



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

Executive Board
Second regular session
Rome, 13–16 November 2023

Distribution: General

Agenda item 4

Date: 13 November 2023

WFP/EB.2/2023/4-A/Rev.1

Original: English

Policy issues

For consideration

Executive Board documents are available on WFP's website (<https://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

Analysis of policy gaps

Draft decision*

The Board takes note of the analysis of policy gaps (WFP/EB.2/2023/4-A/Rev.1) and requests the Secretariat to submit an update of this document for consideration by the Board no later than its 2024 second regular session.

Introduction

1. The purpose of this note is to provide an analysis of potential policy gaps in light of WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025, following a request made by Executive Board at its second regular session in 2022.
2. The forthcoming update of the policy on policy formulation will be coordinated with the ongoing Executive Board governance review and will outline the process that WFP will follow to identify policy gaps and priorities within its mandate, in consultation with the Board. It will also indicate how WFP's policy development approach will ensure that policies are evidence-based, leveraging partnerships and ensuring programmatic coherence.¹

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

¹ The finalization of the policy formulation policy update awaits the conclusion of the Executive Board governance review. A draft of the policy update was shared during an Executive Board informal consultation in March 2022.

Focal points:

Mr D. Kaatrud
Director
Programme – Humanitarian and Development
Division
Email: david.kaatrud@wfp.org

Ms D. Yohendran
Senior Policy and Programme Officer
Programme – Humanitarian and Development
Division
Email: deborah.yohendran@wfp.org

3. Recent examples of new or updated WFP policies include the aviation policy (2023), the cash policy (2023), the gender policy (2022) and the local and regional food procurement policy (2019). Other policies that have been updated to ensure alignment with the strategic plan and international developments include those on country capacity strengthening (2022), South–South and triangular cooperation (2023) and protection and accountability (2020).
4. In 2024, WFP plans to engage with the Executive Board and external partners in the formulation of policy updates on climate change, resilience and school-based programmes. Evaluations of the environment and emergency preparedness policies will guide decisions on whether a new policy or policy update or other normative instruments would be most appropriate for the organization. The strategic evaluation on migration and displacement that will be presented to the Board in 2025 is an additional important initiative that will generate recommendations to ensure that WFP is well positioned to deliver on its mandate. WFP is looking into the development of a localization policy, which has been the subject of recent discussions with the Board and relates to the implementation of the strategic plan.
5. In addition to this ongoing work, potential policy gaps are analysed below. The existing portfolio of policies, captured in the annual *Compendium of policies relating to the strategic plan*, is part of the analysis. The inclusion of other instruments such as strategies, circulars and guidance provides a comprehensive picture of the normative approaches and tools available to management and staff to support the implementation of WFP's operations and the design, delivery and monitoring of its programmes.

Strategic objectives and cross-cutting priorities

Localization

6. Based upon WFP's commitment in the strategic plan to strengthening the capacity of local governments and organizations and to prioritizing local and equal partnerships, and following consultation with Board members, WFP plans to formulate a localization framework, building on the key components of localization – partnerships, capacity strengthening, funding, participation and coordination. The development of the framework will entail an in-depth review of evidence and best practice; a rigorous set of internal and external consultations (including with national and local partners and other actors); a mapping of the full spectrum of WFP localization efforts in humanitarian and development settings; an analysis of the risks associated with localization; and the strengthening of existing ways of working and the adoption of new models. In consultation with the Board, this work will likely be followed by the development of a WFP policy on localization.

Humanitarian–development–peace nexus

7. With the adoption of the strategic plan and guided by the humanitarian–development–peace nexus principles issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee, WFP is operationalizing the triple nexus through action that prioritizes "prevention always, development wherever possible and humanitarian action when necessary". Alongside meeting people's urgent food security, nutrition and other essential needs, WFP leverages its versatility and partnerships to reduce needs, including by scaling up efforts to prevent and address malnutrition in all its forms, strengthening long-term resilience to shocks and stressors and pursuing social cohesion and contributions to peace. The triple nexus is embedded in existing policies, such as the peacebuilding policy (2013), and will be key in formulating forthcoming policy updates, such as for the policy on resilience. Rather than being encapsulated in a separate policy, WFP's normative approach to the triple nexus is grounded in strengthening programmatic design and tools and is reflected in the operationalization of its country strategic plans (CSPs), for example, through partnerships that have a strong focus on WFP's comparative advantage and that prioritize joint analysis and programming. Important steps in operationalizing the

triple nexus are reflected in WFP's normative portfolio, for example in the mainstreaming of the conflict sensitivity strategy, the update of the CSP guidance manual and the establishment of a repository of best practices and tools for country offices.

Food systems

8. As outlined in the strategic plan, the key drivers of hunger – conflict, the climate crisis and economic downturns – and corresponding interlinked shocks and stressors underscore the need for food systems that are flexible and adaptable. Food systems face a “triple challenge” of providing food security and nutrition to a growing population, contributing to the livelihoods of people working in food supply chains and ensuring environmental sustainability while addressing the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation. WFP leverages its expertise in programming and supply chain to build more resilient food systems, improving the resilience of the people and communities within them, in order to address the underlying causes of hunger while reducing future humanitarian needs. WFP contributes to building resilient food systems through integrated and context-specific interventions that improve the capacity and market access of farmers, strengthen food value chains, reduce post-harvest losses and rehabilitate land and ecosystems. Following the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit and building on the momentum and rigorous consultations in the lead-up to the 2023 Food Systems Stocktaking Moment, WFP is working closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development as part of the inter-agency United Nations food systems coordination hub to bring together knowledge and expertise and facilitate progress on national priorities related to food systems in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. While a dedicated policy on food systems is not currently envisioned, upcoming policy updates on resilience and climate change will provide an opportunity to articulate WFP's contributions, delivered through partnerships, towards strengthening food systems.

Inclusion

9. Building on the disability inclusion road map (2020) and the gender policy (2022), WFP is undertaking a review of the various strands of inclusion, notably disability, gender, indigenous identity and age. The review takes into account the inclusion agenda across the multilateral system, examining how inclusion is conceptualized in WFP's policies, operational documents, training and tools. The review is an important first step in establishing a coherent framework, setting targets and building the capacity to identify gaps, measure performance and ensure compliance in the area of inclusion.

Enablers

10. The enablers outlined in the strategic plan are addressed through corporate strategies with the aim of increasing WFP's ability to eradicate food insecurity and malnutrition. The “people” enabler is also set out in the people policy, which was formulated to introduce a significant shift in WFP's approach to workforce planning.

People

11. As emphasized in the strategic plan and reflected in the people policy (2021), WFP is proactively shaping, managing and developing its workforce to enable the organization to meet the constantly changing demands of the complex environments in which it operates. The people policy provided a new vision and framework for the achievement of excellence in people management and the development of a strong workplace culture, all of which are necessary to the accomplishment of WFP's mission.

Partnerships

12. WFP's commitment to establishing and strengthening credible and relevant partnerships across the humanitarian and development system was reiterated in the strategic plan. Partnerships are the bedrock of WFP's portfolio of policies and strategies. The WFP corporate partnership strategy for 2014–2017 provides the overarching vision and corporate approach for partnerships with non-governmental organizations, governments, the private sector, other United Nations entities, international and regional organizations and academic and other knowledge generating institutions. The strategy outlines the benefits of partnerships and the principles and practices that govern WFP's partnership arrangements. At the country level, a key part of the development of CSPs are the partnership action plans.

Funding

13. The strategic plan commits WFP to continuing to advocate flexible funding and multi-year financing to enable the organization to be more agile, to bolster its response to those most in need and to facilitate sustainable assistance in protracted crises. In line with WFP's commitment to expanding its financial resource base, the private sector partnerships and fundraising strategy (2020) outlines how the organization strategically engages with the business sector, philanthropic foundations and individual supporters.² In 2022, WFP developed and disseminated a guidance note for country offices on blended finance. WFP is also developing an innovative financing strategy, which aims to build a menu of innovative finance mechanisms suitable for a variety of country settings and programming needs and to provide streamlined corporate support in developing, adapting and scaling opportunities and activities linked to innovative finance. Internally, a set of guidance notes has been published for country offices.

Evidence

14. The strategic plan emphasizes that evidence and lessons learned from WFP's performance based on research, monitoring and evaluations, as well as knowledge produced by communities, governments and partners, guide WFP's programmatic approaches. The evaluation policy update (2022) underlines the organization's commitment to becoming evidence-driven in how it delivers results. Evaluations make a key contribution to organizational learning and to ensuring that programmes, plans, policies and strategies are evidence-based. WFP is also developing a strategy on knowledge management that will aim to strengthen the culture of generating and sharing best practice and evidence and increase the timely uptake of such knowledge by decision makers and staff.

Technology

15. Anchored in the strategic plan, the information and technology strategy for 2023–2026³ sets out how digital technology and data will reinforce WFP's strength and reach. Through this strategy, innovative, secure and adaptive technology and better data and insights will contribute to WFP's capacities in emergency preparedness and response and resilience building. The strategy also focuses on strengthening the foundations of information and technology, including data governance and management; operational agility, risk management and service management; and enterprise architecture and digital blueprints as the basis for innovation and the development of solutions that support business processes and capabilities.

² "Private sector partnerships and fundraising strategy (2020–2025): Cooperation with the private sector, foundations and individuals for the achievement of zero hunger" (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-A/Rev.1).

³ WFP. 2023. *WFP Information and Technology Strategy 2023–2026*.

16. Identity management is relevant for the strategic plan enablers on evidence and technology. As part of its evolving framework on digital governance, WFP is committed to collecting the minimum information necessary to assist people in need and using that information in a transparent manner. WFP has developed a set of principles and red lines on the use of personal data and how it is shared with governments. The next step will be to disseminate a set of identity management assurance products in 2024. In addition, the Global Privacy Office is finalizing a new Executive Director's circular on a personal data protection and privacy framework.

Innovation

17. Innovation is critical to WFP's operations in emergency and non-emergency settings because it enables the organization to find efficient solutions to new challenges and long-standing problems. A strategy on innovation is under development and will aim to drive the scale-up of innovations that can help WFP to reach those left farthest behind. In parallel, guidance has been disseminated to country offices on how they can leverage innovation in specific settings across the programme cycle and in the development of CSPs.

Global assurance

18. WFP's global assurance high-level task force is activating the whole organization to put in place "end to end" assurance and internal control measures for all high-risk operations. These measures include a set of global standards that all operations must meet and minimum measures that need to be in place in order to mitigate most risks effectively. The reassurance action plan describes the actions that WFP will take to ensure that all high-risk operations meet these standards and have these measures in place by the end of 2024. A provisional set of standards and measures has been drafted; following consultations, this will be refined and issued through an Executive Director's circular.