



World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

Executive Board
Annual session
Rome, 20–24 June 2022

Distribution: General
Date: 2 November 2022
Original: English

Agenda item 14
WFP/EB.A/2022/14/DRAFT
Summary of the work of the 2022 annual session of the Executive Board

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Draft summary of the work of the 2022 annual session of the Executive Board

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Current and future strategic issues

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

1. The Executive Director outlined what he called an alarming global situation, saying that the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic had left many countries without the budgetary reserves needed to address the current unprecedented global needs. Of the USD 20–22 billion that it required for its 2022 programme of work, WFP expected to receive between USD 9.5 billion and USD 12 billion.
2. Following the effects of conflict, climate-related disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, the most recent global crisis was the conflict in Ukraine – the “breadbasket” of the world, on which people in many food-importing countries depended. The dramatic increases in the prices of food, fuel and fertilizer resulting, in part, from blocked transport routes from Ukraine had particularly severe repercussions for already fragile countries in the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America and Asia, and the fertilizer shortages of 2022 were likely to lead to problems with food availability in 2023. WFP purchased half of the grain for its assistance programmes from Ukraine and was working with the rest of the United Nations and other partners to negotiate the reopening of Odesa and other Black Sea ports.
3. Of the 128 million people WFP had assisted in 2021, 69 million were in Africa where conditions were expected to deteriorate further in 2022 following a forecasted 20 percent drop in harvests. With needs far exceeding the funding available to address them, WFP had been forced to stop supporting 1.7 million people in South Sudan while 13 million people in Yemen had seen their rations cut by a half or two thirds. Following the United States’ pledge to provide USD 5 billion to address the impact of the Ukraine crisis on global food security, WFP was working with United States agencies with a view to using the money to restore the cuts it had made and to fill other gaps. WFP had declared a global corporate emergency so that it could provide a strategic and streamlined response to the crisis, prioritizing the saving of lives and helping governments to scale up their safety net programmes and minimize disruption to supply chains. However, the export bans and restrictions on foodstuffs imposed by 26 countries around the world would create additional price volatility.
4. Inflation was exacerbating the effects of funding gaps by increasing the costs of WFP operations by an average of USD 71 million per month. Of the 345 million people in phases 3, 4 or 5 of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) system, WFP hoped to reach 150 million but was already having to reduce the number it assisted. Looking to future solutions, the Executive Director said that working on the humanitarian–development–peace nexus meant not just feeding people but also helping them to develop the resilience and tools they needed to adapt to shocks such as the impact of the war in Ukraine. With the right programmes in place – including WFP’s land rehabilitation, water harvesting and home-grown school feeding activities – rates of migration, child marriage, adolescent pregnancy and recruitment into extremist groups dropped. Such programmes required flexible funding however, and the Executive Director called on high-income countries (particularly oil producing states in the Arabian Gulf), the world’s billionaires and the private sector to contribute more to addressing the world’s problems.

Member statements

5. Members, including those speaking on behalf of electoral lists and other groups of countries, thanked the Executive Director for the overview and praised his commitment to, and efforts in, mediation, fundraising and action in support of WFP’s work. They commended the staff and management of WFP for the assistance they provided to poor, vulnerable and conflict-affected people facing crisis and expressed their condolences to the families and colleagues of the four staff members who had lost their lives in 2021. In particular, members

welcomed WFP's role in enhancing school feeding, including through the global school meals coalition launched at the 2021 United Nations food systems summit; its sharing of information on food security and engagement with the international community; and its strong gender equality results and increased recruitment of women. Management could count on the Board's support for the continued prioritization of workplace culture, talent management and workforce planning.

6. Adding to their comments on the triple nexus, members said that well-coordinated complementary responses with clear divisions of labour were essential, as were strong mechanisms for oversight and control, transparent communications and robust accountability, including with regard to WFP's contribution to the collective response. Elements of that contribution should include localization, accountability to affected populations, the empowerment of local partners, social protection, improved nutrition and anticipatory action that improved local resilience and contributed to women's empowerment and adaptation to climate change. Several members urged WFP to continue to prioritize the saving of lives and to establish efficient and effective internal systems that facilitated its work on the nexus, which should be complemented by the actions of other actors while WFP limited its role in the changing lives agenda to activities where it had a clear comparative advantage. Members encouraged WFP to enhance its coordinated collaboration with other United Nations entities; strengthen its partnerships within the wider international system, including with international financial institutions (IFIs) and groups such as the Group of Seven; increase its involvement in South-South cooperation mechanisms; and invest in innovative solutions for climate adaptation, including innovative financing mechanisms. One member urged WFP to work with the humanitarian community to establish standard IPC-compatible data reporting and analysis systems for the presentation and sharing of information on global food security.
7. Many members commented on the conflict in Ukraine, which they said was a main driver of global hunger, eclipsing and aggravating other crises and demonstrating the vulnerability of global food systems. Praising WFP's rapid response and scale-up to the resulting humanitarian crisis, members condemned the conflict, which they said constituted a grave violation of international law and the United Nations Charter, including through the destruction of agricultural infrastructure, the blocking of ports that were essential to global food trade and the apparent use of food as a weapon of war. They called on partners to support the efforts of the United Nations and the Ukrainian authorities to resume agricultural exports from Ukraine, and they welcomed the World Trade Organization's decision with regard to exempting food bought by WFP for humanitarian purposes from any prohibitions or restrictions, saying that food, fertilizer, seed, medicine and other essential humanitarian commodities should never be subject to international sanctions. Calling for the continuation of humanitarian, economic, political and military support for Ukraine, members took note of the food and agriculture resilience mission proposed by the European Union and its member states as a road map for responding to the crisis and called for joint action to find mutually acceptable political solutions to disputes and ways of supporting local economies during protracted crises.
8. Turning to funding issues, members expressed concern that only a limited share of WFP funding was flexible, and they urged donors to soften the earmarking of their contributions, including by allowing WFP to use them for its advance financing mechanisms and to finance its activities at the triple nexus. One member suggested that WFP explore ways of making the provision of flexible funding more attractive to donors by, for example, allowing the donors of unearmarked funds to participate in country- and global-level decision making. They praised WFP for diversifying its donor base by including new donor countries, IFIs, private sector entities and private individuals, and they recommended that WFP also continue to diversify its procurement activities, in order to avoid reliance on a small number of suppliers, and broaden its local and regional procurement, especially in

developing countries and from smallholder farmers. Several members called for approval of the proposed Changing Lives Transformation Fund, while others said that the current circumstances called for maximum support for life-saving assistance rather than development work and encouraged WFP to direct the flexible funding it generally used for building resilience to emergency response.

9. Individual members raised points with regard to the imposition of international sanctions against developing countries, saying that they hindered the economic and social development of the countries concerned; the use of trade distorting measures that reduced developing countries' access to international markets, technology and certain financial resources; the need to ensure that crises were not forgotten, including those in Afghanistan, Haiti and Yemen; the need to take a growing workload, geographical representation and gender equality into account in decision making with regard to staffing; and the value of school feeding programmes as a channel for community participation in other activities.

High-level panel on the implementation of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus at country level

10. Under agenda item 3 a high-level panel discussion on the implementation of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus was held on the morning of 20 June, with the focus on WFP's work at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. The discussion began with statements by the four members of the panel: Her Excellency Svenja Schulze, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany; Her Excellency Anne Beathe Tvinnereim, Minister of International Development of Norway; His Excellency Laouan Magagi, Minister of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management of the Niger; and His Excellency Amin Salam, Minister of Economy and Trade of Lebanon. The statements were followed by questions from Board members and answers from the panel members, and then statements by Board members speaking on behalf of lists and finally by members speaking on their own behalf. The discussion concluded with remarks by the Executive Director.
11. The Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, introduced the panel members and opened the discussion, saying that WFP's work at the nexus was central to its saving lives and changing lives agenda and that the current global crisis made it more important than ever. While much of the work was at the country level, leadership and engagement at the global level were also essential, including through multilateral and inter-agency fora such as the Global Network Against Food Crises and the Fighting Food Crises along the Humanitarian and Development Peace Nexus Coalition.
12. The Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany said that the Group of Seven countries and the World Bank had jointly launched the Global Alliance for Food Security to bring together institutions and mechanisms and coordinate international efforts to strengthen food security. Alliance members included representatives of governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society. Successful work on the nexus depended on the provision of not only humanitarian assistance but also development cooperation and peacebuilding activities. WFP was a key partner for Germany, working on a national social protection programme in Lebanon and on joint programmes with other United Nations agencies in eight African countries. Resilience building was essential to mitigating the impact of future crises, and WFP was well-suited to contribute. The Minister said that WFP and its donors should continue to increase the share of funding allocated to development work until it accounted for one third of the total budget. She concluded by emphasizing the need to achieve the changing lives agenda.
13. The Minister of International Development of Norway said that her country's response to the global cost of living crisis focused on stabilizing global food and energy markets, increasing individual and national coping capacity, and meeting humanitarian needs. The

- various actors engaged at the nexus had different and complementary roles in the three areas, and the increased emphasis on resilience building, prevention and early action in its new strategic plan made WFP a strong partner. Norway provided WFP with flexible, unearmarked, multi-year support, including in the Niger, for anticipatory action and forecast-based financing, home-grown school feeding programmes, the Farm to Market Alliance and other activities. Such funding bridged the gap between long-term development and immediate humanitarian assistance in countries that were affected by conflict and fragility and work to increase flexibility and risk tolerance through long-term interventions.
14. The Minister of Economy and Trade of Lebanon thanked Germany, Norway, all other donors and the WFP Regional Bureau for the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe for their financial and other support for his country. Lebanon faced serious challenges as it sought to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 explosion at the Beirut port. Gross domestic product and economic activity were declining while inflation rose, and 82 percent of the population was living in multidimensional poverty, leaving the country with the highest rate of acute hunger in the Middle East. The 2020 port explosion had killed 200 people, left more than 300,000 homeless and destroyed the country's national wheat reserve, forcing it to import wheat to meet the population's needs. A reform, recovery and reconstruction framework had been established to manage the repair of damage estimated at between USD 4 billion and USD 6 billion; the Government was working with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to build silos in three regions, with the aim of reducing the risk of again losing the entire national wheat supply in the event of a disaster; and efforts to build a safety net programme with support from Germany, Norway and others in the international community were centred on sustainable solutions that helped Lebanon to re-establish its food production capacity.
 15. The Minister of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management of the Niger said that the *Nigériens nourrissent les Nigériens* (people of the Niger feeding the people of the Niger) initiative had been launched in 2011 to address food security issues in the country. Although the rural sector accounted for 37.7 percent of gross domestic product in 2020, at least 2.5 million people of a population of 20 million were vulnerable to hunger. WFP was supporting the Government's efforts to empower local communities with multisectoral interventions that provided assistance for vulnerable households and activities aimed at strengthening human capital and productive systems. Early results showed that 80 percent of WFP-supported villages were no longer categorized as extremely vulnerable, and the Minister thanked all the partners, countries and organizations that had supported his country.
 16. Four Board members speaking on behalf of their lists, and one speaking on behalf of his country, thanked the panel members for their insights and expressed support for WFP's work at the nexus, which they said should focus on overcoming challenges, avoiding overlaps with the programmes and mandates of other actors and leveraging the strengths of each actor. Other elements of successful work on the nexus mentioned by Board members included localization, including through the engagement of local people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes; South-South and triangular cooperation; the need to strengthen cooperation and coordination in work under the peace pillar; and the leveraging of existing multilateral and inter-agency platforms.
 17. The panel members responded to questions raised by Board members. The Minister of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management of the Niger called on partners to support countries that faced frequent shocks by providing sustainable development and humanitarian assistance such as WFP's work on strengthening the livelihoods of farmers and livestock breeders in the Niger. He agreed that South-South cooperation was valuable and cited support from the Economic Community of West African States for the storage and transport of grains and the Niger's access to fertilizer produced in Nigeria.

18. The Minister of International Development of Norway said that, rather than being required to change, existing international institutions needed to be used more effectively. Nexus implementation varied from country to country, so programmes and activities needed to be tailored to national needs and priorities, in close coordination with national actors. Institutional adaptation might also be needed in order to empower local communities, and far greater use could be made of South–South and triangular cooperation.
19. The Minister of Economy and Trade of Lebanon said that the conflict in Ukraine had a severe effect on his country because Lebanon imported 20 percent of its wheat needs from the Russian Federation and 70 percent from Ukraine. Lebanon was working to increase national food production with help from the international community, but that work would take many years and farmers needed support for sustainable solutions, the rebuilding of storage facilities and access to advanced technologies.
20. The Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany said that WFP's role at the nexus involved linking humanitarian assistance to long-term engagement, development and cooperation. WFP was a strong partner in, for example, the Global Alliance for Food Security, where it brought actors together, shared knowledge and addressed challenges by defining solutions.
21. The Executive Director thanked the panellists and donors for their contributions to work at the nexus, which he said was critical to the ability of people to withstand shocks on their own and thus to the creation of a more stable world.

Special address by the Vice-President of Benin

22. In her address Ms Mariam Chabi Talata, Vice-President of the Republic of Benin, charted the expansion of the school meals programme in her country, which had grown to feed over 1 million children. The success of such programmes, she said, depended on solid political and financial commitment from governments combined with expert technical assistance, which WFP provided in Benin. To ensure the sustainability of her country's programme, the Government was working to enact a law on school canteens and to take ownership of the programme and take over its management from WFP. The work was under way in collaboration with WFP.
23. With its sights set on achieving universal coverage of school meals in 2023, Benin would continue to advocate strongly that such programmes be adopted throughout Africa and beyond.
24. Board members thanked the Vice-President for her inspiring and thoughtful address. They praised Benin's strong high-level commitment to school feeding and recognized the multiple benefits of such programming for developing countries, including protecting children's food security, improving educational outcomes, eliminating discrimination, empowering girls, alleviating poverty and building the resilience of communities.
25. Several Board members welcomed the cost of hunger study and strategic review of hunger currently under way in Africa, recalling the many challenges faced by fragile countries such as climate change, conflict and disease. They called for efforts to transform food systems using local solutions tailored to local circumstances, enriched by the experience of partner organizations.
26. One Board member highlighted school feeding as a clear example of the dual mandate of WFP. Others advocated the inclusion of school feeding in mainstream development activities and the use of local procurement to support economic growth and resilient livelihoods.

27. The Executive Director praised the commitment of the leadership of Benin to school feeding, adding that many years of evidence demonstrated its broad positive impacts. As the largest non-governmental provider of school meals in the world, WFP would continue to work with governments to build sustainable school meals programmes.

Operational matters

Oral global overview of humanitarian needs and operational concerns and priorities

28. The Deputy Executive Director reported that almost 200 million more people were in need of food assistance than before the COVID-19 pandemic; people were on the brink of starvation in more than 20 percent of the countries of the world. Funding requirements for 2022 amounted to USD 22.2 billion, reflecting the enormous humanitarian needs and the sharply rising costs of food and fuel – since 2019 monthly operational costs had increased by USD 74 million, or the cost of feeding 4 million people.
29. The latest global operational response plan set out the three pillars of WFP's strategy for tackling the global food crisis: direct food and nutrition assistance to prevent famine; increased technical assistance to governments, particularly for social protection mechanisms and food security monitoring systems; and measures to protect the functioning of food systems to avert a potential food availability crisis.
30. Flexible funding was key. Mechanisms such as the Immediate Response Account enabled WFP to respond rapidly to the greatest needs, maximizing the agility and effectiveness of its operations. Long-term solutions to food insecurity lay in changing lives, building resilience, ending conflict and dealing with the effects of climate change.
31. Voicing grave concern at the magnitude of the food crisis, Board members commended WFP for its global scale-up of assistance, observing that the situation required a concerted, coherent and coordinated response from the United Nations, governments and others. Several Board members said that a triple nexus approach was key to fostering sustainable and diversified food systems.
32. One Board member urged WFP to ensure that all its operations incorporated a robust response to and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); she called for more preventive measures, including context analysis to identify high-risk settings as well as the recruitment of more female staff and dedicated PSEA advisers for all field and operational settings.
33. With regard to funding, one Board member called on all donors to increase their contributions where possible; he also encouraged WFP to ensure adequate centralized funding to maintain emergency surge capacity. Another Board member said that as needs were outstripping resources innovative new approaches to funding were required.
34. One Board member asked which activities had the greatest potential to improve cost efficiency for WFP. Others underscored the importance of building resilient livelihoods in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss in order to reduce emergency needs in the future.
35. The Deputy Executive Director said that WFP could cut costs by increasing the use of cash-based transfers (CBTs), improving the transport sector and increasing local production and procurement. Regarding innovative financing, WFP was engaging with IFIs to advocate better social protection systems as a means of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response. Donor countries who sat on the boards of IFIs were encouraged to support this approach.

36. The Assistant Executive Director, Partnerships and Advocacy Department, added that while half of the contracts negotiated by WFP with IFIs were for direct contributions, the other half were contracts with national governments through which WFP provided technical assistance for national systems; WFP favoured this second approach and was focused on supporting investment in smart solutions rather than simply fundraising.

Regional overviews

Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe portfolio

37. The Director of the Regional Bureau for the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe outlined WFP's response to the conflict in Ukraine, where it planned to work with partners to assist 4.8 million people per month, mainly in eastern Ukraine. CBTs were used where local markets permitted and food was available. Response capacity was currently focused inside Ukraine, and offices in the region that were no longer needed were closed. With the Government and the private sector, WFP was advocating the reopening of Black Sea ports and exploring alternative routes for food and fertilizer exports. In the Republic of Moldova, WFP assisted some 2,000 Ukrainian refugees a day with hot meals and over 10,00 Moldovan households with cash assistance. A temporary country strategic plan (CSP) for the Republic of Moldova was being drafted.
38. As a result of food price rises caused by the Ukraine and other conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP had been forced to reduce beneficiary numbers and rations across the region.
39. The number of food insecure people had already gone up in the countries of the region from 34 million in 2019 to 46 million currently. WFP projections were that by end of 2022 52 million people in the region and 10 million crisis-affected people in Ukraine would be food insecure.
40. In Yemen food insecurity was expected to reach 19 million people in 2022, but already a lack of funding had forced WFP to greatly reduce its general food assistance and nutrition programmes. In the Syrian Arab Republic the cost per beneficiary had increased by 30 percent in two years, which together with the funding situation had already forced WFP to reduce ration size across the country. The Executive Director was advocating an extension of the Security Council resolution that secured regular cross-border access in the northwest of the country for the 1.35 million people that depended on WFP food assistance.
41. The regional bureau's strategy for the region focused on five strategic opportunities to reduce hunger and contribute to peace in the region: delivering emergency response; contributing to effective national social protection systems; building the self-reliance of refugees; addressing climate change and water scarcity; and engaging young people. WFP was working on social protection with governments in 10 of the 15 country operations, partnering with other United Nations entities and IFIs for greater impact and bringing its extensive field reach and its expertise in vulnerability, targeting and digital solutions to bear on these programmes.
42. WFP's response to climate-change-related challenges included early action rehabilitation of communal assets to support increased food production and the protection of livelihoods from natural shocks; 1 million people in the region had been assisted with such interventions over the last year. The region would capitalize on climate advocacy opportunities, sharpen programmes to include dedicated climate and resilience components and attempt to quadruple the revenue received from climate financing mechanisms by 2025.

43. Board members, including two speaking on behalf of their lists, expressed their countries' appreciation of and commitment to their partnerships with WFP in the region. They welcomed WFP's emphasis on joint work with other United Nations entities and IFIs; attention to cross-border assistance efforts in the Syrian response; and exploration of innovative solutions focused on the humanitarian–development–peace triple nexus. Referring to recent enquiries about the use of drones to deliver food assistance in Ukraine, one member recalled that piloting of that approach in conflict zones had not been successful so far.
44. Expressing concern about projected rises in the number of people expected to face IPC phase 4 or 5 conditions over the coming months, particularly in Yemen, members encouraged WFP to maintain its famine prevention strategy. Other concerns regarded the increasing number of displaced persons and refugees needing urgent assistance and the lack of funding for resilience strengthening projects. Themes on which members requested additional information included the balance between short- and medium-term priorities in the Syrian Arab Republic and the need for a gender-transformative approach in Yemen.
45. Thanking Board members for their words of support, the regional director responded to specific questions. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flights from Damascus airport were expected to resume on 22 June, following the repair of bomb damage. WFP was ready to increase its joint programmes in the Syrian Arab Republic and was working with communities to ensure that resources went directly to targeted beneficiaries. It prioritized life-saving assistance when funding was limited. The switch from an annual to a two-year humanitarian response plan in the Syrian Arab Republic did not imply major changes to WFP's programme there.

Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio

46. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean said that recent economic progress in the region was being crushed by the effects of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine, which affected the cereal and fertilizer imports on which countries in the region depended. Latin America and the Caribbean was the region second hardest hit by the food and energy crisis, with 19 countries vulnerable to the perfect storm, according to a United Nations report. WFP had reached 2.4 million people with direct assistance in the first quarter of 2022 and planned to reach 8.2 million by the end of the year; needs continued to grow, however, as social unrest, political instability, poverty, unemployment and migration escalated.
47. WFP's work on migration included conducting an analysis of the causes, nature and effects of migration in the region, providing food assistance and feedback and complaint systems for 1.3 million migrants in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru and supporting the Government of Colombia in registering migrants for the country's social registry and access to national social programmes covered by the country's temporary protection statute. Mixed migration flows continued to grow, and the region was currently receiving migrants from Africa and Asia who underwent a perilous northbound journey crossing South and Central America, placing further pressure on countries along the migratory route. The regional director invited Board members to attend a side event on migration to be held during the current session featuring the results of an innovative WFP study and analysis of the subject.
48. As part of WFP's efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change and other disasters, 441,000 people had benefited from climate risk management solutions, including insurance schemes, and the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot in Panama had been key to responses in more than 35 countries, supporting WFP and 19 humanitarian partners. Other drivers of positive results included South–South and triangular cooperation, the establishment of supply agreements for sudden-onset emergency responses, and the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF), which had provided advance funding for

rapid purchases. WFP was also looking to increase its use of local and regional procurement. As the hurricane season started in the Caribbean, WFP continued to prepare for an above-average season.

49. In Cuba WFP assistance included distributions of powdered milk for children; services for the storage and transport of medicines and vaccines; projects with smallholder farmers aimed at reducing agricultural losses; and increased purchases of fresh food from smallholder farmers. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela WFP provided school feeding for 225,000 children and was in consultations with the Government and partners on a new CSP. In Haiti WFP was operating UNHAS and sea transport services that addressed humanitarian access constraints in the midst of a challenging security environment. WFP was also strengthening its work on resilience and social protection with the Government, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.
50. Work on the changing lives agenda included promoting social protection and organizing the ninth regional school feeding forum with the Government of Colombia. Twelve countries in the region had joined the global school meals coalition launched at the 2021 United Nations food systems summit. Other plans included supporting severely and moderately food insecure people in Central America as part of efforts to address the root causes of migration and enhancing the inclusion of indigenous peoples and communities. In closing the regional director thanked Board members for their support.
51. Board members praised the regional director and WFP staff for their work in the region. Members welcomed the proposals for establishing a “life transformation fund” to support development work; the promotion of South–South and triangular cooperation in support of smallholder farmers, school feeding programmes and sustainable food systems; and the regional bureau’s surveys on migration.
52. Members said that the current crisis called for a revitalized approach to development and urged WFP to focus its work in the region on the strengthening of local capacity, the expansion of partnerships, including with the private sector and local authorities, and innovative ways to increase agricultural production and transform local food systems and diets.
53. Expressing concern about global price rises, increases in hunger, poverty and food insecurity and a deteriorating security situation in many countries, Board members sought additional information on WFP’s plans for mitigating the impacts of inflation on its operations and supply chains; attracting funding and diversifying its donor base; prioritizing activities, geographical regions and countries in the face of funding gaps; addressing challenges to humanitarian access; and collaborating with the other Rome-based agencies.
54. Taking note of the points raised and responding to specific questions, the regional director said that WFP security teams in Haiti were analysing the security situation and pre-positioning food supplies to facilitate immediate response to sudden-onset crises. WFP prioritized its activities and targeting based on information from the IPC system, partners and governments. Current collaboration with the other Rome-based agencies included work with the 14 countries that had formulated national pathways towards sustainable food systems, an update on which would be provided at the next Board session.

Asia and the Pacific portfolio

55. 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.

56. 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.
57. 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.
58. 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.
59. 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.
60. 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.
61. 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.
62. 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.
63. 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.

64. WFP would continue to focus on resource mobilization for the region, including with IFIs; nonetheless, requirements were such that some degree of assistance prioritization was very likely in 2022, with potentially severe consequences for some beneficiaries.

Western Africa portfolio

65. In his overview of the region, the Regional Director for Western Africa said that food insecurity continued to spread in West Africa, where 43 million people were estimated to be food insecure during the 2022 lean season. In the Group of Five for Sahel (G5 Sahel) countries alone, an estimated 12.7 million people were food insecure and the number of food insecure people in coastal countries had doubled since 2020, from 3 million to over 6 million. The region was heading towards a major food and nutrition security crisis, driven by structural fragility in governance, food systems, human capital and social services, exacerbated by the growing impact of climate change and protracted armed violence.
66. A joint assessment of the 15 countries of the Economic Community of West African States had revealed the impact of the Russia-Ukraine crisis on the region's supply chains for certain goods such as energy, cereals and fertilizers; the magnitude of the fertilizer shortage was such that regional food production was forecast to be 20 percent below the five-year average. Meanwhile, rising food and fuel prices were eroding household purchasing power, with a year-on-year increase of between 40 and 60 percent in the prices of staple foods. Fuel shortages were reported in some countries, affecting WFP's programme implementation. Malnutrition was on the rise in the G5 Sahel countries and Senegal.
67. The regional director urged the international community to support initiatives for countries affected by the disruption of food and fertilizer supplies caused by the war in Ukraine. He also encouraged Board members to support disaster-risk financing instruments such as the African Risk Capacity insurance scheme, which were critical to strengthening national emergency preparedness and response.
68. WFP was engaging in its own preparedness activities, including pre-positioning food and increasing the GCMF envelope for the region. Support for national response plans was a priority, and WFP was scaling up emergency response operations, particularly in the Sahel. Provided enough resources were available, WFP planned to assist over 10 million people in the region, including over 7 million in the Sahel. The organization would also support government food procurement, government cash distribution and the strengthening of national social protection systems, which remained underdeveloped in the region. Work to address the root causes of food and nutrition insecurity continued, particularly at the community level; evidence from WFP's integrated resilience programme in the Sahel demonstrated the positive impact of that work in shielding communities from the impact of shocks and stressors, and needs would have been much greater without WFP's resilience building interventions.
69. Funding was the biggest challenge, as WFP operations in West Africa were funded at just 35 percent; the funding gap for the next six months stood at USD 875 million.
70. The regional director outlined the opportunity to further work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to provide a substantial and well-coordinated response to the current crisis, which would only be achieved through enhanced collaboration, coordination mechanisms at the national and regional levels and leadership at all levels. Ongoing partnerships, joint programming, such as the Rome-based agencies' Joint Programme for the Sahel in Response to the Challenges of COVID-19, Conflict and Climate Change and the joint programme on adaptive social protection with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and existing platforms in support of national governments could be further leveraged.

71. Board members expressed grave concern at the security and food and nutrition security situation and commended WFP for its work in the region. They called for increased attention to the humanitarian crisis that was unfolding, observing that, while the number of beneficiaries and displaced people had doubled, funding for the region had not increased, but would need to do so if WFP was to avoid cutting rations and programming.
72. Several Board members highlighted the impact of non-state armed groups in the Central Sahel, observing that growing violence was also contributing to higher food prices together with climate change and COVID-19.
73. One Board member welcomed activities aimed at strengthening community resilience and local food production; he also expressed appreciation for WFP efforts to raise the alarm regarding the rising cost of agricultural inputs, especially fertilizer, and warned of the need to support communities in the face of severe drought, particularly in the Central Sahel.
74. One Board member welcomed WFP's proactive approach to sharing information with donors. He requested more information on WFP contingency planning in the event of funding shortfalls.
75. Thanking Board members for their support, the regional director explained how WFP was supporting national contingency planning, particularly in view of the potential spread of non-state violence into coastal countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin. For its own contingency planning, WFP was using the GCMF to pre-position food in the region. The organization relied on tools for prioritizing assistance in case of funding shortfalls, including a joint food security and nutrition hotspot analysis conducted with UNICEF. Ration cuts were not contemplated for hard-to-reach areas; in other areas, cuts were possible but not below 50 percent, as even halving rations had disastrous consequences. Cash transfer values were being reviewed in the light of inflation because even without cuts the purchasing power of transfers had fallen.
76. In closing, the regional director echoed calls for more support for West Africa, warning that the situation in the greater Sahara region was deteriorating and that without an adequate response there was a risk of serious destabilization.

Eastern Africa portfolio

77. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa warned of unprecedented food insecurity in East Africa, caused by years of severe drought and exacerbated by the impact of the crisis in Ukraine on food, fuel and fertilizer prices. An estimated 89 million people were acutely food insecure – a 78 percent increase in just 12 months. Malnutrition was rising, the number of displaced people was growing and over 300,000 people faced catastrophic hunger (IPC phase 5).
78. Among the countries of greatest concern were the Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia, where economic and climatic shocks such as drought and flooding, conflict and displacement were placing additional pressure on food security. In Ethiopia, access to Tigray had improved but food stocks were running low; the regional director urged the Board to ensure that WFP did not run out of food for its life-saving operations in the area.
79. WFP operations had far-reaching benefits in East Africa, as evidenced by a recent economic impact study that had found that every USD 1 spent by WFP in the region generated a return of USD 2.30 and contributed USD 1.42 to regional gross domestic product. In 2021 alone, WFP had generated 365,600 unskilled jobs and 20,100 skilled jobs. The study also highlighted the positive impact of WFP investments in infrastructure, food processing and food standards.
80. Funding was the greatest challenge: WFP required USD 982 million for the next six months to respond to the needs of 7.8 million people affected by drought, but current funding was just USD 205 million. The 2022 targeted caseload for the whole region had been revised

upwards to 37 million people, and WFP was already being forced to cut rations for existing beneficiaries by 50 percent in South Sudan, Kenya, the Sudan and parts of Ethiopia; almost all refugees would be on reduced rations from July. With so many people already facing dire food insecurity, there was a real risk of famine if more support was not forthcoming.

81. Speaking on behalf of her list, one Board member commended WFP for its work in East Africa and acknowledged the efforts of the African Union, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), IFIs and United Nations entities to support development in the region. She praised WFP's focus on ecosystem restoration, social safety nets, school feeding and insurance programmes and welcomed collaboration with the World Bank on social protection in Somalia and the Sudan, on nutrition in Burundi and on early warning systems in Kenya and Rwanda.
82. Noting the critical situation in many countries, she asked how WFP was responding to the needs of vulnerable people in Ethiopia outside the Tigray region. She called for safe humanitarian access to Tigray in terms of flights and communication lines and the movement of cash, trucks, fuel and personnel.
83. She urged WFP to avoid ration cuts and to help beneficiaries graduate from humanitarian assistance to livelihood support programmes. She called on donors to ensure full funding for operations in East Africa; sustained donor support was vital for WFP operations in South Sudan, including investment in resilience building, and increased funding was needed for refugee hubs in Rwanda and Uganda to support implementation of the WFP protection policy.
84. Several Board members voiced grave concern about the impact of drought and risk of famine in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Somalia; one Board member urged WFP to ensure that specialized nutritious food reached those in need. One Board member called for a coordinated and cooperative approach to the challenges faced in the region, including climate change, COVID-19, desert locusts, price hikes and conflict; another encouraged WFP to increase its engagement in development activities.
85. Welcoming the improvements in humanitarian access in Tigray, one Board member called for a lifting of restrictions on the movement of cash and fuel; another asked how the humanitarian situation would evolve if fuel and cash shortages were not resolved and how WFP planned to adapt its food assistance and logistics operations under various scenarios.
86. Commending operations in the Sudan, one Board member urged the organization to work with the Famine Early Warning Systems Network and other stakeholders to address discrepancies in food insecurity projections. Another noted that food insecurity in the Sudan was linked to gender and asked how WFP planned to adapt its emergency operations to better address food insecurity in households led by women; she also asked why WFP had decided to switch to CBTs in the Sudan during a period of rampant inflation and how that would affect beneficiaries.
87. One Board member requested an update on WFP efforts to engage with host governments and diversify its funding base. Another acknowledged the difficulty of prioritizing assistance in the face of insufficient funding, asking how WFP prioritized operations and took gender into account in analysis and decision making. She also asked how WFP had been able to scale up assistance significantly in regions where people were in IPC phase 5.
88. Thanking Board members for their comments and support, the regional director said that WFP was constantly working to expand its reach in Ethiopia, working with the Government at the highest levels and emphasizing the imperative to protect humanitarian space and access. WFP was working on raising the funds required to meet the needs of 13 million vulnerable people in Tigray, Afar and Amhara, as well as 7 million people in the south who were affected by drought.

89. On the Sudan, the regional director took note of Board comments regarding the various analyses and would refer the issue internally. He added that WFP always focused on reaching the most vulnerable people, which typically included households led by women, and was studying how best to target, reach and support them.
90. In line with Board guidance, WFP was increasingly using CBTs. The organization was closely monitoring inflation and assessing its impact on CBTs, adjusting them as needed to protect their value; upward adjustments were only possible if funding was available, however. WFP would continue to work with governments and its partners on funding and prioritization and would keep the Board informed of the impact on the ground.
91. In closing, the regional director expressed appreciation for the support of all host governments, noting that very good engagement enabled WFP to broaden its operations in support of its dual mandate, supporting development as well as saving lives.

Southern Africa portfolio

92. In his overview of the situation in his region, the Director of the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa said that the region faced grave challenges driven by climate change, COVID-19 and soaring prices for food, fuel, fertilizer and freight. Rural areas were particularly hard hit. Madagascar, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were facing serious emergencies, and five years of drought in Angola had left 1.7 million in need of assistance.
93. Unpredictable weather including cyclones and storms had led to below-average production during the last growing season; in Zimbabwe, harvests were expected to be 43 percent below average as a result. WFP was working with governments and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to address fertilizer issues; countries were also studying crop diversification with a view to growing wheat in the region. Southern Africa could be the breadbasket of the continent if all actors worked together to capitalize on its climate, land and human resources.
94. In Madagascar, WFP was piloting a rapid rural transformation project, putting solar panels in villages in order to bring in digitalization and transform water systems, education and other services. Digitalization was particularly important in encouraging young people to work in agriculture. WFP was also working with the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to establish a joint team to work on rural transformation in the region in line with the Kinshasa Declaration of the African Union.
95. The next growing season, which started in October, would be critical to averting catastrophic food shortages that could trigger widespread instability in Southern Africa and beyond. It was vital to find ways to ensure that affordable seeds, fertilizer and fuel were available to allow farmers to produce food.
96. Speaking on behalf of his list, one Board member described WFP's approach in southern Africa as progressive and aligned with regional and national priorities. He said it was imperative to shift towards long-term initiatives aimed at rural transformation based on equity and inclusiveness, thereby fostering economic development and reducing poverty among vulnerable rural communities. He agreed that evidence-based agricultural practices were vital to attracting young people and strengthening rural livelihoods.
97. Board members voiced support for resilience building initiatives and projects that empowered women, girls and young people in the areas of nutrition, urban food production, agricultural value chains and gender-transformative humanitarian assistance. Observing that challenges related to agricultural inputs were also reported in West Africa, one Board member asked whether similar solutions were being explored for seeds or fertilizer in both

- regions, adding that collective procurement of those goods could be one way of making them affordable.
98. One Board member said that more support was needed for refugees, particularly through increased institutional capacity strengthening and programme implementation. She called for solidarity in the face of conflicts and cooperation to stem growing instability in Africa through a joint approach to supporting peace. Another Board member underscored the importance of partnerships in combating food insecurity.
 99. One Board member urged WFP to increase its support for and oversight of its country office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to mitigate the risk of fraud, diversion and abuse in WFP programming and to ensure that beneficiaries received high quality food. She commended WFP's work in verifying and registering internally displaced persons in Mozambique and in developing vulnerability-based targeting to reach populations affected by conflict in Cabo Delgado and requested that WFP keep her delegation updated on the progress of both initiatives; she also praised the expansion of assistance to drought-struck populations in southern Angola and requested regular updates on such assistance.
 100. In response to Board member comments the regional director said that WFP, SADC and the African Export-Import Bank had been discussing potential financing mechanisms for supporting regional procurement of agricultural inputs; work was under way to find solutions, but WFP remained concerned about the potential consequences for food security of poor agricultural production in 2023.
 101. On the question of oversight in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, WFP took the issue very seriously. The country director was in Rome to talk to Board members about solutions, taking into account the complex operational challenges faced in the country.
 102. WFP would keep the Board updated on operations in Mozambique and Angola. In the latter, WFP was making every effort to work with the Government and put in place the necessary capacity, including through the appointment of a very experienced country director for the office.

Annual reports

2022/EB.A/2 Annual performance report for 2021

103. The Deputy Director of the Corporate Planning and Performance Division summarized the findings of WFP's annual performance report for 2021, which had been circulated to the Board on 16 May and discussed with Board members at an informal consultation on 23 May. In 2021 operating conditions had been even more challenging than in 2020, but WFP had reached a record number of 128.2 million people, distributing 4.4 million mt of food and USD 2.3 billion in CBTs. The humanitarian situation in 2022 continued to deteriorate.
104. Board members, including four speaking on behalf of their lists, congratulated management, saying that the report was high-quality, and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to review its contents prior to the Board session. They praised WFP staff for their achievements in responding to multiple challenges in complex environments, and several members reiterated their countries' commitment to cooperating with WFP in efforts to prevent and mitigate global humanitarian crises.
105. Expressing concern about the increased number of indicators showing low levels of progress, particularly in the achievement of CSP outcomes and outputs and management priorities, members requested additional information on the main problems encountered in those areas and on how WFP planned to address them, building on lessons learned. In particular they recommended that WFP ensure that the breadth of activities under CSPs not detract from the maximization of impact in priority areas and that the organization increase efforts to achieve management priorities, particularly in the implementation of

environmental management systems by country offices and the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Members also encouraged WFP to continue its innovative work on improving processes and procedures for performance management and the collection, analysis and use of reliable data, including through the rollout of its digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform and coordination of data collection methodologies throughout the international community. WFP needed to continue to build processes and procedures for performance monitoring and reporting, as mentioned by one speaker on behalf of a list, with a focus on the results structure against the new strategic plan, including high-level corporate targets. WFP would continue efforts to scale up its environmental management plan through its environmental plan of action, which included ambitious decarbonization targets as well as targets for waste and water management, sustainable procurement and raising awareness among staff.

106. Board members welcomed WFP's focus on emergency response as a key strategic priority, particularly given the current global situation, which required an efficient and coordinated response at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, with all actors contributing according to their comparative advantages. Members encouraged WFP to continue defining its role at the nexus and sought additional information on the impact of that role on WFP's emergency and long-term operations. Interventions in resilience building, anticipatory action and climate risk management were also important elements of WFP's work, and members urged WFP to continue to implement and monitor them while prioritizing its core humanitarian activities and seeking synergies with its United Nations and other partners. Members welcomed the emphasis on localization and local procurement and requested further details on the financial terms, foodstuffs and countries involved in local purchases and on the recently established Resilient Local Food Supply Chain Alliance. A number of members sought additional information on WFP's participation in the revision of the Grand Bargain framework and the implications for WFP of any planned changes, and they asked whether management planned to consult the Board on that issue.
107. With substantial gaps in funding likely to continue, and flexible funding still accounting for only a small proportion of WFP's contribution income, members encouraged WFP to maintain its efforts to diversify the donor base; explore innovative financing tools such as debt swaps, blended finance and co-financing; pursue cost savings and efficiencies; and prioritize activities, geographic areas and beneficiary groups for assistance. One member said that cash transfers should be prioritized over the use of vouchers or in-kind food distributions.
108. Members requested that future annual performance reports provide more information on WFP's impact on development, including the outcomes, as well as the outputs, of asset creation and livelihoods activities.
109. Management took note of the points raised and responded to members' questions. WFP did not hold any cryptocurrencies but was starting to explore the feasibility of using crypto funding with a partner that was working with other United Nations entities. When faced with resource gaps, WFP prioritized the saving of lives over the achievement of outcomes such as improved nutrition. While WFP could handle a substantially increased programme of work, it continued to address challenges with the deployment of sufficient surge capacity in sudden-onset emergencies. Most cost savings were reinvested in WFP programmes, and WFP expected to receive more funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund in 2022 than in 2021. Lower than expected results in areas such as school feeding, the development of environmental management systems and data collection and reporting were partly the result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the dramatic deterioration of the situation in many countries. They were being addressed through lessons learned exercises, training and the recruitment of specialized staff in regional bureaux and country offices.

110. WFP's role in the revision of the Grand Bargain included participation in the workstreams on the use and coordination of cash-based programming, the reduction of management costs and the enhancement of funding quality.

2022/EB.A/3 Annual report of the Ethics Office for 2021

111. Presenting the annual report of the Ethics Office, the senior adviser on PSEA reported that the number of advisories handled by the office had increased and the annual disclosure programme had been expanded. The Ethics Office had continued to provide input on standards, policies and practices throughout 2021, and a revised code of conduct had been released. A more preventive and targeted approach to resolving emerging ethics issues had been adopted and the office had increased its outreach to field offices. On PSEA, the office had seen an increase in its workload, which included participation and leadership on PSEA matters at the inter-agency level and with humanitarian and development partners.
112. Board members expressed support for the work of the Ethics Office, in particular its focus on prevention and innovations such as the new case management system. They welcomed WFP's increased attention to PSEA internally and within the United Nations system. One member said that the PSEA strategy and associated training were especially important, particularly for front-line workers.
113. One member asked how WFP was analysing and mitigating sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) risks in the humanitarian and food security sectors in relation to the current food security crisis. Another asked how WFP planned to cultivate safer environments for staff and beneficiaries, mitigate SEA risks through activity-based approaches and coordinate with programming units on SEA. He requested that WFP cover SEA mitigation efforts in its reporting to the Board.
114. Several members voiced concern at the resourcing and staffing situation of the Ethics Office, with two members urging WFP to fill the vacant director's post as quickly as possible. One member asked for an update on the status of short-term employees in the office.
115. One member called for mandatory ethics training for all employees; others said that it was important to provide multilingual training. One member asked how WFP ensured that people could report incidents safely and without fear of retaliation.
116. Members requested feedback on a joint tender with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for conflict of interest questionnaires; an explanation of regional differences in the number of cases brought to the Ethics Office; and an explanation of the office's failure to provide input for several policy reviews in 2021. One member urged the Ethics Office to ensure that all WFP offices understood the resources available to them.
117. The senior adviser reported that joint work with IFAD was proceeding well. To address SEA risks, the Ethics Office worked with all WFP divisions and ensured that SEA was included in protection analysis, which was conducted during programme design or implementation; there were also minimum standards for complaint and feedback mechanisms to ensure that they addressed SEA. WFP had a network of over 400 PSEA focal points around the world and provided dedicated PSEA support during emergencies. The Ethics Office had not provided input for certain policy reviews in 2021 because the reviews had fallen outside the office's remit, but the requests had been referred to the appropriate offices.
118. The Director, Human Resources Division (HRM), said that the recruitment of the Ethics Director had been significantly delayed because the preferred candidate had turned down the position at the last minute and the second favourite candidate had been unavailable, as a result of which it had been necessary to restart the recruitment process. Candidates were being shortlisted and it was hoped that a new director would be in place by autumn of 2022.

2022/EB.A/4 Annual report of the Office of the Ombudsman and Mediation Services for 2021 and management note

119. Introducing the annual report of her office, the Director of the Office of the Ombudsman and Mediation Services (OBD) described how the office had helped WFP to become more efficient and effective, particularly through conflict resolution services, support for staff well-being and analysis of systemic issues.
120. Management agreed with all recommendations in the annual report, saying that it provided valuable insight into the effectiveness of WFP people management, internal justice and cultural change initiatives. The Director, HRM, outlined efforts to promote healthy evaluative relationships, foster psychological safety in teams, embed inclusivity and safeguard staff well-being, particularly in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. She invited OBD to share more information on any systemic issues related to recruitment and compliance.
121. Board members praised the role of OBD in resolving conflicts and complaints, supporting the internal justice system and fostering a respectful workplace culture. One member welcomed regular reporting to the Board on systemic issues; another said that she looked forward to the results of the OBD impact assessment.
122. Several members supported the recommendation to revise recruitment processes and introduce a talent acquisition approach at WFP. Others encouraged WFP to support the well-being of staff, saying that they were under renewed pressure from the global food crisis.
123. One member urged WFP to ensure adequate resources for OBD, while others asked how management planned to address the impact of budget cuts. Board members were also interested in how OBD was taking gender equality into account in its work and how it was supporting staff who came forward with reports related to harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination (HSHAAD). One member sought insight into OBD case resolution rates.
124. The Director of OBD confirmed that budget cuts had affected her office's workplan for the first four months of 2022; however, additional funding had been allocated to the office and would cover costs for the remainder of the year. Demand for OBD services was growing, and there had been a rise in issues related to stress in the workplace and psychological safety. The respectful workplace advisors played a vital role in relaying concerns from staff all over the organization.
125. OBD had a high rate of case resolution, although as the office provided visitors with various options it was not always possible to know which course of action was taken or the outcome achieved. As contact with OBD was voluntary, some visitors chose not to report back on the resolution of their cases.
126. Regarding gender, OBD continued to work on its approach in close contact with the diversity and inclusion team in HRM and with the Gender Office. Since 2017 there had been an increase in the number of female staff approaching the office, partly reflecting the increased recruitment of women and steps taken to make them feel more comfortable about raising concerns. HSHAAD issues were the second largest category of issues brought to OBD by female employees; among male employees, the second largest category was job and career. Although reports of HSHAAD had declined, it remained an important area for OBD in terms of both response and prevention.

Policy issues

2022/EB.A/5 Country capacity strengthening policy update

127. Thanking Board members for their input during the drafting of WFP's updated country capacity strengthening policy, management outlined the rationale for the policy update, which addressed strategic recommendations arising from evaluations of the previous policy documents. WFP's plans to address the operational recommendations arising from those evaluations were addressed in an implementation note that accompanied the policy update. The implementation plan covered six intersecting areas of work, including workforce planning, programme support and monitoring and evidence generation. It estimated a total incremental investment of USD 9.85 million for country capacity strengthening work to implement the policy update from its approval in mid-2022 to the end of the WFP strategic plan in 2025.
128. Board members, including three speaking on behalf of their lists, welcomed the clear and well-structured policy update and its focus on social protection, emergency preparedness and response and food systems in line with the strategic plan. Expressing their support for the emphasis on partnerships, they encouraged WFP to foster equitable partnerships between local partners, national governments and United Nations entities, ensuring the participation of women, young people and indigenous people and seeking to prevent all forms of discrimination.
129. Board members said that they looked forward to the next phase of implementing the policy update, which should be as transparent and consultative a process as the development of the policy update had been; implementation actions should be informed by risk assessments, particularly in fragile and conflict settings, and be tailored to local needs and priorities.
130. Members sought further details on how WFP would define its comparative advantages in country capacity strengthening; the opportunities for joint capacity strengthening with partners; how WFP planned to facilitate learning and the transfer of innovative solutions and best practices, including through South-South and triangular cooperation; and the inclusion of capacity strengthening for cooperating partners in the implementation plan.
131. Board members requested regular updates on the implementation and results of country capacity strengthening activities at the headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels. One member said that the policy should be updated regularly, based on new trends and models of cooperation.
132. Management said that some of the issues raised would be revisited in discussions of future agenda items during the current session. With regard to specific questions, WFP was revising its definition of, and reporting on, returns on investment and would update the Board on developments. A new South-South and triangular cooperation policy to be presented to the Board in 2023 would include WFP's leveraging of the innovations and best practices that it and its partners had developed in recent years. Capacity strengthening for cooperating partners would follow the framework laid out in the policy update and implementation plan, using a new tool kit. Knowledge management and adaptive learning was one of the policy update implementation workstreams, and it included the sharing of knowledge generated by other actors, including through South-South cooperation, and the development of a new facility for promoting innovations. WFP was developing guidance on risk analysis and risk mitigation for country capacity strengthening in fragile and conflict settings. The country capacity assessments carried out as part of the development of the United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks (UNSDCFs) provided WFP with an opportunity to identify the support that it could most usefully provide.

2022/EB.A/6 Update on WFP's role in the collective humanitarian response (2021)

133. The Director of the WFP Geneva Global Office introduced the update on WFP's role in the collective humanitarian response, warning that humanitarian response funding was failing to keep pace with the exponential growth in needs, resulting in a 48 percent funding gap in 2021. Along with the entire humanitarian system, WFP had scaled up its response, providing assistance to an unprecedented 128 million people in 2021. The organization had also scaled up the provision of humanitarian services to partners and engaged in joint initiatives with over 60 NGOs to prevent famine and to raise awareness of the global food crisis among participants at major high-level events.
134. Board members welcomed the update, praising WFP's contribution to the collective humanitarian response to the global food crisis and its efforts to keep famine prevention high on the international agenda. One member requested more information about how WFP was engaging in political sensitization as part of its efforts to advocate better sharing of responsibilities for funding humanitarian response. Several others requested an update on the famine prevention and mitigation compact entered into by the world's leading humanitarian and development agencies in December 2021.
135. Board members voiced support for joint initiatives, especially on PSEA, the prevention of sexual harassment and accountability to affected populations (AAP). Several members requested more information on WFP collaboration with the other Rome-based agencies and progress with UNHCR on the Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub. Others encouraged WFP to deepen its collaboration with FAO on climate change, science and innovation. One member called on WFP to implement country-level recommendations following a recent joint WFP-FAO meeting, especially with regard to early response.
136. Board members acknowledged WFP's role in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and requested an update on its activities in that regard. One member asked whether the review of the implementation of the IASC protection policy had affected WFP's implementation of its own protection policy. Another asked how WFP's co-leadership of the IASC taskforce on AAP had shaped related WFP policies and operational approaches. She requested regular updates on WFP's work on anticipatory action and more information about the practical outcomes of the IASC early warning, early action and readiness group's efforts to link with the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. She urged WFP to continue its engagement in the advisory group of the IASC Gender Standby Capacity Project.
137. Praising WFP's cluster leadership, several Board members called for the clusters to be expanded and optimized as platforms for operational coordination, joint analysis and response prioritization for all humanitarian partners. One member highlighted the joint needs assessment and analysis platform offered by the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework as a starting point for increased coordination. She asked how WFP's leadership of the clusters fit in with its new strategic plan.
138. Welcoming WFP's continued commitment to PSEA, Board members encouraged it to strengthen its efforts in that area and help ensure that PSEA experts were available for all entities and operations. Board members also commended WFP for its role in the Grand Bargain caucus on cash coordination and its support for the implementation of the agreed cash coordination model, and they requested regular updates on that work. Several members called for more collaboration on CBTs, especially with regard to interoperability.
139. Private sector engagement, support for regional networks, strong monitoring and evaluation plans and intelligent partnerships with African countries were also cited as areas of Board interest. Some Board members praised WFP for its engagement with IFIs, and one asked how it ensured that IFI funding complemented its humanitarian activities. Several members encouraged WFP to continue to pursue innovative technologies and practices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian response.

140. Responding to Board comments, the director reported that WFP had been extremely active in the review of the IASC structure and priorities and at the level of the IASC principals, who had met very frequently in 2021. In addition to participating in the cash coordination caucus, WFP was also engaged in discussions on quality funding, which was increasingly important because of the growing funding gap.
141. The Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, added that the famine prevention and mitigation compact had facilitated vibrant dialogue and advocacy with partners on ways to collaboratively scale up and respond to famine. Within the IASC, she chaired the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group, which had been revised to sharpen its focus and better connect policies and practice through a series of task groups, including one on AAP and another on protection.

Administrative and managerial matters

Address by staff representative bodies to the Board

142. Speaking on behalf of WFP's general service staff, the General Secretary of the Union of General Service Staff (UGSS) thanked WFP management for the support and care that it had provided over the previous year as staff adapted to the post-COVID-19 "new normal" and different ways of working. With the Executive Director accepting a mandate extension of only 12 months, and the Deputy Executive Director about to retire, UGSS members were concerned about the resulting lack of continuity and security at a time of great global uncertainty and asked the Board to consider inviting the Executive Director to accept an extended mandate or requesting Mr Abdulla to defer his retirement plans.
143. The General Secretary said that many of the concerns regarding the performance and competency enhancement (PACE) process that UGSS members had expressed in 2021 had been addressed, including through the launch of a policy on the prevention of and response to abusive conduct, in February 2022. However, there was still a need to investigate more fully the potential role of poor-quality supervision in staff members' unsatisfactory PACE results. The UGSS proposal to expand its scope of representation to general service staff in the field was still being considered by FAO.
144. With regard to WFP's commitment to investigating all allegations of abusive conduct and taking immediate steps to protect staff pending the resolution of such allegations, UGSS requested that HRM play a more supportive role vis-à-vis staff members alleging such conduct and that the staff members be allowed to address the leadership group, directly or through their chosen staff representative body.
145. Positive developments over the previous year included a satisfactory consultation process during the ongoing review of the internal justice system; the appointment of a focal point for the anti-racism and standards of accommodation policies; the near finalization of a new general service recruitment and selection policy for headquarters and country office staff; the host government's deferment of a decision regarding the arming of WFP security guards at headquarters; and the piloting of "hybrid" working arrangements combining remote and on-site working.
146. The President of the Professional Staff Association said that a more transparent and rapid reassignment process was needed because there was a perception among staff that managers were increasingly recruiting external candidates while existing staff members with the necessary skills and experience were left without clear roles for many months, which was demoralizing for them and costly for WFP.

147. Staff were also concerned about the time taken for the Office of Inspections and Investigations (OIGI) to conclude investigations, which resulted in some staff members being suspended for long periods. Improvements in policy and staff awareness had resulted in a threefold increase in the number of cases reported, from 402 in 2018 to 1,323 in 2021, exacerbating the delays in the investigation and appeal processes and causing some staff members to abandon their cases.
148. The Professional Staff Association was concerned that the backlog of cases and the closure or transfer to other units of hundreds of cases could deter staff from reporting abuse or misconduct. Regarding the long duration of investigations and appeal processes, the association suggested that some form of injunctive relief such as a suspension of action be added to WFP's internal justice system, which would provide its staff with something already enjoyed by the staff of 16 other United Nations bodies.
149. The association acknowledged that tremendous work benefiting WFP staff had already been done by the Deputy Executive Director, Mr Amir Abdulla, who was retiring at the end of June. Mr Abdulla had been one of the first members of the association, and his extensive knowledge of WFP and concern for the staff would be missed.
150. The President of the Executive Board thanked the representatives for their insights into the views and concerns of WFP staff, and the Executive Director thanked all the staff for their professional commitment and service, saying that he looked forward to continuing his relationship with them.

Resource, financial and budgetary matters

2022/EB.A/7 Annual report of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee

151. The Chair of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC) presented highlights from the committee's annual report, reporting that the committee had found no material weaknesses in the governance, risk management or control processes of WFP.
152. Board members, including one speaking on behalf of a list, welcomed the report and its main observations and thanked the outgoing Chair of the IOAC for his valuable contribution to the work of the IOAC in assisting WFP management and the Board.
153. Expressing concern about the report's findings with regard to the large number of allegations of fraud, members urged management to redouble its efforts to prevent such incidents, including by identifying and addressing the root causes of fraud, improving the management and oversight of cooperating partners and strengthening fraud prevention systems at the country and regional levels.
154. Members sought information on how management planned to strengthen risk monitoring processes in order to improve the first line of defence and reduce the burden on the third, as well as on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing increase in humanitarian needs on governance and control measures, internal systems and staff.
155. The Chair of the IOAC said that the report's findings with regard to risk monitoring had been echoed in an independent evaluation of WFP's risk management function conducted by a consultant.
156. Management said that work to enhance risk monitoring included increasing the monitoring of processes, because non-compliance with processes could indicate a breakdown of internal controls; improving the division of labour between those with oversight functions at the regional bureau and headquarters levels; and embedding risk monitoring at the country level, including by recruiting risk and compliance advisers at country offices with high-risk operations and defining key risk indicators for inclusion in the risk registers of country offices.

157. Actions on fraud prevention included training and awareness raising for staff and partners and the engagement of management when problems were identified. The main areas of work where the impact of increased humanitarian needs could be addressed were covered in the statement on internal controls and the report on the management of significant risks. They included workplace culture and conduct issues, talent management and workforce planning, the management of cooperating partners, beneficiary management and information (IT) solutions.
158. With regard to issues raised by the staff representative bodies, including the use of external recruitment when qualified internal staff might have been available to fill positions, the Deputy Executive Director said that senior staff dedicated much time and attention to staff reassignment, recruitment and promotion and that existing staff with the right qualifications were not always available.
159. The Executive Director thanked the Chair of the IOAC for his service since 2015 and for the valuable and frank insights and advice that he had provided.

2022/EB.A/8 Audited annual accounts, 2021

160. The Director, Corporate Finance Division, introduced highlights from the WFP financial statements for 2021. The representative of the External Auditor, the *Cour des Comptes* of France, confirmed that his organization had issued an unqualified audit opinion and recalled that its six-year term as External Auditor would end on 30 June 2022.
161. Board members joined the Executive Director in expressing thanks for the External Auditor's service and took note of the financial statements. Members, including one speaking for a list, encouraged management to continue to strengthen the assurance framework for CBT activities and to address the four issues that remained from 2020 – workforce culture, workforce planning, NGO management and beneficiary management. They requested regular updates on progress in those areas, including on the work of the new identity management steering committee, the leadership and accountability frameworks for supervisors, the diversity and inclusion policy and the staffing frameworks.
162. Three Board members and an observer expressed disappointment at the incorrect application of the reduced indirect support cost (ISC) rate to contributions for operations in Afghanistan and Yemen. Asking for an explanation of the causes and impact of that error, they urged management to ensure that decisions regarding the application of the reduced ISC rate were approved by the Chief Financial Officer prior to implementation and to report regularly to the Board on the use of the reduced rate.
163. To enhance transparency and facilitate fundraising, one member said that the citizens of Member States should have easy access to full information on financial contributions received by WFP, including their sources and the countries and programmes that they supported.
164. Management said that many of the points raised would be covered during the discussion of other agenda items at the current Board session.
165. The erroneous application of a reduced ISC rate to World Bank funds for use in Afghanistan and Yemen had arisen from a misunderstanding; senior management advice had not been sought in either case. The actions taken as soon as the issue had come to light included consulting the Legal Office, informing the External Auditor, the IOAC and Board members and launching a review of the management of donor contributions and donor conditions. Although the negotiations with the World Bank were ongoing, it was understood that WFP would be expected to implement the projects in line with signed legal agreements using a 4 percent ISC rate. If that was the World Bank's final position, the shortfall could be covered from WFP's existing reserves pending the Board's approval.

166. Management confirmed that all External Auditor recommendations from 2021 audited annual accounts had been accepted and would be implemented within the following 12 months. The Board would be provided, through the management plan, with an update on the employee benefits funding ratio at its 2022 second regular session.

2022/EB.A/9 Report of the External Auditor on the management of cooperating partners and WFP management response to the External Auditor's recommendations

167. The representative of the External Auditor outlined the main findings of the report on the management of cooperating partners, following which management summarized suggestions for implementation of the 15 recommendations arising from the audit.
168. Board members, including one speaking on behalf of a list, welcomed the progress made by the NGO Partnerships Unit and others in efforts to reduce the risks associated with the management of WFP's partnerships with NGOs. One member, speaking on behalf of a list, expressed concern with regard to country offices' underestimation of the value of the United Nations Partner Portal and the limited sharing of information on cooperating partners among United Nations entities. Members asked about how WFP ensured that partners adhered to humanitarian principles and put in place policies and systems for ensuring the sound stewardship of resources and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse; how WFP protected the privacy of the information held by partners; the lack of a partnership strategy update since 2014; and the risks associated with country offices' failure to apply WFP guidance to partnership management in the field.
169. In accordance with the humanitarian obligations to remain neutral and to do no harm, Board members recommended that the utmost attention be given to the selection of cooperating partners in politically sensitive settings. With local entities accounting for 80 percent of WFP's NGO partnerships, members also encouraged WFP to promote equitable partnerships that strengthened the capacity of local actors in line with the Grand Bargain and WFP's updated country capacity strengthening policy.
170. Management said that the NGO Partnerships Unit was working with partners to improve data reliability and consistency and to refine corporate data management systems. The United Nations Partner Portal was still being rolled out, and not all country offices had had sufficient time to appreciate its full value. The NGO Partnerships Unit was using updated guidance and new digital tools to increase the transparency of and accountability for partner selection and to help country directors take into account all relevant considerations during the selection process, including in politically sensitive situations. The IASC PSEA capacity assessment tool was being incorporated into the United Nations Partner Portal, as was a risk management module for facilitating the sharing of information on individual partners among United Nations entities.
171. The NGO Partnerships Unit was conducting a review of how existing contractual arrangements worked at the country office level; exploring the role of community-level women's organizations as part of its localization efforts; and working with the global privacy office on the piloting of new data protection clauses for inclusion in field-level agreements.
172. Having expanded the headquarters role in cooperating partner management, including through the establishment and strengthening of the NGO Partnerships Unit, WFP was ready to invest in similar capacity at the regional and country levels.

2022/EB.A/10 Report of the External Auditor on oversight by management and WFP management response to the External Auditor's recommendations

173. The Director of External Audit outlined the main findings of the report on oversight by management and thanked WFP management, staff and the Board for their cooperation in assisting the audit teams deployed by the External Auditor over the six years of its mandate. Management then outlined its plans for implementing the 15 recommendations arising from the audit, most of which would be fully implemented by the end of 2022.
174. Two Board members, one of them speaking on behalf of a list, took the floor to thank the External Auditor for the report and to welcome the positive findings and management's commitment to implementing the recommendations, particularly by clarifying the definition of oversight and updating the 2018 oversight framework; issuing comprehensive annual plans for the oversight missions to be carried out in each region; and committing to escalate and centrally track high-risk recommendations. The Board members encouraged management to strengthen the sharing of information and best practices among offices and within the network of risk and compliance advisers; ensure that oversight tools were up-to-date and consistent with those of other United Nations entities; and build a database of data gathered from oversight reports for use in risk management.
175. Referring to the concerns expressed by country offices and regional bureaux with regard to the growing priority placed on oversight and the potential effects of that prioritization on overall performance, one Board member said that the continuing expansion of WFP's programme of work made risk mitigation and management increasingly important in providing accountability to donors and facilitating the optimal use of funds.
176. Management reiterated its commitment to improving consistency in the understanding of, and approach to, oversight throughout WFP and to enhancing the integration of oversight with risk monitoring. Twelve relatively high-risk country offices were already live with regular risk monitoring reports, and another 15 were in the pipeline. Other tools included the risk and recommendation tracking tool, R2, which was being used for evaluation reports; internal audit reports were about to be incorporated into R2, with regional bureau oversight actions and external audits to be added during the third quarter of 2022. In addition, there was strong uptake of training on oversight and internal control: 4,500 staff members had registered for an e-learning course on the three lines of defence, and 2,500 had registered for a new course on internal control in action since its launch in mid-May 2022.
177. In closing the discussion, the President expressed the Board's gratitude for the support provided by the *Cour des Comptes* over the six years of its mandate as the WFP External Auditor.

2022/EB.A/11 Report on the utilization of WFP's advance financing mechanisms (1 January–31 December 2021)

178. The Deputy Director, Corporate Planning and Performance Division, presented the report on WFP's use of advance financing mechanisms in 2021, giving an overview of WFP strategic financing tools and their contribution to WFP's operational agility. Management requested Board approval to increase the ceiling of the internal project lending (IPL) mechanism to USD 950 million, yielding a ceiling to reserve leverage ratio of 10:1, and to raise the ceiling of the GCMF to USD 950 million, or 10 percent of WFP's forecast contribution income for 2022. WFP also proposed to maintain the Immediate Response Account resources target at USD 200 million.
179. Board members praised the report and voiced broad support for the proposed changes. Several members said that the advance financing tools enabled WFP to respond swiftly and efficiently to humanitarian needs, maximizing the impact of its resources. One member encouraged WFP to continue to monitor and evaluate risks associated with the use of the

tools; another said that it was important to maintain sound financial management based on conservative funding forecasts and requested that WFP report on the impact of the increased ceilings.

180. One Board member praised the growing use of the GCMF for local, regional and smallholder procurement as a means of building resilience and addressing the root causes of food insecurity. Two Board members referred to the low level of contributions to the Immediate Response Account and encouraged more donors to fund WFP's advance financing mechanisms either directly or through more flexible funding.
181. The Chief Financial Officer thanked the Board for its support, noting that WFP would present a report on the impact of the raised ceilings at the Board's 2023 annual session; information on efficiency savings was also presented in the annual performance report. He recognized that an automated mechanism for adjusting the ceilings could be preferable to repeatedly setting and revising fixed ceilings; management was reflecting carefully on what parameters could be used for such an approach.
182. Regarding risk monitoring, the IPL and the GCMF had safety nets in the form of their operational reserves. The IPL reserve had been used only twice in the past 17 years; the GCMF safety net, although only USD 6 million, had never been used. WFP would continue to ensure sound financial management, including by strengthening its internal systems and increasing staffing to meet financial management and risk monitoring requirements.
183. Management took into account the risk exposures associated with various types of procurement, taking on the higher risks associated with purchasing from smallholders within the dedicated GCMF envelope. More information on local and regional procurement was available in an annex to the annual performance report.

2022/EB.A/12 Classification of private sector donors as non-traditional donors under General Rule XIII.4 (c)

184. The Director, Private Partnerships and Fundraising Division, introduced a proposed clarification of terminology in WFP General Rule XIII.4 (c) to classify private sector entities among the "non-traditional donors" eligible to use "twinning" for multiple contributions for the purpose of ensuring compliance with WFP's full-cost recovery principle, with the caveat that twinning funds could not come either from the WFP Fund or from the monetization of in-kind contributions. As private sector donors had not previously been considered "non-traditional donors" by the Executive Board, such donors had been excluded from recourse to twinning to facilitate acceptance of contributions. This had been seen not only to hamper WFP's timely acceptance of contributions, particularly in emergency situations, but also to prevent WFP from engaging in innovative, efficiency-driving joint private sector partnerships, despite numerous expressions of interest in this regard from current and potential private sector partners.
185. Board members welcomed efforts to increase private sector contributions, saying that current needs could not be met by traditional donors alone. They said that private sector donors could provide invaluable support, as seen, for example, in their contributions to and support for the UNHCR Ukraine emergency response fund.
186. Some Board members sought further clarification of the proposal, asking whether it meant that donations from public and private sector donors could be combined to cover the costs associated with a large private sector donation. They also asked why private sector donors would not be able to monetize part of their contributions to cover costs. One member asked how WFP would ensure that Board oversight was not affected by the involvement of private sector organizations, particularly in the event of very large contributions.

187. One Board member urged WFP to ensure that potential private sector donors received a thorough explanation of the need to cover all costs associated with their contributions. Other members requested that the impact of the classification be monitored closely.
188. The director replied that governance and oversight implications had been addressed during the formulation of the current private sector strategy (covering the period 2020–2025) and that contributions large enough to raise concerns about their possible impact on governance or Board oversight were not currently expected.
189. Emphasizing the value of the proposed classification, the director said that immediately following the outbreak of conflict in Ukraine WFP had received substantial offers of in-kind support from the private sector, many of which it had been forced to decline because of an inability to secure funding to uphold WFP's full-cost recovery principle in a timely manner consistent with needs of the emergency. In some cases companies had made cash contributions for the Ukraine response and had indicated that part of their contributions could be used to cover the costs of the in-kind contributions of other companies; even with the express agreement of the parties involved, however, this was not possible under WFP rules given the current lack of classification of private sector donors.
190. Management acknowledged the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of the United Nations (ACABQ) report on the matter, which included a suggestion to implement the new classification on a trial basis subject to review, but emphasized that the proposal of classifying private sector donors as "non-traditional donors" in the context of WFP General Rule XIII.4 (c) would be simple and avoid the need to develop special rules for private sector entities.
191. The Assistant Executive Director, Partnerships and Advocacy Department, acknowledged that WFP had existing processes for safeguarding any challenges or risks associated with accepting such contributions and that management would continue to both report to and seek the views of the Board on private sector matters, which the Board had supported through its investment in WFP's private sector engagement.
192. The Chief Financial Officer noted that ACABQ had issued its report on the proposed change following a silent hearing, the format of which had not allowed management to interact with the committee beyond submitting written answers to written questions or to comment on the committee's recommendations; as a result, management had not had the opportunity to clarify for the committee, among other things, that if the proposal were adopted the full cost recovery principle would continue to apply to all private sector donations, a point about which the committee appeared to be confused.

2022/EB.A/13 Update on the WFP management plan (2022–2024)

193. The Chief Financial Officer explained that management was taking the unusual step of presenting an update on the management plan in the middle of the year because the recent deterioration in the global food, fuel and financial situation had had significant implications for the funding requirements for the management plan for 2022–2024, presented to the Board at its 2021 second regular session. The document outlined management's proposals for addressing those implications and provided an update on the progress made in implementing the bottom-up strategic budgeting exercise.
194. Board members, including four speaking on behalf of their lists, took note of the proposals and the substantial increase in contributions for 2022. With the number of people requiring life-saving assistance continuing to rise, they urged WFP to prioritize the saving of lives and to take its organizational capacity into account when planning its operational requirements and budget allocations.

195. Members expressed concern about the funding gap and encouraged management to seek out innovative financing mechanisms, including through strengthened partnerships and cooperation mechanisms, opportunities for South–South and triangular cooperation and increased involvement of the private sector. One member speaking on behalf of a list requested additional information on the share of flexible funding and on progress in efforts to reduce donors’ earmarking of contributions.
196. Members agreed to the proposed allocations of funds from the Programme Support and Administrative Equalization Account (PSAEA) to the special account for wellness programmes and a critical corporate initiative, as well as from the General Fund to the Immediate Response Account and the Emerging Donor Matching Fund. They welcomed the inclusion of reporting on critical corporate initiatives in the annual performance report and asked whether management had considered using the PSAEA or the General Fund to fill funding gaps in underfunded core areas such as programme monitoring and cooperating partner management. With regard to the Emerging Donor Matching Fund, they sought clarification of the expected effects of raising the annual allocation ceiling to USD 1.5 million per recipient country.
197. Turning to the bottom-up strategic budgeting exercise, one member speaking on behalf of a list asked when the Board would be consulted on the development of WFP’s new cost recovery policy and requested additional information on management’s prioritization criteria for the allocation of programme support and administrative resources, including clarification of the corporate priorities that guided resource allocation, and details on progress made in eliminating budget and work overlaps between headquarters divisions and regional bureaux and among functional areas at headquarters.
198. With regard to the use of a 4 percent ISC rate on funds from IFIs that could not be channelled through a host Government, the same Board member said that his list could approve the proposal on a temporary basis while WFP defined parameters and an internal framework for the use of IFI funding, which should be based on a review of the ISC rates applied to IFI funds by other United Nations entities.
199. While many Board members said that they approved of the proposed establishment of a Changing Lives Transformation Fund (CLTF), the members of one list raised concerns about the timing of the proposal and the manner in which it had been presented. While they did not object to the proposal in principle, they said that it should be discussed at an informal consultation and presented to the Board at its second regular session as part of the item on the management plan for 2023–2025. Thanking management for the supplementary note it had provided, the Board members from that list sought assurance that the allocation of funds to the CLTF would not result in reduced funding for other critical corporate priorities, including with regard to supply chain and emergency preparedness and response capacity; that the CLTF would focus on fragile and conflict-affected states as well as stable countries; that WFP would report on the CLTF and the projects it funded in annual performance reports; that the CLTF would be evaluated after three years and before any fund replenishments were considered; and that key performance indicators for the fund would measure programme results as well as financing and returns on investment.
200. Members from other lists said that the current global humanitarian situation made initiatives such as the CLTF particularly valuable in building resilience and contributing to the elimination of root causes of food security crises; that several recent evaluation reports by the Office of Evaluation had recommended the establishment of mechanisms similar to the CLTF; and that the fund was coherent with WFP’s comparative advantages and work on the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

201. Management sought to address the points raised, including by proposing to amend the draft decision on the management plan. The Joint Inspection Unit was considering the inclusion of a United Nations-wide review of ISC rates in its 2023 workplan. WFP's current cost-recovery system would be maintained in the next management plan, and management would update the Board on progress in strengthening the governance of that system. The next management plan would include WFP's prioritization criteria and the rationale for using programme support and administrative funds and for any critical corporate initiatives. The most recent draft of the annual report on flexible funding showed that the trend in donor earmarking was moving in a positive direction, from the activity level to the country level. Efforts to reduce earmarking below the strategic outcome level would continue, and WFP had introduced a new criterion of "softly earmarked" to better align with external definitions. The growing involvement of the private sector was resulting in increasing amounts of unearmarked funding.
202. Management recalled that the CLTF had been one of the topics discussed during the resource management seminar held in May. The fund would not require additional resources because it would use funding reserves, and much of the work of establishing it had already been done. Responding to specific issues raised, management said that the CLTF would be reported on in the annual performance report, that it would be evaluated after three years and before any replenishment was considered and that key performance indicators for measuring the use of CLTF financing would be developed. Allocations from the fund would be directed to CSPs through country portfolio budgets. The fund would allow catalytic funding for resilience and root causes in areas where WFP had a comparative advantage, but WFP would continue to prioritize its response to urgent needs – the fund would help to reduce those needs in the future. Decision making regarding allocations from the CLTF take into account the needs in fragile and conflict-affected countries in line with WFP's work on the nexus, and in accordance with the assessment method outlined in the information note.
203. Given the failure to reach consensus on the wording of the draft decision, Board members agreed to hold discussions on the remaining issues with the aim of preparing a revised draft decision for the Board's consideration. The importance of the changing lives agenda made it essential that decisions on the subject be carefully considered.
204. The item was returned to later in the session, when a revised draft decision was approved by the Board.

2022/EB.A/14 Annual report of the Inspector General and note by the Executive Director

205. The Inspector General presented the annual report of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), noting that no material weaknesses had been identified in 2021 in the governance, risk management or control processes at WFP. Scope for improvement had been found in areas such as human capital, performance management, accountability, risk management, management oversight, information technology, beneficiary management, CBT processes and the management of cooperating partners.
206. The number of allegations of misconduct reported to OIG had continued to grow in 2021, particularly in relation to fraud, corruption and SEA. The number of matters related to abusive conduct and sexual harassment also remained high but stable between 2020 and 2021.
207. The Chief Financial Officer welcomed the insights provided by the annual report and highlighted ongoing efforts to address weaknesses in areas such as beneficiary management and workforce planning. Significant progress had been achieved in reducing the number of overdue audit recommendations, which were at their lowest level since 2006.

208. Board members noted the report's favourable assurance opinion and commended WFP for the positive trend in audit reports and the closure of overdue audit recommendations. One member urged WFP to reassess how it addressed recurring issues; others called on WFP to address data protection issues, adopt a comprehensive people-centred approach to workplace planning and put in place a resilient staffing framework.
209. Board members voiced concern at OIG findings related to WFP's systems for performance and accountability, the impact of staff capacity and turnover on operational performance, a lack of defined roles related to beneficiary management, and the operational implications of the continued fragmentation of data management systems, particularly for beneficiary data.
210. Some Board members welcomed the new approach to country office audits and requested a breakdown by country office or regional bureau of issues and practices that needed improvement. Others requested more information on the length of the process for contracting with financial service providers for CBTs and how it affected payment instrument tracking.
211. One member asked the Inspector General to comment on the appropriate balance between robust governance and operational agility in the light of WFP's rapid growth. She also sought insight into the effectiveness of tone-at-the-top leadership training and supported a follow-up audit in that area.
212. Turning to investigations, Board members commended OIGI for managing an ever-increasing caseload and strengthening collaboration with the oversight offices of cooperating partners. However, several members expressed concern about the management of cooperating partners and controls to prevent food diversion, expressing surprise that headquarters was not providing more support to the field in this area. They requested details of the parties responsible for the substantiated breaches of the anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy in 2021.
213. One Board member requested more information on how WFP would ensure adequate digital maturity for all country offices. She asked what prevented WFP from meeting monitoring requirements and using monitoring information in its work and why more resources had not been provided for that. She also asked OIG to continue to report to the Board on the adequacy of its resources.
214. Remarking upon the continued rise in investigations, another Board member called on WFP to strengthen its controls, prevention and awareness raising. He encouraged the organization to foster a culture that went beyond compliance to foster integrity and ethical behaviour and to allocate sufficient resources to ethics, risk and oversight, as well as capacity strengthening for implementing partners. He also called for sufficient safeguards for WFP assets, staff and beneficiaries, especially with regard to SEA, harassment, fraud and corruption.
215. Responding to Board comments, the Inspector General noted that all rapidly growing organizations faced challenges related to the balance between governance and agility. The Enterprise Risk Management Division played an important role in providing early warning of potential problems; OIG was also continuing to deepen its understanding of issues to identify the right balance for WFP.
216. On tone at the top, she suggested that training should be continuous and that even when audit recommendations were closed, it was possible to revisit or even reopen them; a follow-up tone-at-the-top audit or a tone at the middle audit was under consideration. Systems were only effective if used appropriately: training on human resources performance appraisals was important for managers and appraisees alike to ensure that everyone was participating effectively.

217. Regarding the tracking of issues raised in country office audits, OIG planned to use disaggregated issues to map progress and create syntheses of reports more quickly. On shadow IT, the Inspector General noted that shadow IT systems were not related to, or were only partially related to, beneficiary management; OIG would share more insights in this area once its shadow IT audit report was complete.
218. On CBTs, the length of the process for recruiting financial service providers did not affect payment instrument tracking, which enabled country offices to reduce fraud and operational risk; tracking was, however, being conducted slowly or more manually than OIG believed necessary in some offices and was therefore an area flagged for improvement.
219. The Director of OIGI added that information on substantiated investigations in 2021 was provided in annex III of the annual report. OIGI worked closely with cooperating partners and their oversight offices, where they existed. Investigations focused on staff, not on organizations, which largely did their best to address issues with support from WFP where needed.
220. The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that tone at the top remained a priority for management; HRM was also providing training for country office management to ensure appropriate tone at that level. Management would liaise with OIG to identify any further action required to reinforce tone at the top.
221. An information technology strategy currently being developed would support the digital maturity of country offices. The strategy and work to incorporate information technology considerations into CSP design would also help achieve alignment between future skills and digital approaches, such as for data science.
222. Internal control implementation had improved, as seen in the findings of an oversight review of the WFP country office in Jordan. Monitoring was being strengthened but remained an important topic and would be discussed further at the current session during the agenda item on management review of significant risk and control issues in 2021. Management was working to ensure adequate funding for monitoring, which was sometimes redeployed for food assistance in the face of funding shortfalls.
223. With regard to CBTs, the assurance framework would be supplemented by a technical note describing the components of an end-to-end cash assurance framework, which would help country offices to understand whether risk mitigation measures were being implemented and whether they required enhancement. Financial service provider selection and contracting took 90 days under normal operations and 40 days for emergency responses; WFP had streamlined the process by implementing recommendations made by a cross-functional team. A global long-term agreement with Western Union was also expected to accelerate financial service provider contracting.

2022/EB.A/15 Report on the implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations

224. Management presented the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the External Auditor, highlighting that WFP had closed 72 percent of the recommendations issued or outstanding since June 2021 – the highest closure rate achieved since 2006.
225. Two members, one speaking on behalf of a list, welcomed the progress made in implementing recommendations in spite of the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and encouraged WFP to implement outstanding recommendations as quickly as possible. Recalling that at the 2021 annual session of the Board members had stressed the importance of closing all recommendations within three years of their issuance, one member praised WFP for responding well to that request, with all outstanding recommendations from 2019 and 2020 on track for completion on schedule and items from 2017 and 2018 to be closed by the end of 2022.

226. Management said that the Enterprise Risk Management Division's assumption of responsibility for coordinating responses to external audits had led to good internal engagement in the implementation of those audit recommendations. While WFP aimed to close all recommendations within three years of their issuance, some called for structural change or investments in systems and thus took longer to implement.

2022/EB.A/16 Management review of significant risk and control issues, 2021

227. The Chief Risk Officer said that the management review of significant risk and control issues in 2021 showed good progress in WFP's management of workplace culture, where further attention was required, while in the remaining three key risk areas of NGO management, talent management and workforce planning, beneficiary management and IT solutions, progress had been made but further improvements were nevertheless needed.

228. Two Board members, including one speaking on behalf of a list, congratulated management for the progress to date, welcoming improvements in NGO management, cyber security, assurance in CBT activities and beneficiary management while urging management to continue to address outstanding issues. In particular they expressed concern about the reliability of data provided by NGO partners. They welcomed the establishment of a cross-functional steering committee on beneficiary identity management to address the issue and said that the guidance to be issued by the committee should establish standard requirements and methods for data collection and management by country offices and should emphasize the need for due diligence, including the practice of evaluating partners as a condition of renewing their contracts.

229. One Board member commended WFP for closing all agreed actions recommended in the tone-at-the-top internal audit and encouraged management to do more to hold senior managers accountable for inappropriate behaviour in their offices and to ensure greater gender parity and inclusiveness in senior staff and management.

230. A member speaking on behalf of a list asked for more information on lessons learned from the investigation carried out on allegations of falsified beneficiary data in Somalia and requested that future annual reviews of risk and control issues be the subject of informal consultations prior to their consideration at Board sessions.

231. Management took note of the issues raised, saying that many were already being addressed. The proposal for an informal consultation on the review of risk and control issues would be discussed with the Executive Board secretariat; in the meantime, risk and control issues were discussed during the annual seminar on resource management. As NGO management was a cross-cutting issue, management was considering incorporating it into other corporate risks rather than covering it as a standalone issue.

232. In response to questions management said that tools and procedures for NGO management were regularly updated in line with global developments and Board decisions and could be demonstrated to the Board at members' request. Guidance on the management of beneficiary identification data would be completed by the end of the year and would establish the level of proof required for beneficiary identification and verification along with measures for ensuring data privacy and beneficiary protection. The CBT assurance framework for country offices, which was aligned with the standards used by the Office of Internal Audit and mutually reinforced with corporate risk management standards including management assurance exercises, was being implemented by most country offices. Relative to diversity and inclusion, WFP was aggressively including gender targets in reassignment and recruitment, preparing guidelines to implement the disability policy and rolling out an anti-racism action plan, all in line with the WFP people policy.

233. With regard to the Somalia investigation, the Inspector General advised that multiple investigations were under way and that lessons learned would inform the development of guidance for management. In addition, management was examining the procedures for beneficiary registration and identification, removing duplicate beneficiary identities of single beneficiaries, carrying out periodic verification exercises and establishing a pool of specialists in data analytics. An update on the investigation would be included in the next quarterly report on the activities of the Inspector General and Oversight Office. The original lessons learned report had been issued in January 2021 and was available to members via the Executive Board Secretariat.

Evaluation reports

2022/EB.A/17 Annual evaluation report for 2021 and management response

234. After showing a short video on highlights of WFP's evaluation function in 2021, the Director of Evaluation presented the 2021 annual evaluation report, which would be the last report under the evaluation policy for 2016-2021. Management took note of the progress made and expressed its commitment to continuing to build a culture of evaluative thinking and behaviour throughout WFP, including by using evaluation findings to inform the design of CSPs and other corporate decision making processes.
235. Thanking the Office of Evaluation (OEV) for the high-quality report, Board members, including one speaking on behalf of a list, welcomed the broad range of evaluation types conducted; the practice of carrying out a post-hoc quality assessment of every evaluation conducted; the steady increase in the budget allocated to the evaluation function; and the plans for including an expanded analysis of WFP's use of evaluation evidence in future evaluation reports, which would allow the Board to monitor progress in that area. The members praised managers in certain divisions and regional bureaux for their engagement in decentralized evaluations and encouraged others to follow their lead.
236. Members expressed satisfaction with OEV's approach to joint evaluations at the headquarters and country levels, mentioning in particular the use of joint evaluations with national partners as a way of strengthening national capacity, and the opportunities for using joint evaluations to enhance collaboration among the Rome-based agencies. They encouraged OEV to expand on those efforts and to build synergies between evaluation and regional research and monitoring. They asked how WFP ensured adherence to international evaluation norms and guidelines in joint evaluations that were managed by partners. One member expressed concern about the low representation of staff recruited from developing countries in the evaluation function and the need for WFP to exercise particular care when working with national evaluation consultants in certain political settings.
237. Specific questions were raised with regard to the exclusion of three country offices from the impact evaluation window on school-based programmes; the capacity of WFP to absorb learning and evidence from evaluations; and the value to countries of learning from the evaluation of CSPs for other countries.
238. The Director of Evaluation said that the number of impact evaluations varied from year to year because they were resource-intensive, spanned several years and were undertaken in response to demand from country offices. She could share with Board members the feasibility assessment used for deciding which countries to include in an evaluation window. The Senegal country office had not been included in the school-based programme impact evaluation window because the relevant activity was part of a McGovern-Dole application that had not been successful. The Congo country office had not been included because it had not been possible to construct a counterfactual and thus to undertake a rigorous evaluation. The Yemen country office had been excluded because of capacity limitations. The drop in the number of joint evaluations conducted in 2021 reflected a reduction in the

number of opportunities for such evaluations; more would be conducted in 2022. The Director said that management's low rate of implementation of evaluation recommendations was probably attributable to overambitious timelines rather than too many evaluations being conducted, and over the long term WFP was doing quite well with regard to implementation.

239. Deputy directors of evaluation responded to other issues raised. WFP was involved in the preparatory planning phase of joint evaluations led by partners and was therefore able to ensure that participants adhered to evaluation principles and the standards and norms of the United Nations evaluation system. When that was not possible WFP took on an advisory role aimed at strengthening partner evaluation capacity. With regard to the use of evaluation findings, particularly from CSP evaluations, OEV produced summaries of evidence and main issues and held workshops that provided opportunities for intra- and interregional learning between countries. Evaluation plans were part of the broader plans produced by country offices, which included assessments, reviews, monitoring exercises and mid-term reviews as well as evaluations. OEV was focusing on increasing the number of staff members from developing countries, including by identifying national officers in country offices with the right skills and potential for evaluation.

2022/EB.A/18 Implementation status of evaluation recommendations

240. Management introduced the report on the implementation of evaluation recommendations, saying that it covered recommendations due for implementation between 2016 and 2021 – the period covered by the previous evaluation policy. During this time OEV had conducted an average of 32 evaluations per year, up from 18 per year in the previous six-year period. Recent years had seen an increase in recommendations focused on cross-cutting priority areas such as the environment, gender, protection, human rights and AAP, reflecting the direction of the new strategic plan, and there was greater emphasis on evidence-based learning from evaluation throughout WFP.
241. Board members welcomed the reported results of implementing recommendations, including programmes that were more people centred and focused on humanitarian principles, and the diversification of funding sources. They said that it was important to ensure focused leadership and clear ownership of recommendations, with actionable plans for their implementation that considered the resources required. One member praised management for implementing 92 percent of the recommendations issued between 2016 and 2019, which exceeded the 85 percent benchmark of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, while another asked why certain recent recommendations were taking more time to implement than planned and what mitigation measures were being taken.
242. Management said that the newly launched R2 risk and recommendation tracking tool facilitated the transparent tracking of recommendation implementation. Reasons for delays in implementation included the pressure of delivering on an expanding programme of work and responding to growing immediate needs, as well as resource constraints in many offices. Management was committed to increasing its use of evaluation evidence and thanked OEV for establishing a high-quality evaluation function whose standards met or exceeded those of the United Nations system.

2022/EB.A/19 Summary report on the review of the implementation of recommendations from thematic evaluations of a strategic/global nature and management response

243. The Director of Evaluation presented a summary report on a review of the implementation of recommendations from thematic evaluations of a strategic or global nature, which aimed at enhancing the visibility and use of evaluation recommendations in WFP based on 10 evaluation reports completed between 2016 and 2020. The review made five

recommendations aimed at strengthening the formulation and implementation of recommendations.

244. The Director, Corporate Planning and Performance Division, on behalf of management, welcomed the review as a valuable opportunity for learning lessons on the follow-up process for recommendations and evaluation outcomes and outlined its planned response to the recommendations, which included updating and improving standard operating procedures and analysing organizational factors that hindered recommendation implementation. A number of the issues highlighted by the review were already being addressed through the new strategic plan, the bottom-up strategic budgeting exercise and the human resources capital management project.
245. One Board member endorsed the review and management response, saying that recommendations should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). She encouraged management to focus on key areas such as accountability, tracking and transparency related to specific actions and to ensure segregation of duties regarding the implementation and verification of management responses. Another Board member praised the review for identifying the factors that facilitated and hindered the implementation of recommendations, saying that he looked forward to follow-up on its findings.
246. Thanking Board members for their support, the Director of Evaluation invited the Board to indicate interest in any further such review, noting that her office could undertake similar analyses. She confirmed that the Office of Evaluation would report on its follow-up to the review in future annual evaluation reports.
247. The Board would also receive updates from management on implementation of the review recommendations.

2022/EB.A/20 Comprehensive management response to the evaluation of the WFP response to the COVID-19 pandemic

248. The senior advisor to the Deputy Executive Director on the COVID-19 pandemic presented the comprehensive management response to the evaluation of WFP's response to the pandemic, noting that an initial response had been presented at the Board's 2022 first regular session. The response set out planned and executed actions related to each of the six items for consideration, indicating the offices responsible for each action and deadlines for implementation; as the evaluation had followed a retrospective development approach, many of the actions had already been completed.
249. An additional oral update on the management response would be provided at the Board's 2022 second regular session and would reflect the results of an inter-agency humanitarian evaluation of the COVID-19 response due to be published in October 2022. Management also planned to hold a cross-functional workshop on the lessons learned from the evaluation.
250. Board members commended WFP for its swift response at the outset of the pandemic, including its support for national social protection systems, adaptation of its own programming, technical advice and supply chain and logistics support. Board members also praised the commitment shown by WFP staff who stayed to deliver in extremely difficult circumstances.
251. They welcomed the evaluation and management response, particularly in the areas of the humanitarian-Development-peace nexus, innovation and technology and the promotion of gender equality in humanitarian, resilience and development activities. One Board member said that it was important to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on food chains and boost the productivity and resilience of food production and distribution systems in order to foster better food security, nutrition and growth.

252. Several Board members endorsed WFP's role as systems enabler and praised its flexible approach to working with governments and other United Nations agencies. One Board member said that it was important to improve and standardize the tools used during the pandemic to increase accountability and operational efficiency; another encouraged WFP to strengthen its capacity to deal with future crises, particularly in the area of logistics. One Board member highlighted capacity strengthening at the local and national levels as key to reducing vulnerability and fostering food security and sustainable livelihoods.
253. One Board member requested more information on the planned cross-functional workshop, the global operations meetings held with regional directors, the humanitarian logistics service and the virtual field visits mentioned under recommendation 3. She also invited WFP to explain its partial agreement to recommendation 6 and urged the organization to ensure that sufficient resources were dedicated to providing a safe and supportive working environment for staff.
254. Thanking the Board members for their comments, management explained that the workshop would take place in the third quarter of 2022 and would look at WFP tools, information sharing, common issues and policies through a cross-functional lens. Regarding the partial agreement with recommendation 6, management said that while WFP fully agreed with the recommendation to adopt an ethos of staff care, it wished to fully implement and evaluate the new people policy, human resources strategy and staffing framework before developing new approaches.
255. Introduced during the pandemic, the meetings with regional directors had since been adopted as a best practice and were used to ensure regional alignment on corporate priorities and the provision of headquarters support where needed; the results of the meetings were reflected in the global operational response plan and in briefings to the Executive Board.
256. The pandemic had triggered increased demand for social protection expertise and social protection programmes. WFP continued to expand its national capacity strengthening support and was applying learning from the COVID-19 response to current planning for the global food crisis.
257. The virtual field visit format had been introduced during the pandemic when travel was highly restricted. Such visits were now possible in 20 countries and provided considerable savings in cost, time and carbon emissions. The format enabled participants to meet beneficiaries and talk to them through a virtual platform.

Western Africa portfolio

2022/EB.A/21 Country strategic plan – Togo (2022–2026)

258. Introducing the CSP for Togo for 2022–2026, the Togo Country Director said that it was derived from the national priorities set out in the Presidential Road Map 2025 and was aimed at strengthening national systems and community resilience and fostering stronger and more stable livelihoods for vulnerable people. Through the CSP, WFP would remain fully prepared to respond to crises while also addressing cross-cutting issues including nutrition, gender equality and climate change.
259. Board members endorsed the CSP, praising its focus on emergency response, national capacity strengthening, private sector engagement, school feeding, gender and resilience building. Board members noted with concern the challenges faced by Togo, particularly the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and outbreaks of violence in the north of the country; one member urged WFP to continue to monitor population movements and the security situation.

260. One Board member praised the consultative approach to the development of the CSP and voiced support for activities 2 and 3, with their focus on home-grown school feeding, smallholder access to markets and local food supply chains. Another Board member asked how WFP would coordinate with other school feeding actors to prevent duplication of effort. Several members encouraged donors to fully fund the CSP.
261. Thanking Board members for their support, the country director said that WFP would continue to create synergies with the Government and other partners to strengthen the national school feeding system. Population movements were being monitored and government monitoring capacity had been enhanced through technical support and equipment. Private sector engagement would be key to the success of the CSP, and WFP was drawing up a strategy with the Global Child Nutrition Forum to guide work in this area.
262. The regional director added that WFP had a very strong relationship with the Government of Togo, which had committed to funding 30 percent of the CSP each year. Togo was also critical to WFP programming in the Sahel, as it was a major logistics corridor for the region. WFP was embarking on programmes with a regional perspective for Benin, Togo, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire in areas such as emergency preparedness, government capacity strengthening, supply chain resilience and CBT preparedness.
263. His Excellency Dindioque Konlani, Director of Cabinet of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development of Togo, affirmed his Government's commitment to supporting the implementation of the CSP as part of its efforts to create a peaceful modern country with inclusive and sustainable economic growth envisioned in the Togo Presidential Road Map 2025. He thanked WFP for its engagement in Togo and requested the support of partners in implementing the new CSP.

Special Address by UNICEF Executive Director

264. Ms Catherine Russell, Executive Director of UNICEF, said that she was proud of the work that WFP and UNICEF were doing together to reach the most vulnerable communities and save lives. Much of that work focused on improving nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life by protecting and promoting healthy diets and practices that supported nutrition, growth and learning, including through the use of CBT programmes. Commending the Executive Director of WFP for his efforts to raise the world's awareness of the growing global food and nutrition emergency, the Executive Director of UNICEF described her recent visits to Afghanistan and Ethiopia, where she had seen the suffering caused by the emergency.
265. Around the world UNICEF and WFP worked together to prevent malnutrition in vulnerable communities facing severe food insecurity, with WFP providing general food assistance and UNICEF, therapeutic feeding and care for the most severely malnourished children. With 8 million children under 5 at imminent risk of death from starvation, need continuing to rise and prices soaring, the Executive Director urged donors to increase their support. UNICEF and WFP were seeking to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their collaboration and had agreed on a comprehensive partnership framework for addressing the most life-threatening forms of malnutrition and undernutrition in fragile settings.
266. Two members speaking on behalf of their lists thanked the Executive Director for her address and commended UNICEF and WFP for their work in response to unprecedented global needs. They welcomed the joint and complementary programmes in global nutrition and other initiatives. Urging the two organizations not to lose sight of those programmes when faced with the current extraordinary needs, they said that there was a need to combine emergency response with work on development and resilience building, strengthening local capacity in the field so that the most vulnerable people could mitigate the effects of future emergencies. The platform for such programmes was the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, which also provided opportunities for bolstering cooperation between UNICEF and WFP. With women and girls particularly vulnerable to

- malnutrition and hunger due to systemic discrimination, one member encouraged the two organizations to take gender fully into account when developing and implementing all programmes.
267. One Board member sought the Executive Director of UNICEF's views on the priority areas where UNICEF and WFP could maximize synergy and increase impact in emergency and development settings; the opportunities for promoting school health and nutrition during the forthcoming summit on transforming education called for by the United Nations Secretary-General; the potential for increased cooperation in amassing evidence of the impact of joint resilience programming and other work, and how donors could support such efforts; and the potential for the two agencies to work with the World Bank on scaling up protection systems in countries affected by the global food crisis.
268. The Executive Director of UNICEF said that three principles guided UNICEF's collaboration with WFP: when food assistance was essential, UNICEF supported WFP's efforts to provide food assistance at scale; when food assistance was not sufficient, the two organizations cooperated on joint malnutrition prevention programmes for children and women, guided by their 2021 partnership framework; and when prevention failed and treatment was needed, joint action would be taken to support governments in delivering treatment in fragile settings. UNICEF, WFP and other partners worked together at the triple nexus, strengthening cooperation and coherence at the country level and implementing recommendations related to collaboration on the nexus.
269. The transforming education summit would provide an opportunity to address the problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and long school closures by getting children back into school – which was not easy as some children had entered the workforce and girls had been married – assessing their needs and helping them to catch up on the education they had lost. Education helped to reduce the intergenerational impacts of poverty partly because the children of educated mothers were more likely to be healthy and to receive an education themselves. UNICEF and WFP were exploring opportunities to work together with the World Bank in various settings.
270. The Executive Director of WFP thanked the Executive Director of UNICEF for her address and for leading her organization's collaboration with WFP. UNICEF and WFP were the two largest programmes in the United Nations, accounting for a total of USD 18 billion worth of operations, but both needed more funding to continue their work. He thanked Board members for their commitment and contributions to that work and urged them to continue to hold WFP accountable for its actions and use of resources. UNICEF and WFP working together could become the glue that held the world together and helped it through the difficult times it faced.
271. The President of the Board thanked the Executive Director of UNICEF for her time and her words of encouragement.

Southern Africa portfolio

2022/EB.A/22 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Mozambique (2017–2021) and management response

Country strategic plan – Mozambique (2022–2026)

272. In accordance with the Bureau's decision, the summary report on the evaluation of the CSP for Mozambique for 2017–2021 and the proposed CSP for Mozambique for 2022–2026 were presented and discussed together.

273. The Director of Evaluation introduced the evaluation of the CSP for 2017–2021, which had found generally good results with further efforts required in certain areas. The Country Director outlined the actions taken or planned in response to the five recommendations from the evaluation and presented an ambitious new CSP for 2022–2026, whose design had been informed by findings from the evaluation and by the new WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025. It had six CSP outcomes.
274. Praising WFP for what they called its excellent work in Mozambique, Board members, including two speaking on behalf of their lists, welcomed the new CSP and its focus on strengthening national systems and institutions as part of WFP's efforts to contribute to development and peace while prioritizing life-saving interventions. Members expressed satisfaction with the CSP's human rights-based approach and integration of cross-cutting issues related to climate change, gender, disability inclusion, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, protection and AAP. One member welcomed the country office's commitment to conducting a workforce planning exercise to ensure adequate staffing for CSP implementation.
275. Several struck a note of concern, saying that WFP lacked long-term relationships with other United Nation agencies, government institutions, local actors and other partners in Mozambique and urged the country office to address those gaps and to engage in joint advocacy with partners. Members sought additional details on several aspects of the CSP, including work with UNICEF on water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools; the development of a home-grown school feeding programme with partners; collaboration with the Ministry of Health on health services and the nutrition agenda; and food assistance for assets programmes, particularly for the continued management, maintenance and monitoring of the assets created after programmes finished.
276. In reference to WFP's support for insurance programmes, one member said there was a need for an exit strategy to ensure national payment of premiums beyond payments by WFP or other international organizations. Referring to recent discussions of the FAO governing body, another member objected to the use of certain terms in the document, including "nature-based solutions", "climate-smart" and "nutrition-sensitive", saying that they did not have multilaterally agreed definitions.
277. Responding to a question, the Director of Evaluation said that the aim of recommendation 1 on mainstreaming climate change considerations throughout the CSP was to promote the development of an integrated approach to cross-cutting issues that were currently treated in separated "silos".
278. The Country Director replied to other points raised. Collaboration among United Nations entities was based on the entities' respective mandates and capabilities and included inter-agency consultation during the design of the CSP. WFP was committed to expanding joint programming with other United Nations entities, strengthening its other partnerships, particularly with local NGOs, and working with the national institute for emergency response on protection issues.
279. With regard to work on the triple nexus, WFP emphasized that interventions must be context appropriate and that humanitarian, development and peace activities had to be implemented in parallel rather than sequentially. The country office aimed to make its interventions on the nexus more peace-sensitive. The Regional Director for Southern Africa added that the country office had the support of the regional bureau and headquarters on those efforts.

2022/EB.A/23 Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for the United Republic of Tanzania (2017–2021) and management response

Country strategic plan – United Republic of Tanzania (2022–2027)

280. In accordance with the Bureau's decision, the summary report on the evaluation of the CSP for the United Republic of Tanzania for 2017–2021 and the proposed CSP for 2022–2027 were presented and discussed together.
281. The Deputy Director, Office of Evaluation, highlighted the main findings of the evaluation of the CSP for 2017–2021, which had assessed WFP's strategic positioning, the quality and extent of its contributions, its efficiency and the factors underlying its performance. The evaluation had produced four recommendations related to WFP's strategic focus, change pathways, performance analysis and assessment of risks and opportunities.
282. Management reported that all recommendations had been taken into account in the design of the new CSP. A long-term view had been adopted when defining the CSP strategic priorities, which were aligned with national plans and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. WFP would continue to focus on areas of comparative advantage, including support for refugees, nutrition and agriculture. Improvements had also been introduced in the areas of gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation systems, beneficiary feedback mechanisms and risk assessment and mitigation.
283. Based on a whole-of-society approach, the new CSP had been developed in consultation with the Government and development partners and was informed by the outcomes of national food systems dialogues and feedback from an informal Board consultation. Through four strategic outcomes, it would help sustain inclusive economic growth through market-based interventions, strengthening human capital, increasing the affordability of healthy diets and promoting climate change adaptation and environmental restoration.
284. Board members commended WFP's work in the United Republic of Tanzania and endorsed the recommendations of the evaluation; they encouraged WFP to make optimal use of its resources and called for more progress on gender equality. They described the new CSP as well adapted to the challenges faced by the country, its national plans and UNSDCF. They endorsed the CSP's focus on partnerships, agriculture and market access.
285. One Board member asked why WFP had established outcome indicators for strategic outcome 4 of the previous CSP but had failed to monitor them. She requested more information on plans to address gender-based violence in and around refugee camps and asked how WFP would coordinate its home-grown school feeding programme with the efforts of other school feeding actors. She also requested more details of the non-refugee populations who would be receiving general food assistance and whether the reference to "health crises" indicated COVID-19 or other pandemics or epidemics.
286. The Deputy Director of Evaluation clarified that in some areas of the CSP for 2017–2021 monitoring had been very effective; the evaluation team had found, however, that the indicators for strategic outcome 4, which related primarily to system-level capacity strengthening and constituted quite a limited part of the CSP, did not facilitate analysis. Indeed WFP faced a challenge in monitoring such activities across the board, not only in the United Republic of Tanzania. The country director added that the activity implemented under strategic outcome 4 had been new but that many lessons had been learned, and the monitoring and evaluation framework had since been strengthened.
287. The country director reassured the Board that WFP had taken onboard all the evaluation recommendations and lessons learned in the design of the new CSP. CSP activities addressed risk factors related to gender-based violence, including child labour, child marriage, pregnancy among girls, child dropout rates, women's unpaid work and unjust

- social norms. A confidential hotline was being added to the channels available to beneficiaries for reporting concerns, including those related to gender-based violence.
288. On home-grown school feeding, WFP was committed to supporting a national programme funded by the Government and implemented by communities. WFP would play a capacity strengthening role and bring the various actors together, ideally in a cross-cutting format involving the ministries responsible for education, health and other matters. The Government would receive a package of assistance encompassing support for smallholder farmers, vegetable gardens, education and nutrition education. Opportunities for South-South cooperation were being explored, and the Government was also expected to join the school meals coalition launched at the 2021 United Nations food systems summit.
289. Support for non-refugee populations would take the form of cash rather than in-kind assistance. Support was currently focused on vulnerable people in urban areas who had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Activity 2 of the CSP could cover assistance provided in response to future disasters, including any potential climate-related crisis.
290. His Excellency Mahmoud Kombo, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania, thanked the Executive Board for approving the new CSP and paid tribute to the work of WFP in his country and around the world. He highlighted agriculture, economic growth and nutrition as priorities for his Government, which was committed to working closely with WFP to implement the new CSP.

2022/EB.A/24 Country strategic plan – Zimbabwe (2022–2026)

291. Introducing the CSP for Zimbabwe for 2022–2026, the country director warned that food insecurity and poverty were rising in the country, where 27 percent of the population had been food insecure in the 2021 lean season despite a bumper harvest. Through the new CSP, WFP would help to build shock-responsive social protection and food systems, assist the people in pursuing their livelihoods and aspirations and support the Government in striving to achieve its sustainable development targets.
292. One Board member praised the shift in focus of WFP operations in Zimbabwe towards resilience building; support for urban populations, adaptation to climate change and capacity building for humanitarian and development actors were also key features of the new CSP.
293. Another Board member noted with satisfaction that the evaluation of the CSP for 2017–2021 had informed the development of the new plan. She welcomed the emphasis on empowering women and people with disabilities and asked whether progress had been made on developing a unified assessment approach with the Government and other partners. She encouraged WFP to expand its collaboration with other United Nations entities, including UNICEF and FAO in particular, and to localize assistance by increasing the role and capacity of local partners and amplifying the voice of NGOs in national forums and coordination groups.
294. She requested more information on microinsurance schemes and encouraged WFP to work closely with the Government to ensure the provision of resources in the lean season, with WFP playing a complementary role. She also called for robust strategies to help beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance graduate to development programmes.
295. Another Board member expressed concern about potential overlap of the mandates of WFP and other United Nations entities working in Zimbabwe and urged WFP to coordinate with them to mitigate that risk. He also advocated increased collaboration with research institutes on innovation and technology and called on WFP to engage with the Government on its commitments and budget allocations to social sectors, especially those related to CSP outcomes. He added that the widespread use of short-term contracts for WFP staff ran

counter to the focus on development outcomes, and he called for increased use of long-term contracts.

296. In response to Board comments, the country director said that a unified approach to vulnerability assessment was in place through the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC), which was used and supported by all development and humanitarian actors in Zimbabwe. Although there were challenges to conducting an IPC analysis in the country, the two issues were being discussed by WFP, the humanitarian country team, the resident coordinator and the Government, and an IPC analysis could be conducted in July 2022.
297. WFP collaborated closely with UNICEF and the Government in the areas of nutrition and social protection; WFP, UNICEF and FAO were working together to support the Government in the implementation of its food security and nutrition strategy; and with FAO, WFP was working on resilience and agriculture. WFP activities complemented the work of FAO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with WFP providing extensive field presence and community engagement, FAO harnessing its normative capacity and UNDP working on governance. The resident coordinator's office and the United Nations country team were working on a collective strategy related to resilience building that would further enhance collaboration in that regard.
298. A relatively new activity, the microinsurance initiative was an element of support provided during the lean season, and lessons were still being learned from its implementation. Discussions were under way regarding a potential handover of the scheme to the private sector or the Government; a planned mid-term review of global funds would examine the viability of the scheme.
299. Every year, WFP and the Government worked together on lean season assistance; WFP was well positioned for the next lean season, and coordination and consultation had begun ahead of the results of a rural ZimVAC assessment. Investment in resilience building was key to supporting the graduation of beneficiaries from humanitarian assistance to development programmes. Collaboration with research institutions and universities was already under way.
300. WFP fully recognized the responsibility of the Government and would introduce an agreement matching the duration of the CSP that set out government responsibilities related to the partnership with WFP and the achievement of targets under the national development strategy.
301. WFP preferred to use long-term contracts for staff; however, contracts were subject to funding availability, and the country office could therefore only offer long-term contracts if funding was long-term.
302. Her Excellency, Mietani Chauke, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe, delivered a statement on behalf of His Excellency Paul Mavima, Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. She thanked the Executive Board for approving the CSP for 2022–2026, saying that it was the product of extensive stakeholder consultations, including with government ministers, and was aligned with the national development strategy. She commended WFP for its success in delivering food assistance and managing supply chains during crises and welcomed the increased focus on resilience building with a view to ending poverty and hunger by 2030.

Latin America and the Caribbean portfolio

2022/EB.A/25 Country strategic plan – El Salvador (2022–2027)

303. The Country Director for El Salvador introduced the CSP for that country for 2022–2027, saying that it had three main aims: responding to natural disasters such as tropical storms and droughts; improving food security by strengthening food systems; and strengthening national capacity. El Salvador had come through the COVID-19 pandemic relatively well and had had some success in developing infrastructure, but it needed capacity strengthening support in several areas.
304. Board members welcomed the CSP, noting that it took into account the findings from an evaluation of the previous CSP. A number of members from Latin America and the Caribbean said that the region did not receive as much global attention and support as it needed to address the frequent climate-related and other emergencies that it faced while protecting the development gains made in many countries. They and other members said that WFP's dual approach of saving lives and changing lives was particularly appropriate for such conditions.
305. Members welcomed the CSP's alignment with national plans; its capacity strengthening activities, including on national school feeding, health and social protection programmes; its emphasis on transforming discriminatory gender norms as a government priority; and its focus on local community participation in resilience building and the inclusion of smallholder farmers in local food systems, particularly given the country's reliance on fresh food imports.
306. The country director thanked members for their comments and replied to the points raised. As well as providing assistance in the event of emergency, WFP was also working on early warning systems to help people and communities to prepare for and recover from events. The director said that flexible financing and WFP's presence on the ground enabled the organization to identify and address community-level issues as they arose. WFP's work with the Ministry of Education included strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of school feeding programmes and improving the basic food basket used in school feeding. A degree of success in increasing food production to replace food imports had already been achieved.
307. The Director-General of El Salvador's international cooperation agency thanked the Board for approving the CSP and said that her country's Government had been closely involved in the development of the CSP and was committed to contributing to its successful implementation.

Operational matters

2022/EB.A/26 Country strategic plan – China (2022–2025)

308. Mr Sixi Qu, Director, WFP Beijing Office, introduced the new CSP for China, saying that it comprised one strategic outcome and three activities focused on smallholder support, childhood nutrition and partnerships and fundraising. Aligned with UNSDCF for China, the CSP would support domestic efforts to accelerate achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDG 2. The plan had been developed through extensive consultations with the Chinese Government, civil society organizations, private partners and the United Nations country team and would be fully funded by China.
309. Board members, including one speaking on behalf of a list, welcomed the focus of the CSP and its alignment with WFP and national strategic goals. They encouraged WFP to harness its expertise in programming and technology to support government efforts to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable groups and achieve sustained agricultural and rural economic development.

310. Noting the alignment of the CSP with the humanitarian principles and universal human rights, one Board member invited WFP to implement the CSP through a transitional approach that took into account the progress achieved by China and its status as an upper-middle-income country. China's transition, he said, should be considered in the mid-term review and the centralized evaluation of the CSP.
311. Thanking Board members for their comments, the Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, said that Board advice and guidance would be taken into account as WFP began implementation of the CSP.
312. His Excellency Guang Defu, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of China, thanked the Board for its support. He expressed disappointment that some proposals made by his Government, such as a global development initiative, had not been reflected in the CSP. He gave an overview of the development of the humanitarian depot and hub in his country and said that China looked forward to collaborating with WFP to ensure that the facility contributed to the provision of humanitarian assistance around the world.

Policy issues (continued)

Update on WFP's implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 72/279 (repositioning the United Nations development system)

313. The Deputy Executive Director and members of senior management presented an update on WFP's implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 72/279, on repositioning the United Nations development system, saying that WFP's implementation of the changes resulting from United Nations development system reform was also reflected in other documents presented to the Board, including the annual performance report. The reform had started before recent world events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the related food, energy and finance crisis. Those events had rolled back years of progress towards the attainment of the SDGs. The Deputy Executive Director underscored the importance of tangible progress towards the SDGs and avoiding too many processes that did not move the system towards the 2030 target.
314. Three Board members took the floor to express appreciation for WFP's engagement in the reform agenda, acknowledging that successful implementation of the agenda would require increased joint efforts by Member States (including their own), including improved adherence to obligations under the Funding Compact in terms of the volume and the flexibility of donations to and investments in development programmes. One member said that through WFP's New York office, the organization's engagement in reform had enabled it to remain abreast of, and to contribute to, developments at the United Nations and within the international development community.
315. Members mentioned aspects of reform and WFP's role that they viewed as being of particular importance, including the need to focus on work to achieve the SDGs and to embed reform through joint planning, programming, financing, implementation, reporting and evaluation with regard to integrated responses to emergencies that also contributed to the prevention of and recovery from crises. They urged WFP to assess its country presence and ensure that the right skills and experience were in place in each country; to continue to align its CSPs with UNSDCFs; to engage strategically in the resident coordinator system, using it to strengthen partnerships and enhance the efficiency of resource use; and to support countries in working to understand and meet their human rights obligations and commitments.
316. Members sought additional information on topics such as WFP's use of common country analyses, humanitarian needs overviews and other analytical tools; WFP's contribution to the efficiency agenda, especially at the country level; lessons learned from implementation of the management and accountability framework; the impact of the reform agenda on the

nexus approach; the challenges faced in implementing reform at the regional and country levels and how those challenges were being mitigated; and the development, rollout and use of digital platforms and other tools aimed at saving time and money.

317. Management said that WFP's engagement in policy making included its participation in the follow-up to the 2021 United Nations food systems summit and Our Common Agenda, including its efforts on social protection and the new agenda for peace. Implementation of the management and accountability framework had started with its official endorsement in the fall of 2021, and WFP would be recording any related challenges and best practices as they emerged. Regional level reform was one of the hardest areas of United Nations development system reform, as noted by the Secretary-General in recent comments, because United Nations entities defined their regions of operation in various ways and each faced its own opportunities and challenges. However, the issues-based coalitions in which WFP participated offered opportunities for advancing reform at the regional level. At the country level the configuration of United Nations country teams was under discussion with a view to ensuring that country teams had the right skills and expertise to address the issues of concern in each country. The configuration of a given country office would change over time, depending on evolving needs and conditions in the country.
318. Opportunities for Member States to engage in the reform agenda existed mainly at the country level but also included adhering as closely as they could to their Funding Compact obligations and carrying out related advocacy in their capitals. WFP would be applying the forthcoming guidance on joint programming to its existing joint programmes. WFP highlighted its work with the other Rome-based agencies in joint programmes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. WFP was also looking to expand its engagement in joint programming with other entities, including the United Nations Environment Programme. Such joint programming worked well when it was in line with the priorities of WFP's strategic plan and CSPs. Thematic areas for potential joint programmes included food systems, the triple nexus and resilience.
319. WFP was engaged in the efficiency agenda through the Business Innovations Group, the use of common premises for 49 percent of its offices, the development of business operation strategies at all of its country offices and the use of local shared service centres. It had a leading role in the United Nations booking hub, the digital booking of medical services and the United Nations vehicle fleet and sought to explore the expansion of global shared services.

Administrative and managerial matters

2022/EB.A/27 Appointment of one member to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee

320. As chair of the selection panel for the appointment of one member to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC), the Alternate Permanent Representative of the United States of America introduced the item. The new member was to replace Mr Suresh Kana of South Africa, whose term would expire on 14 November 2022. The chair of the selection panel thanked Mr Kana for his contribution and service to WFP as IOAC chair and member.
321. The selection panel comprised five members, one from each of the electoral lists of the Executive Board, appointed by the Board at its 2021 second regular session. An IOAC member had provided the panel with advice during the selection process. The recommended candidate had been identified during a selection process in 2021 and came from the List C region.

322. Having reviewed the candidate, the selection panel recommended that the Board appoint Ms Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas of Uruguay to serve as a member of the IOAC for a period of three years starting on 15 November 2022.
323. One Board member took the floor to thank the chair of the selection panel, express support for the panel's decision and thank Mr Kana for his contribution to the work of WFP, adding that the appointment of the new member would ensure regional balance and contribute to gender balance on the IOAC.

Update on food procurement

324. Before presenting the update on food procurement, management outlined actions taken in response to recent price rises and other challenges, including diversifying the supply base, encouraging commodity substitution where applicable and leveraging innovations. Since 2021, an increasing number of governments had requested WFP to procure and deliver food on their behalf, and WFP was working with stakeholders such as IFIs, national and local governments and other United Nations entities to provide such services. WFP and the Government of France had recently launched a food and agriculture resilience mission, that aimed to ensure equitable access to cereals and agricultural inputs for countries with deficits. WFP had also been approached by the African Development Bank with regard to supporting an emergency food facility aimed at providing farmers in Africa with timely access to agricultural inputs. The recent World Trade Organization agreement to exempt food for humanitarian purposes from export bans and other restrictions would enable WFP to lead the global response to the current unprecedented food supply crisis.
325. Board members, including two speaking on behalf of large groups of members, thanked management for the presentation and welcomed WFP's engagement in food procurement on behalf of governments. Members praised WFP's work on increasing cost-efficiency, expanding local and regional procurement, especially from smallholder farmers, and diversifying supply sources. They encouraged WFP to explore partnership opportunities for technology transfer and the exchange of experiences, including with IFAD and its smallholder farmer support programmes; to expand its procurement activities to countries where it did not have a presence; to take into account country and local conditions when making procurement decisions; and to pay greater attention to the development and enhancement of food management and distribution systems.
326. A number of members made reference to WFP's plans for developing a tool for calculating the environmental footprint of procurement and other activities, with one member calling on WFP to sign the charter on climate and the environment established by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with the aim of maximizing the environmental sustainability of humanitarian operations. Two other Board members, however, said that in the absence of a global consensus on the form such a tool might take WFP should handle the matter very carefully.
327. Members sought additional information on WFP's plans for assessing and managing the risks and opportunities related to local and regional food procurement; the results of an analysis of supply and demand in East Africa and plans for similar exercises in other regions and at the global level; and WFP plans for expanding the range of countries from which it procured specialized nutritious foods.
328. Two members said that international sanctions were having an adverse effect on food supplies and prices in their own and other countries. One of them also raised points of order with regard to the Board's discussion of an item that had previously been for information only and the accuracy of reporting that a statement had been delivered on behalf of a list when one Member State from that list had disassociated itself from the statement. The Secretary of the Executive Board said that the Executive Board Bureau had requested that

the item be discussed during the session, as reported in the note for the record of the most recent Bureau meeting. The statement referred to had been reported as being delivered on behalf of only those Member States that had associated themselves with it and not the entire electoral list.

329. Management responded to the points raised. The supply chain road map would be presented, together with an update on progress towards food procurement targets, at an informal consultation. Analyses of supply and demand in West Africa and southern Africa were being prepared, and the results of those analysis would be shared with the Board. Work on reducing WFP's carbon footprint was at a very early stage, and WFP would work with the ICRC and other agencies to develop indicators and tools in line with existing charters and policies. Negotiations on the procurement of wheat from India were at an advanced stage; WFP was piloting a model for such procurement, which would be implemented and scaled up if successful. Engagement with the private sector included work to improve the packaging used for WFP food supplies. WFP was developing a tool for the real-time tracking of food products along the supply chain, from farm to fork. A risk matrix for the procurement policy was being developed and would be rolled out, and efforts to expand the sources of specialized nutritious foods included the establishment of factories in Ghana and Ethiopia, with partners providing the necessary technical expertise.

Other business

Oral report on the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP

330. The President presented an overview of the 2022 joint meeting of the executive boards of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS), UNICEF, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and WFP, which had taken place on 3 June 2022 with the theme "An integrated approach towards sustainable investment in people and planet: Leaving no one behind as a principle for climate action to ensure a transformative path for the most vulnerable."
331. During a panel discussion among the principals of the organizations, the WFP Deputy Executive Director had called for United Nations entities to combine their comparative strengths to implement climate action in fragile settings and remote locations. He had also emphasized that United Nations reform efforts should focus on improving the lives of beneficiaries rather than processes.
332. In his remarks, the President of the WFP Board had given an overview of global hunger, noting that climate change, in conjunction with conflicts and economic inequality, was a huge obstacle to achieving zero hunger. He had stressed the importance of collaboration among United Nations entities and called for even greater partnership to respond to climate crises and to meet the needs of the most vulnerable.
333. A summary report of the meeting would be posted ahead of the 2022 second regular session of the WFP Executive Board.

Update on the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service

334. The Chief, WFP Aviation Service, gave an overview of the achievements of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service in 2021, including the launch of new operations and expansion of existing services in response to humanitarian access constraints. He also described the funding outlook for 2022; progress made in the aviation, environmental and sustainability programme; the development of the United Nations booking hub system for UNHAS operations and the set-up of a centralized funding mechanism for UNHAS operations. He also provided an update on the External Auditor's recommendations in the WFP air

- transport services audit report. He noted that financial details of all UNHAS operations in 2021 would be sent to all Executive Board members after the presentation.
335. Speaking on behalf of her List, one Board member urged WFP to adhere closely to its humanitarian mandate and provide UNHAS services only when no safe commercial alternative existed; she added that in the event of resource constraints, UNHAS service plans and budgets should be driven solely by humanitarian access priorities, and UNHAS should avoid accepting passengers who could jeopardize its neutrality.
 336. Examining 2021 indicators, she asked why passenger and evacuation figures remained below 2019 levels. She also requested an explanation of UNHAS operational priorities and the indicators on provision of access and passenger satisfaction, in particular the low passenger satisfaction rate recorded in Mali.
 337. She encouraged WFP to broaden the scope of its partnership with the European Union on humanitarian aid flights and to make further progress with the aviation, environment and sustainability programme, especially on measuring CO₂ emissions for WFP-chartered aircraft, promoting alternative fuels and developing carbon offset strategies. In that regard she requested more insight into the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) technical measures applied by some air operators.
 338. Welcoming the implementation of external audit recommendations, she asked for an update on recommendation 3 on revising the financial and budgetary framework, specifically regarding the directives envisaged and the establishment of a dedicated central trust fund. She also requested an estimated timeline for the full integration of all UNHAS operations into the United Nations booking hub and an indication of the resulting efficiencies achieved or expected in the medium term.
 339. Recognizing the funding challenges faced by UNHAS, she requested an analysis of the benefits of the current cost-recovery model and information on WFP's funding outlook and funding prioritization criteria, noting that Board members stood ready to support the establishment of a centralized mechanism for direct multilateral contributions. She asked, however, whether donors would still be able to direct funding towards specific UNHAS country operations under a centralized model.
 340. Recognizing that insurance and fuel costs had risen sharply for some operations, she encouraged WFP to analyse insurance options to identify the most cost-effective solution and mitigate the risk of significant cost increases; she added that Board members were ready to explore ad hoc solutions with WFP to minimize insurance costs.
 341. On structural and administrative barriers faced by UNHAS, she called on all Board members to support the operationalization of the air service by ensuring that flight permits were issued without complicated or lengthy administrative procedures.
 342. In closing, she said that she looked forward to the consultation on the next WFP aviation policy, which she said should set out the principles, objectives and enabling factors for addressing the challenges facing UNHAS and include a transparent explanation of the approach to cost recovery for aviation services.
 343. Responding to the comments, the Chief of the Aviation Service explained that the relatively low number of passengers transported in 2021 reflected the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, while there had been more evacuations in 2021 because of increased security concerns.
 344. On passenger satisfaction, he took note of the concerns raised and said that WFP sought to minimize breaks in service. In Mali, the lower satisfaction rate could be explained partly by low participation in the survey and interruptions to flight schedules; however, the UNHAS office in Mali had taken measures to address the reported issues.

345. On the environmental and sustainability programme, selected operators were applying ICAO technical measure 100-13, which dealt with measures to reduce fuel use and emissions such as continuous descent operations, continuous climb operations, minimization of the use of reverse thrust on landing, engine-out taxiing for multi-engine aircraft, use of optimum cruising altitude, selection of take-off runway to shorten taxiing distance or flight time and the use of aircraft towing where feasible.
346. On the cost of war risk insurance premiums, WFP continued to look for more affordable solutions while ensuring the continuation of proper coverage; Board support was welcome in that regard.
347. Regarding the United Nations humanitarian booking hub, its greatest advantage was its functionality, allowing user organizations to operate in self-service mode, providing a flexible system tailored to meet the various requirements of each individual UNHAS operation. It enabled efficient information exchange and improved the customer experience, starting with organization registration, passenger data entries and bookings, and compliance with documentary requirements such as the provision of passport details and health certificates if required.

Summary of the work of the Executive Board

2022/EB.A/28 Summary of the work of the 2022 first regular session of the Executive Board

348. The President reported that the Rapporteur for the Board's 2022 first regular session had prepared the summary of that session and that in May 2022 a draft of it had been distributed to the Board members. The Board then approved the summary.

Verification of adopted decisions and recommendations

349. Following the President's introduction of the agenda item, the Rapporteur 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

AAP	accountability to affected populations
ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of the United Nations
CBT	cash-based transfer
CLTF	Changing Lives Transformation Fund
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
HSHAAD	harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFI	international financial institutions
IOAC	Independent Oversight Advisory Committee
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IPL	internal project lending
ISC	indirect support cost
IT	information technology
NGO	non-governmental organization
OBD	Office of the Ombudsman and Mediation Services
OIGI	Office of Inspections and Investigations
PACE	performance and competency enhancement
PSAEA	Programme Support and Administrative Equalization Account
PSEA	protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UGSS	Union of General Service Staff
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
UNSDCF	United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the empowerment of Women
ZimVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee