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## Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Burkina Faso (2019–2023)

### Executive summary

The evaluation of the country strategic plan for Burkina Faso covers the period from 2018 to mid-2022. It assesses WFP's strategic positioning, its contribution to strategic outcomes, efficiency in implementation and the factors explaining performance.

Burkina Faso is a low-income country home to 22.1 million people. In recent years, the country has suffered significant political upheaval including several military coups and has been caught up in an escalating wave of violence and insecurity that has led to the displacement of almost 2 million people. Burkina Faso is also highly affected by food insecurity and acute malnutrition.

The country strategic plan was initially focused on resilience building and country capacity strengthening but was adapted through seven budget revisions in response to the multiple shocks faced by the country; the changes included the addition of an emergency component, which gradually became the main focus. While both the transitional interim country strategic plan and the country strategic plan were initially aligned with national priorities, as the situation in the country deteriorated, programme modifications did not involve sufficient consultation with national partners.

After initial supply chain and human resource mobilization challenges, WFP was able to scale up its response adequately to meet needs. Beneficiary needs were identified through surveys and analyses, and WFP adapted its targeting criteria according to the priorities under each strategic outcome. However, the targeting of internally displaced persons remained subject to external

*In line with WFP evaluation policy (2022) (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.*

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#### Focal points:

Ms A.-C. Luzot  
Director of Evaluation  
email: [anneclaire.luzot@wfp.org](mailto:anneclaire.luzot@wfp.org)

Ms A. Larmoyer  
Senior Evaluation Officer  
email: [aurelie.larmoyer@wfp.org](mailto:aurelie.larmoyer@wfp.org)

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constraints. Although WFP made efforts to deliver timely assistance, performance varied by activity.

The transformative potential of WFP's activities in terms of gender, age and inclusion remains limited. Actions promoting gender sensitivity were not accompanied by a gender action plan nor supported by analyses of gender-specific needs. WFP made considerable effort to improve its accountability to affected populations such as by establishing feedback mechanisms; however, further improvements are needed to keep beneficiaries properly informed.

The country office used appropriate strategies to operationalize the humanitarian-peace-development nexus, yet the effectiveness of these approaches and of conflict sensitivity elements is still to be demonstrated. Several interventions have the potential to be sustainable but have been negatively impacted by the deteriorating security situation.

The country strategic plan was well funded thanks to strong resource mobilization efforts. Despite relatively little flexibility in allocated contributions, the available resources were sufficiently diverse to allow a balanced implementation. WFP was recognized for its capacity to respond to emergencies, contribute to common services, facilitate humanitarian access and build partner capacities.

Overall, the evaluation found that the country strategic plan provided flexibility and allowed WFP to adjust to emergency conditions. From 2021, WFP became a major emergency response player, responding at scale and supporting the humanitarian community. However, strategic shifts were not adequately discussed with national partners. Resilience programming encountered setbacks, raising questions regarding its validity within the new operating environment, and WFP ambitions for accountability to affected populations, protection and gender mainstreaming require further investment for results.

The evaluation produced six recommendations: continue to invest in emergency preparedness; foster further development of WFP's triple nexus approach; improve partnerships; continue work on accountability to affected populations; ensure evidence-based decision-making; and invest in human resources to facilitate the scale-up of operations.

## **Draft decision\***

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Burkina Faso (2019–2023) (WFP/EB.2/2023/6-A/2) and management response (WFP/EB.2/2023/6-A/2/Add.1) and encourages further action on the recommendations set out in the report, taking into account the considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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\* 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.

## Introduction

### Evaluation features

1. The evaluation of the WFP country strategic plan (CSP) for Burkina Faso was conducted between November 2021 and January 2023 in order to feed into the design of the new CSP, due to start in January 2024. The evaluation covered the design phase of the CSP for 2019–2023 and its implementation from January 2019 to July 2022, including all of WFP's activities during that period. The evaluation also considered the transitional interim CSP (T-ICSP) for 2018.
2. The evaluation analysed WFP's strategic positioning, the contribution of the CSP to planned outcomes, implementation efficiency and the factors underpinning performance, as well as WFP's agility and ability to respond to a level 3 emergency.
3. In light of the sharply deteriorating conditions in Burkina Faso between 2018 and 2022, the evaluation adopted a flexible methodological approach that, in addition to assessing results, allowed it to evaluate the CSP's adaptive capacity and the factors that influenced change. Fieldwork in July 2022 allowed for institutional consultations in Ouagadougou and for visits to activities around the towns of Kaya, Dori and Fada N'Gourma, where most registered beneficiaries are served, including internally displaced persons (IDPs). The challenging security context limited access to some areas, which had a particular impact on the observation of unintended outcomes. Gender was mainstreamed throughout the evaluation, including in data collection tools and analysis.

### Context

4. Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in the Sahelian zone of West Africa whose 22.1 million inhabitants comprise 60 ethnic groups. A democratic, unitary and secular state, Burkina Faso has faced significant political upheaval and instability since 2015, when long-time President Blaise Compaoré was forced to resign. New political tensions arose in 2021, when the president elected in 2016 was ousted in early 2022 by the military, who established a transitional government which was itself overthrown later the same year.
5. In addition, armed groups operating throughout the Sahel have led to growing insecurity, particularly in northern and eastern regions. Attacks perpetrated on civilians have displaced thousands from their homes. The humanitarian situation has deteriorated since January 2019<sup>1</sup> such that national authorities have declared state of emergency in one third of the country. The number of IDPs has increased dramatically, from 8,665 displaced in January 2018 to 1,902,150 in August 2022.
6. A low-income country, Burkina Faso faces several economic challenges including vulnerability to external shocks, such as fluctuations in global commodity prices, and weak infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. With a gross domestic product per capita of USD 893.1 in 2021<sup>2</sup> and a negative trade balance, Burkina Faso's economy is predominantly agricultural and most of the population are engaged in subsistence farming. The unemployment rate is particularly high among young people and women and 94.6 percent of the labour force work in the informal sector.<sup>3</sup> The country ranked 184th out of

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<sup>1</sup> WFP. 2020. *Burkina Faso Annual Country Report 2019*.

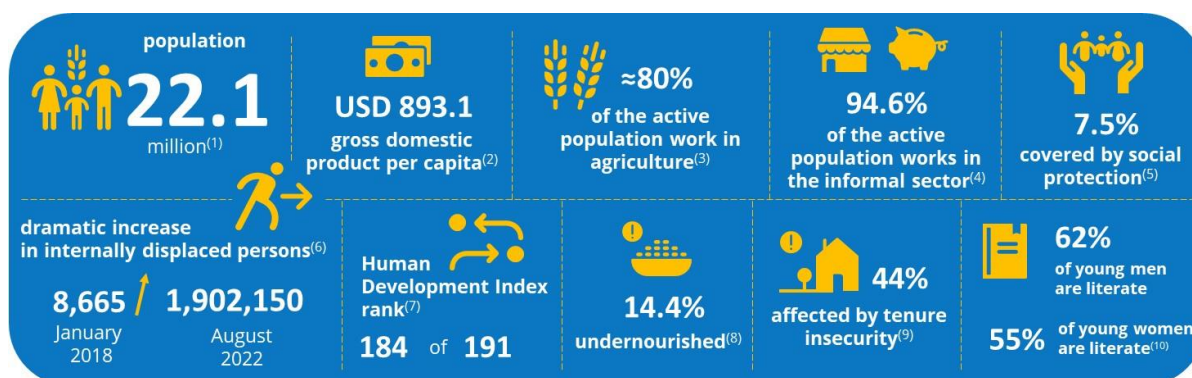
<sup>2</sup> World Bank. 2021. *GDP per capita (current US\$) - Burkina Faso*.

<sup>3</sup> International Labour Organization. 2020. *The Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy in Africa*.

191 countries on the Human Development Index in 2022<sup>4</sup> and 7.5 percent of citizens benefit from social protection support.<sup>5</sup>

7. Within West Africa, Burkina Faso is one of the countries most affected by food insecurity, which is driven by the combined effects of poverty, inequality, weak social protection systems and limited infrastructure. These factors have been compounded by the considerable insecurity, which has severely curbed agricultural production and rural livelihoods. Vulnerability has also been exacerbated by the effects of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which reduced economic activity and affected supply chains; price rises, with imports contributing to the supply of essential foodstuffs; and climate shocks. Food insecurity increases during the lean season.
8. Although improving, the country's Global Hunger Index score of 24.5 in 2021 was classed as "serious".<sup>6</sup> Between 2018 and 2020, 14.4 percent of the population were undernourished.<sup>7</sup> In 2020, acute malnutrition exceeded the World Health Organization alert threshold in 12 provinces, and between August 2021 and January 2022,<sup>8</sup> 21 provinces were classified as being in an "alert" hunger phase while 18 were in a "serious" situation according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification framework.<sup>9</sup> Amid increasing humanitarian needs, access to vulnerable populations was curtailed by growing insecurity and violence, even while aid volumes increased significantly up to 2020.

**Figure 1: Overview of key indicators**



Source: (1) World Bank. 2021. [Population, total – Burkina Faso](#); (2) World Bank. 2021. [GDP per capita \(current US\\$\) – Burkina Faso](#); (3) Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie. 2018. [Enquête Régionale Intégrée sur l'Emploi et le Secteur Informel 2018](#); (4) International Labour Organization (ILO). 2020. [The Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy in Africa](#); (5) ILO and the Government of Belgium. 2020. [Supporting Burkina Faso and Senegal to promote social protection](#); (6) Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 2022. [UNHCR RBWCA – Monthly Statistics – August 2022](#) and UNHCR. [IDP trend data for Burkina Faso](#); (7) United Nations Development Programme. 2022. [Human Development Report 2021/2022. Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World](#); (8) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and others. 2021. [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021](#); (9) Prindex. 2018. [Burkina Faso](#); and (10) United Nations Children's Fund. 2021. [The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind – Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health](#).

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2022. [World Report on Human Development 2021/2022: Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World](#).

<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organization and the Government of Belgium. 2020. [Supporting Burkina Faso and Senegal to promote social protection](#).

<sup>6</sup> Welt Hunger Hilfe and Concern Worldwide. 2021. [2021 Global Hunger Index: Hunger and Food Systems in Conflict Settings](#).

<sup>7</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and others. 2021. [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021](#).

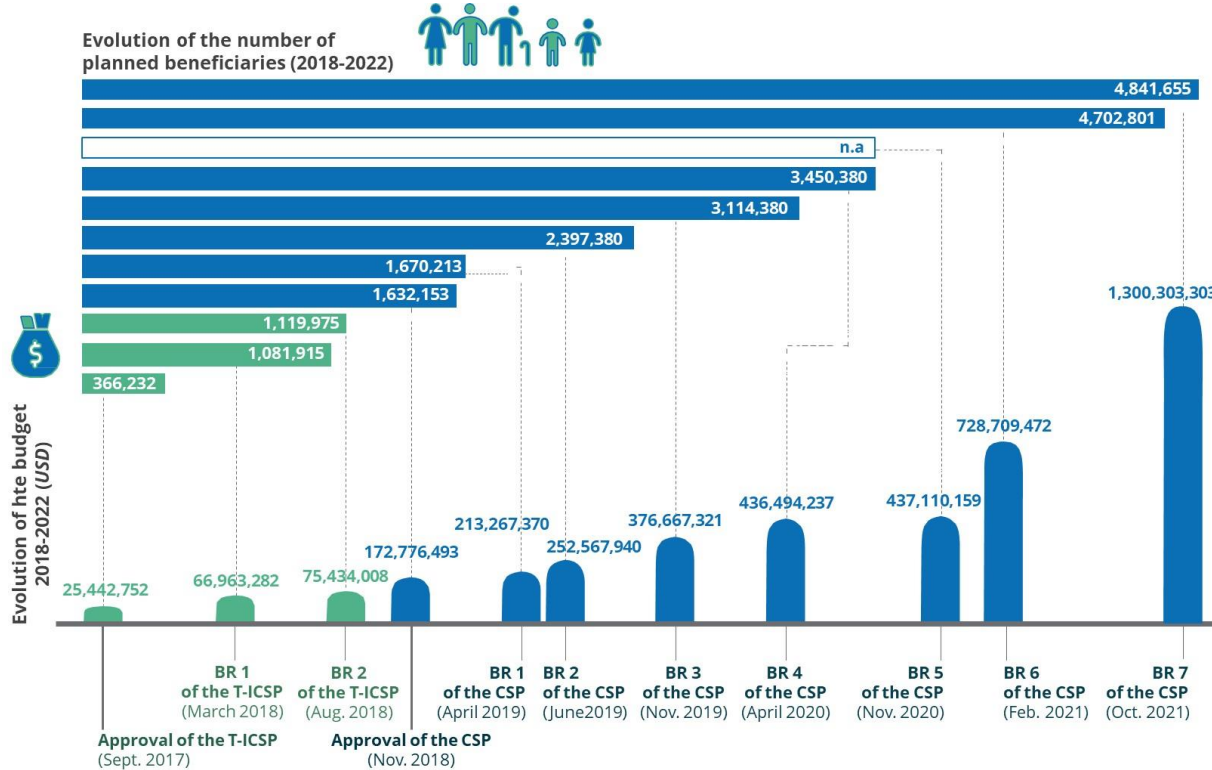
<sup>8</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. 2021. [Burkina Faso: Acute Malnutrition Situation October 2020–January 2021 and Projections for February–April 2021 and May–July 2021](#).

<sup>9</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. 2022. [Burkina Faso: Acute Malnutrition Situation August 2021–January 2022 and Projections for February–April 2022 and May–July 2022](#).

**WFP country strategic plan**

- 9. Based on the results of the zero hunger strategic review (2017),<sup>10</sup> the CSP retained the logic used for the T-ICSP for 2018, placing emergency response (strategic outcomes 1 and 6) at the centre, supplemented with resilience building work (strategic outcomes 2, 3 and 4) and support for national state structures (strategic outcome 5). The CSP planned to adopt nutrition-sensitive and gender-transformative approaches, with attention to environmental and social risks, country capacity strengthening, protection and accountability to affected populations.
- 10. While the CSP prioritized resilience to climate change and capacity strengthening for national and local institutions, its intervention logic had to adapt to the various health, climate and security shocks that occurred during implementation. These included emergency responses to meet the humanitarian needs of the growing number of IDPs and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on commodity markets and food prices in 2020. In May 2019, WFP activated a level 2 country response for Burkina Faso and in September 2019, a level 3 emergency was declared, placing the country at the heart of the WFP emergency response for the Sahel regional crisis,<sup>11</sup> which was still ongoing in December 2022.
- 11. Figure 2 reflects the changes introduced over the period under evaluation.

**Figure 2: Evolution of the budget and the number of planned beneficiaries by country strategic plan budget revision (2018–2022)**



Abbreviation: BR = budget revision.

Source: Produced by the WFP Office of Evaluation based on the budget revisions of the T-ICSP and CSP.

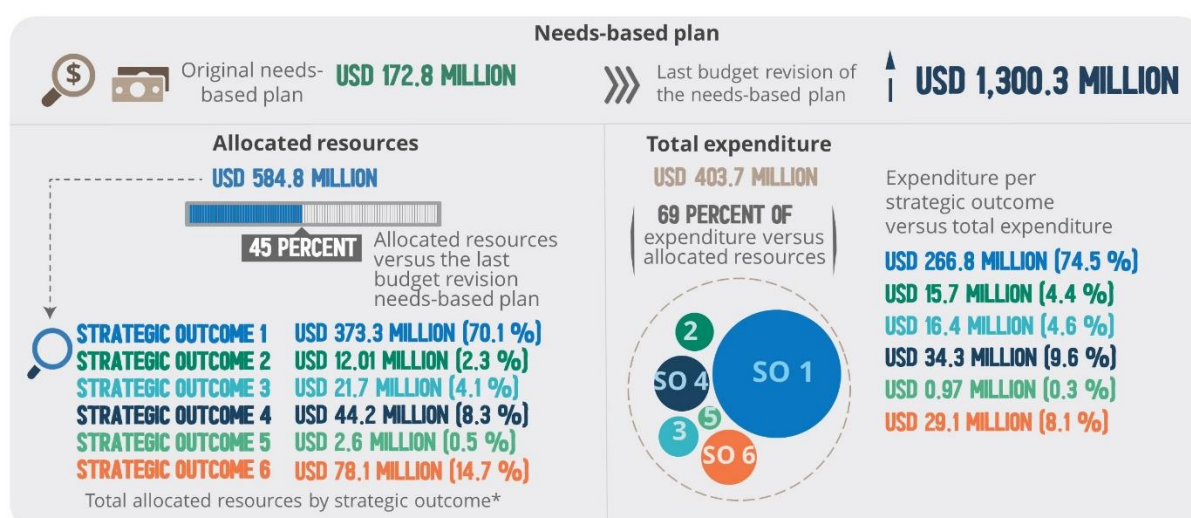
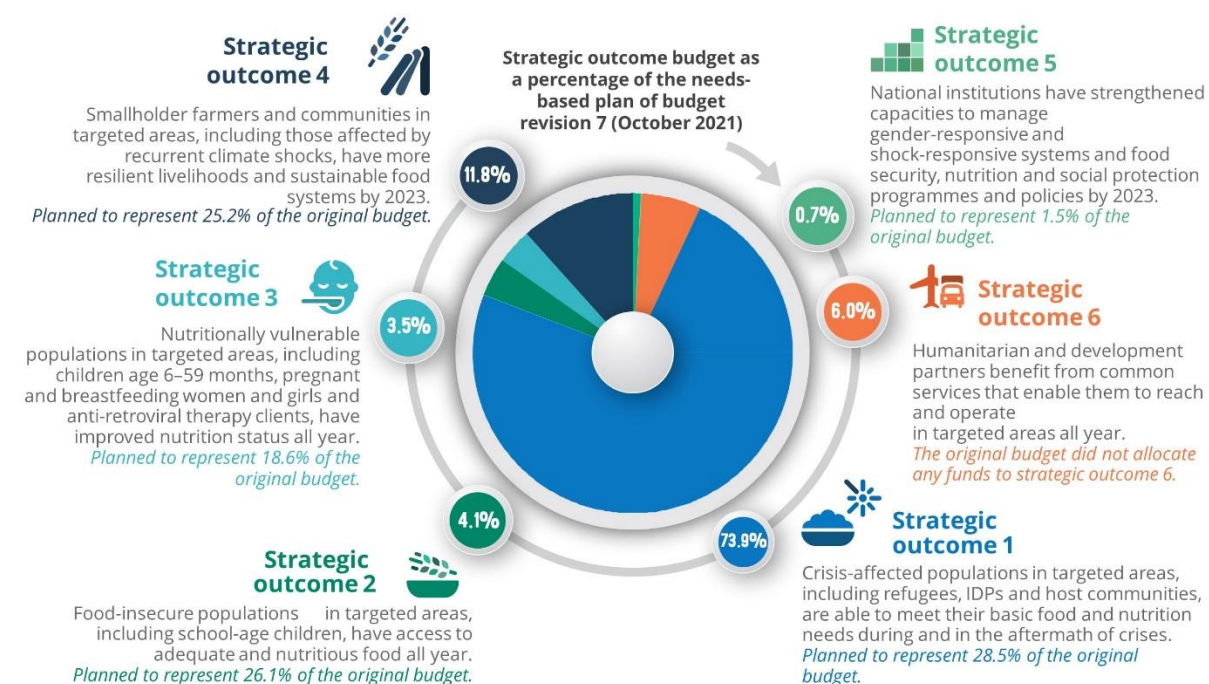
<sup>10</sup> Government of Burkina Faso. 2017. *Zero Hunger Strategic Review* (not available online).

<sup>11</sup> WFP. 2019. *Executive Director Decision Memorandum, Activation of WFP Level 3 Emergency Response for Central Sahel* (not available online).



12. From an initial T-ICSP budget of USD 25.4 million in 2018 and 366,232 planned beneficiaries, WFP expanded its requirements under the seventh CSP budget revision of October 2021 to 4.8 million beneficiaries. The sharp deterioration in the operating environment also shifted the balance between the resilience building and emergency response strands of the CSP; the share of the total needs-based plan allocated to work under strategic outcome 1 rose from 28 percent of the initial budget to 74 percent under CSP budget revision 7. While the T-ICSP needs-based plan was funded at 74.9 percent of needs, the CSP was only funded at 45.98 percent of the needs-based plan presented in CSP budget revision 7.

**Figure 3: Burkina Faso country strategic plan (2019–2023) strategic outcomes, budget, funding and expenditures, as at 31 July 2022**



\* Percentages of allocated resources and expenditures by strategic outcome were calculated at the transfer and implementation cost level, and therefore exclude funding allocated and expenses relevant to non-strategic outcome-specific purposes, direct support costs and indirect support costs.

Source: Produced by the WFP Office of Evaluation based on the [approved CSP document](#); [CSP budget revision 7](#); and Integrated Road Map Analytics. ACR-1 Standard Country Report (internal source).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Allocated resources and expenditures data is as of 31 July 2022. The graphic does not include budget revisions 8 and 9 (approved in February 2023 and June 2023, respectively) as these fall outside the period under evaluation.

## Evaluation findings

### To what extent are WFP's strategic position, role and specific contributions based on country priorities, people's needs and WFP's strengths?

13. WFP undertakes and supports surveys on agricultural production, market functioning, household vulnerability and nutrition, as well as monitoring overall food security in Burkina Faso. The results of this work are used by the humanitarian community and national institutions to identify needs; they also informed WFP's planning for its beneficiary caseloads, including the increase described in paragraph 12.
14. An analysis identified gender inequality as an aggravating factor for food insecurity. In response, WFP ensured that attention was paid to gender issues under all CSP pillars.
15. Geographical targeting was relevant under all strategic outcomes and despite growing insecurity, WFP and its cooperating partners succeeded in maintaining or improving their physical access to most areas of the country, which also helped to ensure that assistance was relevant to needs. WFP adapted its targeting criteria appropriately under each strategic outcome, although changes were not effectively communicated to partners. Challenges were encountered with the targeting of IDPs related to partner decisions, resource availability and access constraints.
16. Both the T-ICSP and CSP were initially aligned with national policies and the Sustainable Development Goals. However, subsequent modifications introduced to respond to the changing operational environment – though relevant and important – were not sufficiently discussed with, or understood by, national partners. The value WFP brings to emergency response is recognized and appreciated by all partners, particularly as WFP helped to increase access to insecure areas for other humanitarian actors. Other United Nations entities appreciated WFP's efforts to intervene within the framework of "One UN" as the emergency intensified. The division of labour between WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, however, remained challenging.
17. The initial internal logic of the CSP, including its emphasis on "changing lives", was appropriate to the context at the time. However, the programmatic shift implemented in response to the rapid changes in the country from 2019 onwards was not accompanied by explicit adjustments to the internal logic of the plan. WFP continued to pursue resilience building objectives, with uneven anticipation of the medium and long-term issues that would arise from the crisis. Changes in the operating environment have also raised questions about the relevance of some intervention strategies, such as those involving innovative approaches, particularly capacity strengthening.
18. School feeding and nutrition support activities were integrated under several strategic outcomes as WFP gradually redirected its operations to emergency response. Although this change had a positive impact on resource mobilization, it posed challenges in terms of the management, monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

### What are the extent and quality of WFP's contribution to country strategic plan strategic outcomes in Burkina Faso?

19. Under strategic outcome 1, WFP implemented a humanitarian response that made a major contribution to meeting the food needs of crisis-affected people and communities. However, wide coverage was reached by cutting rations by up to 50 percent, which, coupled with the intensification of the crisis, could explain the continued decline in food and nutrition security over the period.

20. Under strategic outcome 2, WFP struggled to achieve objectives related to keeping children in schools under the “regular” school feeding programme in the Soum and Séno regions, largely owing to conflict-induced disruptions, although in 2021 and 2022 WFP managed to increase coverage by adapting intervention and delivery modalities to the conditions created by conflict and COVID-19. Pilot projects on cash transfers for vulnerable families in Ouagadougou suffered from flaws in their intervention logic, targeting and financing, which negatively affected their results.
21. Efforts under strategic outcome 3 to improve the nutrition status of children, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, and patients under antiretroviral therapy treatment had mixed results. Despite increased coverage, prevention activities did not improve the quality of beneficiaries’ diets as expected. The treatment of moderate acute malnutrition with blanket supplementary feeding showed very positive results despite implementation challenges – although there are some concerns about data reliability, given that WFP distributed smaller quantities of food than planned. Linking blanket supplementary feeding with food distribution under strategic outcome 1 helped limit (although not completely resolve) the sharing of nutritional inputs within households. Finally, efforts to strengthen national capacities related to nutrition helped to lessen the deterioration of the situation, although overall, nutrition indicators did not show improvement.
22. Although a growing number of resilience building activities were introduced up until 2021, results under strategic outcome 4 declined over the period. This was due to changes in the operating environment that reduced the relevance of the resilience strategy and hampered its implementation.
23. Under strategic outcome 5, WFP sought to support national capacity to respond to food and nutrition insecurity. Despite substantial outputs such as studies, training and South–South exchanges, there was limited evidence of the impact at the institutional level. Progress was impeded by significant difficulties in implementing a large project-based intervention, which was the main source of funding for activities under this strategic outcome.
24. Under strategic outcome 6, WFP was generally effective in facilitating access and communication for humanitarian and development partners, judging by the high satisfaction levels expressed. However, specific results in relation to the humanitarian response have not been well measured. WFP’s contributions to common services, including logistics and transport services, are well recognized by its partners. The extremely rapid changes in the operating environment as well as the subsequent scale-up of humanitarian activities helped to build the capacities of partners, some of whom lacked experience of humanitarian emergencies.
25. The rapid scale-up of the humanitarian response has had the positive collateral effect of strengthening the emergency response capacities of partners, which until then had been geared towards the implementation of development programmes. Other positive and unintended effects of WFP’s support were noted in the area of social cohesion for both emergency and resilience building work.
26. WFP has made many efforts to improve its accountability to affected populations, including by establishing various feedback mechanisms. However, there is room to improve awareness of these mechanisms and, more broadly, the sharing of information on WFP interventions. As security deteriorated, protection issues increased in significance and WFP was generally effective in stepping up relevant capacity, creating a dedicated protection unit in early 2021. Since 2021, WFP has also made investments and deployed human resources to strengthen the implementation of its protection policy, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, and the management of beneficiary resettlements. Several analyses



have been carried out or are under way, aimed at improving the conflict-sensitivity of interventions.

27. The transformative potential of WFP's activities in aspects related to age, gender and diversity remains limited and below corporate ambitions. Although some activities promoted the participation and protection of women and girls, the country office lacked a gender action plan and did not analyse gender-specific needs and preferences or intra-household dynamics. This gap limited the scope for improving gender equality.
28. Attention to environmental matters has been limited to food assistance for assets activities aimed at safeguarding natural resources, with no formal policy in place for reducing WFP's environmental impact. Several interventions were designed to achieve sustainable results but faced practical challenges in the complex operating environment. Sustainability, while poorly monitored, was also strongly impacted by the deterioration of the security situation.
29. Strategies for operationalizing the humanitarian–development–peace nexus were appropriate and entailed responding to urgent needs while supporting the self-reliance of populations in conflict-affected areas when possible; supporting the resilience of populations and institutions in areas peripheral to conflict zones; and engaging in national capacity-strengthening in stable areas. The effectiveness of these approaches and the integration of conflict sensitivity in operations is still to be demonstrated, although contributions to peacebuilding, including stabilization and conflict prevention, appear mixed.

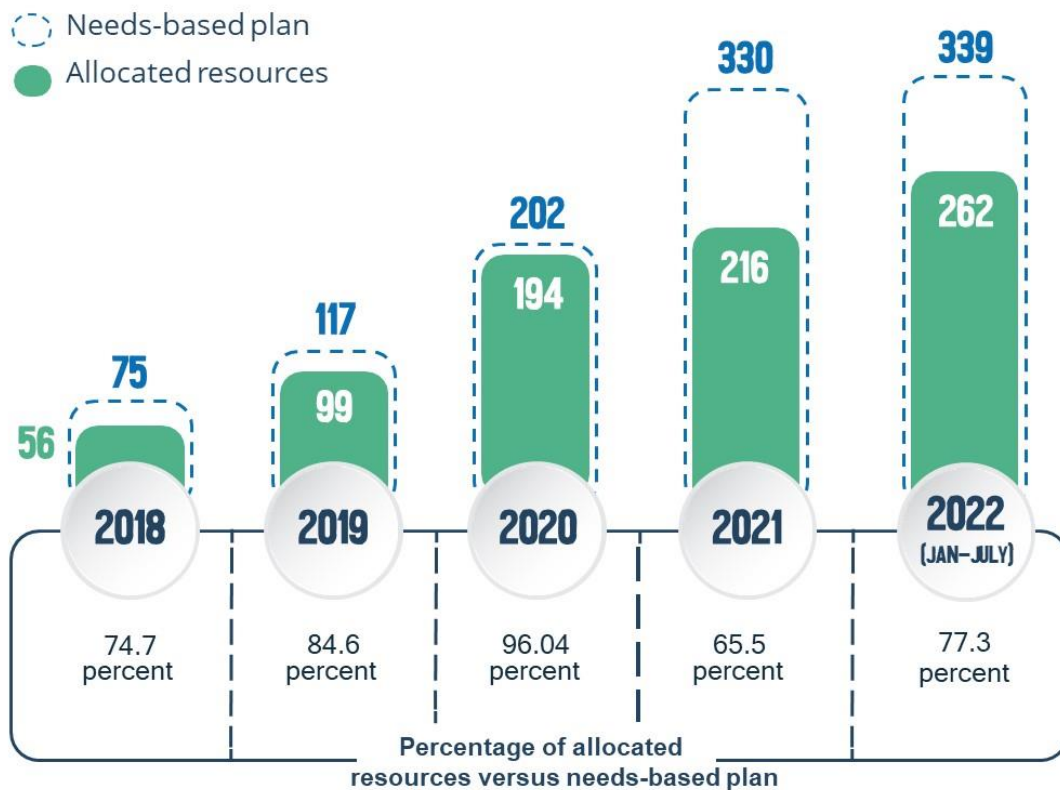
**To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to country strategic plan outputs and strategic outcomes?**

30. WFP's efforts to deliver timely assistance, particularly to IDPs in need of emergency assistance, were appreciated by partners and beneficiary populations, although timeliness varied across activities.
31. Some delays were experienced with lean season distributions, partly due to misalignment between partner strategies including on targeting and partly because of challenges with mobile money platform management. IDP emergency assistance was impeded by registration issues, which left some IDPs without support for months. Nutrition and resilience building activities were negatively affected by insecurity and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on supply chains, with delayed distributions and ration cuts for nutritional food products.
32. The level of financial execution was high until 2020 but decreased from 2021 due to implementation constraints. The country office increased its efficiency by adapting interventions to circumstances and needs, with the selection of cash or in-kind transfers playing a significant role in managing delays.
33. Targeting efficiency and WFP's capacity to manage targeting errors and related risks improved significantly over the period, partly due to digitalization through the deployment of WFP's digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform (SCOPE). Complaint and feedback mechanisms helped identify exclusion errors, although vulnerability criteria remain poorly understood by beneficiaries. The responsibilities of the various stakeholders could be improved, particularly regarding the use of targeting criteria, to avoid tension. The risk of fraud or duplication also reduced significantly during the period thanks to the deployment of SCOPE, which also enhanced the traceability of interventions.

**What are the factors that explain WFP's performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected under the country strategic plan?**

34. The financing of the CSP was balanced thanks to strong resource mobilization, supported by the regional bureau (figure 4). Fundraising relies on WFP's recognized capacities, proactive communication, reporting and high-quality analysis.

**Figure 4: Annual resource mobilization against annual needs-based plans (2018 to mid-2022) (in USD million)**



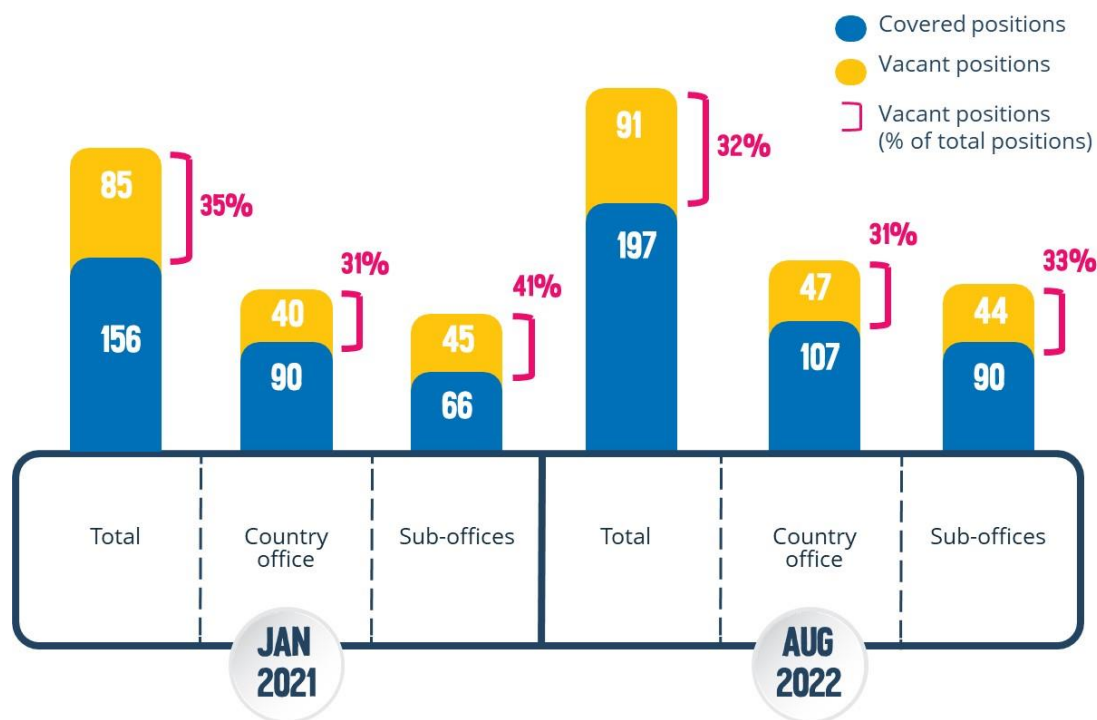
Source: Integrated Road Map Analytics. 2018–2022 (internal source). Annual country reports for [2018](#), [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#) and [2022](#).

35. Facing increased humanitarian needs and growing access constraints, WFP also boosted its data collection and analysis capacities and adapted and diversified its data collection and analysis tools. Data collection for nutrition, school feeding and resilience programmes – areas more dependent on partners' monitoring abilities – suffered considerably from changes in the operating environment. However, WFP makes limited use of analysis to inform operational decisions, and few investments have been made to learn the lessons of strategic choices, for example in emergency operations. Outcome data suffers from validity challenges, particularly for nutrition activities, and resilience work is poorly documented. WFP cannot yet robustly assess its contributions to building national partner capacities for emergency response, in part because its corporate framework is not conducive to this task.
36. As the crisis has intensified, WFP's relations with state partners have evolved both politically and technically. These changes have strategic implications that are not well articulated by WFP. Some partnerships have grown more distant, influenced by humanitarian principles and access considerations, particularly as the increased numbers of IDPs presented operational issues related to registration and targeting. Partnerships with other United Nations entities were facilitated by joint offices yet hampered by disparities in operational capacity. On the other hand, WFP's strategic partnership with the World Bank, aimed at strengthening the links between emergency response and support for national systems, is promising.
37. The crisis led WFP to diversify its cooperating partners and increase its focus on national organizations, who all appreciated the support received to strengthen their technical capacities as part of this process. Operational and reputational risk management have received investment, but security risks are largely transferred to local partners. Efforts to

streamline the contracting of financial service providers coupled with difficult access and security constraints have reduced the pool of available partners and the geographical areas where WFP can use cash transfers.

38. The staffing needs of the country office quadrupled between 2018 and 2022 (figure 5), though recruitment was challenging given competition with other crises and a general shortage of francophone capacities in WFP. Staff security and safety has been a priority for the country office since the beginning of CSP implementation and is perceived as such by staff. The new staffing framework does not facilitate all types of recruitment and conditions are inadequate to facilitate staff retention. Despite the creation of numerous ad hoc positions, inconsistencies remain between the WFP corporate strategy and the human resource arrangements of the country office team, compounding the cumulative effect of recruitment difficulties. Efforts to strengthen staff skills in emergency response management in an insecure operating environment were effective but insufficient.

**Figure 5: Coverage of open positions over 2021 and 2022  
(by country office, sub-office and total in the country)**



Source: WFP Burkina Faso. Organigrams for 2021 and 2022 and data provided by the human resources unit in the country office.

### To what extent has WFP been able to react to and adapt effectively for the implementation of a level 3 emergency response?

39. Although the CSP framework allowed WFP to adapt to dramatic changes in Burkina Faso, the repeated CSP budget revision process was not efficient and impeded the focus on scaling up the response. Combined with somewhat cautious initial adjustments to the country office's human resources, with limited emergency management capacities in place, this constrained the scale-up process required to respond to the escalating emergency.
40. The systems mobilized and the strategic support provided by headquarters and the regional bureau within the framework of the level 3 emergency were decisive in compensating for the limited capacities of the country office, particularly for security crisis management. Regional and headquarters support was also key to mobilizing the financial, logistical and human resources necessary for scaling up the response to the crisis, such as Immediate

Response Account funding and Global Commodity Management Fund financing, which helped enable WFP's timely response and ensured continuity of food supplies.

41. WFP's support to telecommunications and food security and nutrition sector coordination were generally appreciated by partners, but the added value of the logistics cluster was less clear. Support from headquarters and the regional bureau in Dakar was essential in preparing, supporting and developing the country office's response in Burkina Faso over the period under evaluation.

## Conclusions

42. Overall, the CSP provided a flexible vehicle for articulating WFP's operations in Burkina Faso, allowing the organization to readjust from a strategy strongly oriented towards building resilience to climate shocks to a focus on responding to needs and managing risks arising from a security and political crisis. However, initial strategic adjustments were overly reactive, leading to numerous resource-intensive CSP budget revisions. From 2021, WFP implemented a bolder response strategy, which included the ability to rapidly adjust to the changing operating environment while maintaining attention on meeting the long-term needs of IDPs.
43. The shift towards more emergency-focused operations required strategic reorientation and significantly impacted WFP's partnerships and collaboration with state institutions. WFP's repositioning was mainly handled through internal processes and the implications of the strategic shift were not conveyed sufficiently clearly to partners. In crisis-struck regions, WFP has had to carefully manage its coordination with national institutions, including around targeting decisions, to safeguard its operational effectiveness and neutrality. WFP's support has also shifted towards delivering services for other institutions including national organizations, for which capacity gains are not measured. Synergies and efficiency gains with other United Nations entities remain limited, with challenges in operational coordination.
44. WFP has positioned itself as a major player in emergency response for food security, demonstrating strong comparative advantages in emergency preparedness and response and in facilitating humanitarian access. After initial supply and mobilization challenges, WFP was able to implement the required humanitarian response at scale. Targeting IDPs based on vulnerability criteria and reducing rations allowed WFP to maintain broad coverage despite budget constraints, although the division of roles and responsibilities among stakeholders in relation to targeting remained a source of tension. The decision to reduce IDP rations over prolonged periods of time, combined with the constant deterioration of the security situation, also helps to explain the continued rise in food insecurity.
45. By strengthening its cash transfer delivery capacity from the end of 2020, WFP has enhanced the efficiency and the relevance of its actions. The scale-up of cash transfers was associated with the rollout of SCOPE, which further enhanced the traceability of interventions. On the other hand, efforts to streamline the contracting of financial service providers coupled with difficult access and security constraints reduced the pool of partners and the geographical areas where WFP could use cash transfers, with negative effects on inclusiveness.
46. Targeting has been and remains a major challenge for humanitarian actors in Burkina Faso due to the scale of the crisis and resulting insecurity. The relevance of geographical targeting relies on WFP's capacity to analyse information and on efforts to maintain or improve access to insecure areas. Access constraints have particularly affected resilience building interventions, and the crisis has negatively impacted the achievement of medium and long-term objectives, raising questions about the relevance of some intervention strategies under the changed conditions.

47. The separation of school feeding and malnutrition management interventions under emergency (strategic outcome 1) and resilience building (strategic outcomes 2 and 3) objectives has supported resource mobilization but has been detrimental to the clarity of the plan and the pursuit of a clear strategic line regarding sectoral objectives and capacity building. Under the integrated resilience package, some actions have suffered from the combined impact of insecurity, COVID-19 and political crises, culminating in disappointing results and raising questions concerning their continued relevance.
48. Despite slow establishment of United Nations Humanitarian Air Service operations, WFP was effective overall in fulfilling its service provider commitments to humanitarian actors and state institutions, although the contribution of these services to the effectiveness of the national and international humanitarian response are poorly measured. More broadly, better use can be made of analysis to inform operational decisions and learn the lessons of strategic choices across the country portfolio.
49. WFP has significant ambitions regarding accountability, protection, conflict sensitivity and gender mainstreaming in Burkina Faso and has implemented interventions accordingly. However, strategies have failed to be transformative and gender-related efforts have suffered from a lack of dedicated human resources until recently.
50. With regional and headquarters support, WFP has been effective in mobilizing financial resources, which are sufficiently diversified to allow a balanced implementation of the CSP. However, in the rapidly changing environment marked by crises, staff mobilization, retention and training have posed challenges for strategic adjustment and programme implementation.

## Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<b>1</b>	<b>WFP should continue investing in its preparedness for future shocks.</b>	Strategic				
1.1	Continue emergency preparedness work by developing crisis scenarios and anticipated impacts. For each scenario, WFP should identify challenges and the best strategic approach.		Country office (emergencies unit)	Country office (management team and heads of unit); heads of sub-offices	High	First half of 2023
1.2	Continue to strengthen the risk management system, particularly regarding the unintended impacts of geographical and individual targeting of assistance; the use of escorts; stakeholder discussions; the selection of cooperating partners; partnerships with public institutions to address the impacts of the security crisis; and inter-agency coordination.		Country office (risk management unit)	Other country office units (emergencies, partnerships, programme, security); regional bureau units (risk management, emergency preparedness and response)	High	First half of 2023
1.3	In view of the evolution of the crisis, develop WFP's operational capacities in urban areas (activities adapted to urban livelihoods, partnerships with municipalities, targeting, transfer modalities, etc.)		Country office (programme unit)	Regional bureau (programme and emergency preparedness and response units)	High	By the end of 2023
1.4	Establish more framework contracts with local service providers and cooperating partners in areas vulnerable to shocks (security shocks and natural disasters) to reduce procurement delays and therefore improve the speed of response.		Country office (supply chain unit)	Other country office units (emergencies, cash-based transfer)	High	First half of 2023



#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
2	<b>WFP should develop its humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach by giving priority to operational and technical support.</b>	Strategic				
2.1	Support the development of a national strategy designed to empower internally displaced persons and returnees and a corresponding theory of change common to all relevant United Nations entities, and then identify and facilitate its implementation.		Country office (programme unit)	Country office (management team, emergencies, protection, and research, assessment and monitoring units)	High	By the end of 2023
2.2	Sharpen the definition of the synergies between strategic outcomes, particularly between outcomes related to emergency response and the others. To this end, WFP should specify the conditions under which emergency assistance provided for internally displaced persons and returnees shifts to medium-term support and how internally displaced persons assistance can contribute to local economic development and support local food systems.		Country office (programme unit)	Country office (emergencies unit); regional bureau (programme unit)	Medium	Before the next CSP
2.3	Given the national political and institutional situation, give priority to providing technical support for operational bodies of the State and to local authorities in order to facilitate access to basic services (including social protection) for internally displaced persons, returnees and vulnerable members of host communities, fostering political and strategic dialogue at the central level.		Country office (programme unit)	Country office management	High	Immediate, in line with the decisions of the United Nations country team
2.4	Clearly define WFP's objectives in relation to the triple nexus in the next country strategic plan. Do this with the support of experts in peacekeeping and social protection, if necessary.		Country office (programme unit)	Country office management; regional bureau (programme unit)	Medium	Before the next CSP

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
3	<b>In the area of partnerships, WFP should take a more structured approach to localization, be more proactive in its communication with government institutions and be more consistent in its relations with other United Nations entities.</b>	Strategic				
3.1	Strengthen engagement with local cooperating partners, who should be more involved in programmatic decisions and better supported with capacity strengthening, particularly in relation to identifying and managing risks, to ensure that crisis response is embedded in their work plans and that they have the capacities needed to achieve this.		Country office (partnerships unit)	Country office (programme, emergencies and security units)	High	By the end of 2023
3.2	Improve communication on strategic adjustments made during country strategic plan implementation to clarify the implications of these changes and ensure that stakeholders, including governments, understand them.		Country office (management team)	Country office (emergencies and programme units)	Medium	By the approval of a new budget revision or before the next CSP
3.3	Within the United Nations system, develop more coherent partnerships and more effective inter-agency interventions based on agencies' respective mandates in order to retain control of WFP's various commitments.		Country office (management team)	Country office (emergencies and programme units)	High	By the end of 2023

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
4	<b>In its efforts to ensure accountability, WFP should engage in broader communication about its programmes, targeting and feedback mechanisms, design more gender-transformative interventions and promote financial inclusion.</b>	Operational				
4.1	Streamline the complaint and feedback system as part of the coordination of humanitarian action, clearly identifying protection issues.		Country office (research, assessment and monitoring unit)	Country office (protection and programme units)	High	By the end of 2023
4.2	Regarding the organization of the country office, the research, assessment and monitoring unit should consider accountability in order to improve its cross-functionality and link it more clearly to monitoring and evaluation and ultimately to programme quality.		Country office (management team)	Country office (research, assessment and monitoring, protection and programme units)	High	First half of 2023
4.3	Endeavour to be more transformative in the approach to gender issues, including by challenging gender stereotypes through the design of livelihoods interventions.		Country office (gender unit)	Country office (programme unit)	High	Before the next CSP
4.4	Continue to promote the use of mobile money transfers including for households that do not have a phone or mobile money account. WFP should continue to encourage households that have identity cards to register with Orange Money. In parallel, WFP should explore the use of other payment mechanisms, for example using SMART cards, which do not require households to hold identity cards (for amounts below CFA 200,000).		Country office (cash-based transfer unit)	Country office (emergencies unit, management team and technology unit)	Medium	By the end of 2023

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
4.5	Invest more in communication regarding the process and criteria used to target internally displaced persons and host community households, particularly for activities related to emergency assistance. Communication should include messages tailored to cooperating partners, the operators of the feedback mechanism, households and the <i>Conseil National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation</i> .		Country office (programme unit)	Country office (research, assessment and monitoring, and protection units); sub-offices	High	First half of 2023
<b>5</b>	<b>WFP should ensure that programmatic and strategic decisions are based more firmly on available evidence and analysis, and the research, assessment and monitoring unit data should be used more effectively to inform operational and strategic decision making.</b>	Operational				
5.1	Invest more in evaluating strategic and programmatic decisions <sup>13</sup> in the context of the crisis, the rapid changes of which are affecting the implementation and impact of WFP operations. Decisions should be reviewed more regularly based on the evidence and data collected.		Country office (research, assessment and monitoring unit)	Country office (management team, emergencies and programme units)	High	First half of 2023, then to be continued
5.2	Improve the internal use of data collected and reports produced (dashboard, third-party monitoring data) for operational and strategic decision making (e.g. market monitoring data should also be used to analyse and track the suitability of cash transfers in addition to producing generic bulletins in collaboration with the Government).		Country office (programme unit)	Country office (research, assessment and monitoring, technology (SCOPE), and emergencies units and management team)	High	First half of 2023, then to be continued

<sup>13</sup> Such as decisions to impose blanket ration cuts, use vulnerability-based targeting or focus on "buffer" zones for resilience-building activities.

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
5.3	Strengthen the local and central use of monitoring and evaluation analyses. At the sub-office level, the sub-office manager and the programme teams should take part in analysing monitoring and evaluation data and related decision making. At the central level, WFP should make greater use of outcome monitoring to stimulate discussion between activity managers and management. The field knowledge of monitoring staff and the third-party monitoring entities can be better exploited by systematically involving them in the monthly monitoring meetings held at sub-offices.		Country office management team; sub-offices	Country office (research, assessment and monitoring, programme and emergencies units)	High	First half of 2023, then to be continued
5.4	Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the assumptions that underpin WFP's intervention logic, and the monitoring framework for outcomes related to country capacity strengthening and service provision for other humanitarian actors.		Country office (research, assessment and monitoring unit)	Country office (programme unit); regional bureau (research, assessment and monitoring unit) with support from headquarters team in charge of the corporate results framework	Medium	Before the next CSP
<b>6</b>	<b>Given the recruitment challenges faced in West Africa, new investments should be made in the management and structure of WFP's human resources in Burkina Faso in order to facilitate the scale-up of operations.</b>	Operational				
6.1	Review the structure of the country office, with the support of the regional bureau. The review should assess and restructure the office, which has developed organically and needs to be redesigned in light of likely crisis scenarios and future WFP operations.		Country office (human resources unit)	Regional bureau (human resources unit)	High	First half of 2023

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
6.2	Continue efforts to improve well-being at work in order to foster staff retention, focusing on working and rest conditions and advocacy on related aspects of the United Nations system.		Country office (human resources unit)	Country office management team; regional bureau (human resources unit)	Medium	By the end of 2023
6.3	Strengthen its recruitment capacities in response to urgent needs at all levels by increasing the presence of French-speaking staff in headquarters rosters; accelerating the deployment of regional rosters and improving training for national staff to facilitate their integration into these regional rosters; and investing in the establishment of rosters of national candidates in Burkina Faso.		Country office (human resources unit)	Country office management team; regional bureau (human resources unit); headquarters (Human Resources Division)	High	A national roster to be created by the end of 2023; work should then continue on rosters at the headquarters and regional bureau levels



**Acronyms**

COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization
SCOPE	WFP's digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform
T-ICSP	transitional interim country strategic plan
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees