included the strengthening of disaster management, social protection and the management and coordination of supply chains, especially ahead of the hurricane season. One member said that as well as socioeconomic inequalities within countries the region was affected by inequalities between countries in terms of access to markets and financial resources.
175. Several Board members mentioned the potential of countries in the region to serve as models for other countries worldwide by sharing, through South-South and triangular cooperation, the good practices, strategies and experience that they and WFP had developed.
176. The Deputy Executive Director welcomed the Board's recognition of the need to fund and deliver more of WFP's life-changing development interventions in the region. The Regional Director thanked Board members for their support and reiterated WFP's commitment to seeking more sustainable funding from the private sector, international funds, foundations and other new and existing donors. Governments in the region provided 23 percent of the funds that WFP required.

2022/EB.1/11 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for El Salvador (2017–2021) and management response

177. The Director of Evaluation introduced the summary report on the evaluation of the CSP for El Salvador for 2017–2021, which had found the CSP to have been successful, with the country office positioning itself on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and playing a leading role in emergencies. There was, however, room for improvement in gender-transformative programming and partnerships, the sustainability and scaling up of pilot projects and the country office's use of evidence generated from CSP implementation in its strategic decision making.
178. The Regional Director said that the six recommendations derived from the evaluation were informing the formulation of a second-generation CSP for El Salvador, which would be presented to the Board at its 2022 annual session. The Country Director outlined the actions being taken to implement the recommendations.
179. Board members commended the country office for the results achieved, its flexibility in adapting to the rapidly changing situation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and its

focus on participatory approaches to the strengthening of livelihoods and climate resilience. They welcomed the recommendations related to the adoption of a gender-transformative approach to programming and partnerships, capacity building with partners and the management and use of information and evidence. They looked forward to seeing implementation of the recommendations incorporated into the next CSP.

180. One member said that the evaluation findings highlighted the lack of global attention to needs in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, the central role that major donors played in driving the multilateral agenda of recent years and the difficulties that WFP faced with regard to funding gaps. Another said that the findings demonstrated the importance of WFP as a key partner in development and called on donors to increase their support for action to address climate change and gender inequality and on WFP to reinforce its advocacy of multilateral and flexible contributions.
181. The Director of Evaluation thanked the country office and regional bureau for their engagement in the evaluation and their commitment to delivering results in challenging circumstances. In particular she expressed appreciation for interactive stakeholder workshops that she had attended with staff of the country office and national partners. An evaluation of the situation in El Salvador was one of the first to be completed through WFP's cash-based transfers and gender impact evaluation window; it examined interrelations between gender equality and women's empowerment and cash-based programming. The Regional Director said that gender issues played a significant role in the root causes of food insecurity in the region, and a communication strategy and tools would be included in the next CSP.
182. Ms K. de Palma, Director General of the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of El Salvador, expressed her Government's satisfaction with its collaboration with WFP and its commitment to working with WFP on the establishment of a resource mobilization strategy and the formulation of development priorities.

2022/EB.1/12 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Honduras (2018–2021) and management response

183. The Director of Evaluation introduced the summary report on the evaluation of the CSP for Honduras for 2018–2021, which had found that despite progress towards the achievement of the CSP's planned strategic outcomes there had been a lack of attention to the needs of vulnerable young people and limited use of CSP results to generate learning. In addition, funding gaps and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic had compromised some results, including those related to gender equality and long-term development.
184. The Regional Director for the Latin America and the Caribbean region welcomed the evaluation's identification of positive results and areas for improvement. The Country Director outlined the planned actions for implementing the four recommendations, which would inform the formulation of a new CSP to be presented to the Board at its 2022 second regular session.
185. Board members welcomed the evaluation findings related to the CSP's alignment with national priorities and United Nations plans and its focus on improving food security and nutrition, including through expanded school feeding programmes and partnerships aimed at enhancing sustainability and resilience. They urged WFP to focus more on addressing the needs of vulnerable young people, in particular women.
186. Members from countries in the region said that the evaluation findings demonstrated yet again the consequences of the region's lack of international visibility, which included a lack of funding for work not directly related to emergency response, such as the establishment of a national school feeding programme. They urged WFP to continue its efforts to

mobilize resources, including through South-South and triangular cooperation. Members said that while many countries in the region had limited financial resources they had experience, good practices and other resources that they could share within and beyond the region. One member asked for more information on WFP's funding forecast and on how the organization planned to address potential funding gaps, particularly in relation to school feeding programmes.

187. The Director of Evaluation said that the full evaluation report provided more information on South-South and triangular cooperation in Honduras, which had also been covered in the evaluation of the South-South and triangular cooperation policy presented to the Board at its 2021 second regular session. She said that the Government of Honduras had provided 22.1 percent of the funding required for CSP implementation, and she thanked the country office and national partners for their engagement in the evaluation.
188. The Regional Director said that work on the establishment of a universal school feeding programme and the enhancement of social protection programmes would be included in the next CSP. The country office had received only 40 percent of the funding needed for the following six months.
189. The Representative of Honduras thanked OEV for the evaluation and expressed his country's commitment to maintaining its collaboration with WFP under the next CSP.

2022/EB.1/13 Caribbean multi-country strategic plan (2022–2026)

190. The Country Director ad interim, Multi-Country Office, English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, presented the 2022–2026 multi-country strategic plan (MCSP) for the Caribbean, where food insecurity had risen sharply as a result of the impact of COVID-19 in addition to climate and economic shocks. Based on stakeholder consultations and in alignment with the United Nations multi-country sustainable development cooperation framework, the MCSP addressed the vulnerabilities and needs of 22 small island developing states (SIDS) through capacity strengthening, innovation and disaster preparedness and response.
191. Highlighting the threat to Caribbean countries posed by climate change, Board members endorsed the focus of the MCSP on disaster risk reduction and preparedness. They encouraged WFP to foster partnerships and knowledge transfer between the governments of the region and to bridge the gaps between humanitarian and development assistance. One Board member commended efforts to enhance the sustainability of preparedness measures and strengthen regional and national response capacity. Another called on governments to use existing social protection mechanisms to deliver assistance in response to shocks.
192. One Board member requested more information on capacity strengthening for local response personnel and efforts to address the logistical challenges that hampered the timely delivery and deployment of supplies for SIDS.
193. The Country Director ad interim confirmed that South-South cooperation, largely within the Caribbean region, was a key component of the MCSP. That included strengthening capacity at the national, subnational and community levels through the strong partnerships that WFP had established with national disaster management and social protection responders in the region.
194. Even in the absence of shocks, logistics presented major challenges in the Caribbean, and ports and other infrastructure were not equipped to cope with climate-related shocks. WFP was working with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and national governments to strengthen capacity and build on the subregional alliances between countries. Pre-positioning of supplies and equipment was also ensuring WFP's capacity to respond in the region.

195. Following the approval of the MCSP, the Board heard an address from Her Excellency Ms Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, who called for the use of a multidimensional vulnerability index in order to better reflect the complex challenges facing SIDS and facilitate their access to support. Saying that there was a need for new approaches to disaster response and preparedness, she endorsed the MCSP and thanked WFP for its positive contribution in the region.

Asia and the Pacific portfolio

196. The Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific reported that in response to soaring humanitarian needs driven by conflict, climate shocks, natural disasters and economic collapse WFP had increased the number of beneficiaries in the region by 40 percent in 2021.
197. In Myanmar, one in four people was food insecure. Living conditions continued to deteriorate in the face of rising food and fuel prices, lack of access to basic services and an intensification of open conflict. In 2022, WFP planned to reach 4 million severely food-insecure people. However, access to newly displaced people was being effectively denied; WFP called for concerted international action to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access to all in need in Myanmar.
198. Nearly 900,000 Rohingya refugees had received WFP support in Cox's Bazaar in 2021, including through electronic vouchers and the provision of locally produced fresh produce in camps. In a bid to stem rising malnutrition on Bhasan Char, WFP had provided specialized nutritious food for three months in late 2021. The organization was also assisting vulnerable members of the host community.
199. In Afghanistan WFP assistance had been scaled up tenfold since August 2021. Staffing levels had risen by 25 percent: one quarter of new recruits were women, and all female WFP staff in Afghanistan were working. School feeding programmes and interventions for women such as vocational skills training were a priority. However, operations faced a funding shortfall of over USD 1.5 billion for 2022. With 80 percent of households already eating less to cope with rising poverty, the potential consequences of a funding gap were extremely grave. In addition to humanitarian aid, therefore, it was vital that the international community identify ways to support economic recovery.
200. Board members praised WFP for what they called tireless work under very difficult circumstances. They commended the scale-up of operations in Afghanistan and called on WFP to continue to advocate the unhindered implementation of humanitarian programming throughout the country. One member welcomed the continued focus on supporting women in Afghanistan and the increased engagement of female staff. Another highlighted school feeding as a vital instrument for strengthening food security and eliminating malnutrition.
201. Turning to Myanmar, Board members encouraged WFP to strengthen the links between emergency programming and other food security and social protection initiatives in order to safeguard populations living outside conflict areas.
202. One Board member thanked WFP for its flexibility and commitment to identifying innovative solutions to commodity delays in Bangladesh and for emergency telecommunications support provided in the aftermath of the volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga. Several members urged WFP to strengthen resource mobilization for its work in Asia and the Pacific and to expand its partnerships with governments, the private sector and development partners.

203. The Regional Director thanked the Board members for their support. In Afghanistan, the Ministry of Economy had recently issued non-interference directives that facilitated passage through provinces; in general, there were no major issues related to access or interference in Afghanistan.
204. He agreed that humanitarian and long-term programming needed to come together in Myanmar to avert further regression in human development; WFP intended to introduce a social protection approach in its urban food security operations in mid-2022. Regarding Bhasan Char, general food distribution and nutrition services were largely provided under the leadership of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), together with basic livelihood development activities. A recent increase in dialogue within the international community with regard to a more systematic approach to support for the island was very welcome.
205. WFP would continue to focus on resource mobilization for the region, including with international financial institutions; nonetheless, requirements were such that some degree of assistance prioritization was very likely in 2022, with potentially severe consequences for some beneficiaries.

Middle East and Northern Africa portfolio

206. The Regional Director for the Middle East and Northern Africa began her overview of the region with an update on WFP's response to the crisis unfolding in Ukraine. WFP had mobilized an advance team in Ukraine three weeks earlier to prepare for the scenario currently unfolding. Operations would be run out of neighbouring countries until it became possible to operate in Ukraine. In preparation, WFP had set up a staging area and logistics capacity in Poland and would do the same in the rest of the region in order to support a coordinated response and establish uninterrupted supply chains for humanitarian aid for those affected by the conflict.
207. WFP was ready to support those fleeing the conflict at the borders and, depending on access, also within Ukraine. The organization was connecting with NGOs, civil society groups and churches within Ukraine to support their response on the ground. WFP supply chains were ready to mobilize food in the country through networks of bakeries and retailers, as well as through the use of vouchers where food was available on the shelves. A combination of cash and in-kind support would be provided.
208. As Ukraine was a major supplier of wheat for the Middle East and northern Africa, the conflict was expected to have serious repercussions for food security throughout the region and beyond, including in Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Lebanon and Egypt.
209. The Regional Director also provided a summary of WFP's achievements in the Middle East and Northern Africa in 2021, during which the organization had reached 28 million people in the region, 89 percent of planned beneficiaries. Famine had been averted in Yemen and in Lebanon, and a social protection system had been set up enabling the Government to support vulnerable Lebanese independently. A new distribution corridor had been established in the northwest of the Syrian Arab Republic; meanwhile in Gaza large-scale mobile cash transfers had helped foster stability following an outbreak of conflict in May.
210. Despite these successes, formidable food security challenges lay ahead, driven by conflict, political deadlock, economic collapse and soaring food and fuel prices. An estimated 42 million people faced hunger in the region. Before the crisis in Ukraine, WFP had aimed to reach 32 million people in 2022 at a cost of USD 4.9 billion. However, with major funding deficits on the horizon WFP crisis response operations in Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and Libya were under threat, and ration cuts for vulnerable populations, including refugees, were already under way. As part of its implementation of the new strategic plan,

the regional bureau planned to focus on five areas in order to optimize the impact of its work. More details of this approach would be provided at the Board's 2022 annual session.

211. Many Board members commended WFP for its rapid scale-up in response to the crisis in Ukraine. One member asked for an update on negotiations over access to areas recently exposed to active combat. Another requested regular written briefings on operations.
212. Expressing concern at the multiple threats to food security in the region, Board members welcomed the five strategic priorities mentioned by the Regional Director. They highlighted Iraq as an example of a successful transition from emergency operations to national capacity strengthening. One Board member thanked WFP for continuing to support internally displaced persons and refugees in Iraq and for ensuring that assistance continued to flow even in volatile situations. He urged WFP to raise more funds in order to prevent pipeline breaks and he encouraged it to continue its advocacy regarding cross-border and crossline missions in the Syrian Arab Republic in the lead-up to the Security Council vote on the matter in July.
213. On funding, many Board members expressed concern at the major shortfalls, particularly in Yemen. One called on donors to provide more flexible funding and strengthen WFP capacity to take anticipatory action. Another member asked how WFP intended to ensure that assistance reached the most vulnerable. A third called for contributions through a high-level pledging event for Yemen that would take place on 16 March in Geneva.
214. One Board member advocated a change in approach in Yemen, with greater focus on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
215. Responding to Board comments and questions, the Regional Director confirmed that access negotiations for Ukraine were taking place at the highest level in New York, with the United Nations Secretary-General. WFP had issued two situation reports on Ukraine and would continue to issue daily reports, with specific briefings for donors as required.
216. WFP would continue to advocate crossline operations for the Syrian Arab Republic, and in Yemen the organization was working closely with authorities to ensure that assistance reached those most in need; WFP was conscious of the need to protect nexus-related activities in Yemen, which were supported by specific contributions from certain donors.
217. The Deputy Executive Director added that WFP had advanced over USD 16 million for operations in Ukraine; that money had been secured by using its multilateral allocation funds as collateral in the absence of specific forecast donations. WFP sought more clarity regarding the contributions that would be made to Ukraine operations in order to release the multilateral funds. Moreover, confirmed contributions for other operations that faced extreme funding gaps were vital if WFP was to continue to alleviate suffering in other urgent crises, including in Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and Afghanistan.

Western Africa portfolio (continued)

2022/EB.1/14 Cameroon country strategic plan (2022–2026)

218. The Country Director introduced the second-generation CSP for Cameroon, covering the period 2022–2026, saying that it came at a pivotal moment in the efforts of WFP and the Government to address persistent humanitarian needs in the country. The CSP, based on consultations with stakeholders and an evaluation and audit of the previous CSP, targeted 1.6 million people for direct assistance.
219. Expressing concern about the deteriorating situation in Cameroon, Board members welcomed the CSP, with many expressing appreciation for its alignment with national and

United Nations priorities within the country. The CSP had an ambitious aim of combining emergency response with interventions for building resilience and tackling the root causes of hunger, including through the expansion of home-grown school feeding activities with the Government. WFP was building the country office's capacity to deliver results in a challenging environment. Several members suggested that WFP's experience in Cameroon could serve as an example of how to exercise the organization's dual mandate by creating a "virtuous cycle" in which emergency response contributed to development while development activities reduced the need for future emergency response.

220. With Cameroon appearing to be a "forgotten" humanitarian crisis that attracted limited donor support, members welcomed WFP efforts to diversify its funding sources, including international financial institutions, while strengthening its partnerships with existing donors. They encouraged WFP to continue those efforts, centring them on the CSP's five strategic outcomes, to engage in joint advocacy with other aid organizations to raise awareness of the needs in Cameroon, and to uphold and advocate respect for the humanitarian principles, in particular independence.
221. Members welcomed WFP's progress in the socioeconomic profiling of refugees and vulnerable households and the establishment of a joint targeting hub with UNHCR. Those initiatives improved beneficiary targeting, although one member said that targeting of activities that promoted self-reliance and durable solutions should always be based primarily on need rather than on whether beneficiaries were affected by a protracted or a sudden-onset crisis. Members requested additional information on WFP's partnership with UNHCR and collaboration on resilience building activities with the other Rome-based agencies.
222. Members also sought additional information on WFP's plans for prioritizing beneficiary groups in the event of funding gaps; the expansion of home-grown school feeding activities would inform the Government's expansion of school feeding beyond the Far North region; the allocation of 85 percent of the CSP budget to crisis response, disaggregated by type of crisis, area and population group; the gender-related activities to which 15.2 percent of the budget was allocated; the new hotline for the reporting of alleged cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, including the number of complaints received each year and the follow-up to those complaints; and the assurance that the use of UNHAS to transport cargo on behalf of the Government on a cost-recovery basis was compatible with perceptions of the independence and neutrality of UNHAS.
223. The Country Director thanked Board members for their comments. She said that WFP planned to scale up resilience building despite limited resources. For example, WFP and FAO were working with an international financial institution to formulate a joint resilience building programme. Moreover, the Rome-based agency working group brought together the three agencies' competencies and explored ways to raise funding for joint resilience building activities. WFP had developed a joint resilience building strategy with FAO, UNHCR and other agencies in the United Nations country team.
224. As part of home-grown school feeding activities, WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development had launched local agricultural production projects, including yogurt making.
225. WFP and UNHCR were working with local governments to find ways to tighten targeting criteria based on the needs and economic profiles of beneficiaries wherein the criteria would be adapted in the event of funding shortages. Although reductions in rations compromised refugees' dietary intake, they were currently the only viable response to funding shortages.

226. The sexual exploitation and abuse hotline received more than 1,000 complaints a month, of which 99 percent were resolved within three weeks.
227. Following approval of the CSP, His Excellency Gabriel Mbairrobe, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Cameroon, thanked the Board for its support in combatting malnutrition and food insecurity. He said that the Government of Cameroon would make all efforts to ensure the availability of its counterparts for CSP implementation. WFP was a major player in supporting the Government by building technical capacity, and he thanked the Country Director for her cooperation.

Administrative and managerial matters (continued)

2022/EB.1/15 Reports by the Joint Inspection Unit relevant to the work of WFP

228. The Chief Risk Officer and Director, Enterprise Risk Management Division, introduced the document on reports of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of relevance to the work of WFP issued in 2021, expressing WFP's appreciation for the work of the JIU and its commitment to implementing the unit's recommendations, including by establishing a JIU focal point position reporting directly to executive management, following up on the implementation of JIU recommendations and including links to JIU reports in annual reporting to the Board. The document covered four new JIU reports; recommendations from a fifth report, on multilingualism in the United Nations system, had been presented at the Board's 2021 annual session.
229. Of the 29 recommendations outstanding at the start of 2021, WFP had completed and closed 28, or 97 percent, the highest percentage since 2013. The JIU had issued 21 new recommendations in 2021; responses to the five recommendations that were directed to the Board had been prepared in consultation with an Executive Board Bureau alternates working group.
230. In 2022, five JIU reviews were in progress, on the ethics function, preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination, business continuity, internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms, and accountability frameworks.
231. Speaking on behalf of a list, one member encouraged WFP to continue to follow up on the implementation of JIU recommendations, expressing concern that WFP had agreed only partially with some JIU recommendations pertaining to land-locked developing countries and saying that those countries required particular attention given their needs. Environmental sustainability was another priority issue for the list, which called for results in that area to be included in WFP's annual performance report. As part of its work on ensuring the environmental sustainability of its local procurement activities, the Board member recommended WFP should implement environmentally sustainable production projects with local smallholder producers. The Board member also encouraged WFP to continue to enhance monitoring, in synergy with partners, and to maintain its research efforts as a leader in that area, including by adhering to shared rules with the other Rome-based agencies.
232. The Chief Risk Officer and Director, Enterprise Risk Management Division, the Director, Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division, and the Chief Economist and Director, Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division, responded to the points raised, saying that WFP's approach to CSP formulation and implementation was consultative and comprehensive, tailored to the needs of each country, including those of landlocked developing countries, and that its assessment and analytical work took into consideration the effects of landlocked status on food insecurity. WFP's local and regional food procurement policy and environmental policy included elements aimed at ensuring that its procurement supported positive social, economic and

environmental outcomes, and its climate change policy promoted interventions that helped smallholder farmers and other vulnerable communities adapt to climate change. Research informed the design and implementation of all WFP policies, programmes and operational work; the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division had been created in 2019, and research was enshrined in WFP's strategic plan. All WFP research was peer-reviewed, and WFP followed the communication guidelines of UNESCO, with a cross-departmental publication strategy for the prioritization of research at the national and global levels. WFP was a global leader in data collection and open-source platforms for analytical research, and it shared its research results with other United Nations agencies, the academic community, civil society and other partners.

Summary of the work of the Executive Board

2022/EB.1/16 Summary of the work of the 2021 second regular session of the Executive Board

233. The President reported that the Rapporteur for the Board's 2021 second regular session had prepared the summary of that session and that in February 2022 a draft of it had been distributed to the Board members, some of whom had suggested revisions that had been incorporated into the final draft for consideration by the Board. The Board then approved the summary.

Verification of adopted decisions and recommendations

234. Introducing the item, the President observed that the current session had, like previous sessions, proceeded smoothly from a technical point of view, and he thanked the Secretariat and the technical staff for their efforts in supporting the Board. He highlighted some of the discussions that had taken place during the session, including the high-level event on school feeding graced by the First Lady of Burundi and the debates on the new corporate results framework that would enable WFP to measure its success in implementing its strategic plans, on operational matters such as CSPs, and on the evaluations of those matters.
235. The Rapporteur then confirmed that the decisions and recommendations presented in the draft compilation of decisions and recommendations adopted by the Board at the current session corresponded to those that had been agreed during the session. The final versions of the adopted decisions and recommendations would be posted on the Board's website by the next working day, and a draft summary of the discussions that took place during the session would be circulated for comment in due course.

Acronyms

| | |
|----------|---|
| COVID-19 | coronavirus disease 2019 |
| CRF | corporate results framework |
| CSP | country strategic plan |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| ICSP | interim country strategic plan |
| IOAC | Independent Oversight Advisory Committee |
| IPC | Integrated Food Security Phase Classification |
| IRA | Immediate Response Account |
| JIU | Joint Inspection Unit |
| MCSP | multi-country strategic plan |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa's Development |
| NGO | non-governmental organization |
| OECD-DAC | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee |
| OEV | Office of Evaluation |
| PSAEA | Programme Support and Administrative Equalization Account |
| PSEA | protection from sexual exploitation and abuse |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SEA | sexual exploitation and abuse |
| SIDS | small island developing states |
| UNESCO | Education, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNHAS | United Nations Humanitarian Air Service |
| UNHCR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |