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Management response to the recommendations from the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Cambodia (2019–2023)

Background

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for Cambodia for 2019–2023.
2. The evaluation was conducted between May 2022 and April 2023 and covered WFP's activities in the period from 2018 to September 2022, assessing the quality of the CSP design process and progress made towards the intended strategic changes.
3. Taking a utilization-focused, consultative approach, the evaluation served the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informed the preparation of a new CSP.
4. The evaluation made five recommendations, two of which are strategic and three operational.
5. The response sets out whether WFP management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with the evaluation recommendations and sub-recommendations, and presents the planned (or completed) actions, responsibilities and timelines for implementing those recommendations. In general, the country office agrees with the recommendations but has adjusted the deadlines for the completion of some, based on the planned actions.

Focal points:

Ms C. Conan
Country Director
email: claire.conan@wfp.org

Mr J. Aylieff
Regional Director
Asia and the Pacific
email: john.aylieff@wfp.org

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUMMARY REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CAMBODIA (2019–2023)						
Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Responsible WFP office or division (with supporting offices and divisions in brackets)	Management response	Actions to be taken	Action lead office or division (with supporting offices and divisions in brackets)	Deadline for completion	Status of implementation
Priority: High Deadline: In the design of the new CSP - November 2023 1. Strategic framing of the new country strategic plan: WFP should refine the strategic focus of the next country strategic plan in order to strengthen the integration of inclusive activities, maximize effectiveness across development and humanitarian work, link shock-responsive social protection to climate change adaptation and ground the design of the country strategic plan on WFP's comparative advantages.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters Programme Cycle Management Unit)	Agreed				
1.1 WFP should consider framing the next country strategic plan in a more holistic way, with more activities clustered under strategic outcomes that have an overarching narrative both within each strategic outcome and among strategic outcomes. While the school feeding programme will remain a large financial and operational component of the overall programme, WFP should ensure that school feeding is positioned within a broader social protection framework, linking country capacity strengthening to the strategy for	Country office senior management	Agreed	The country office will direct due attention to the framing of the upcoming CSP so that activities are clustered under strategic outcomes, a more holistic narrative is presented within and among strategic outcomes, and the school feeding programme is positioned within a broader social protection framework linked to country capacity strengthening.	Country office senior management	August 2023	Completed

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transitioning to a government-owned home-grown school feeding programme in order support coherence across the portfolio. (In the design of the new CSP – November 2023)						
1.2 The framing of the next country strategic plan should include a specific, highlighted focus on shock-responsive social protection, linking it to climate change adaptation as part of food security and nutrition resilience and building on WFP's current activities and direction. (In the design of the new CSP – November 2023)	Country office senior management	Agreed	In designing the upcoming CSP, the country office will direct due attention to including a specific focus on shock-responsive social protection that builds on past activities and is linked to efforts to build resilience to climate change and enhance food security and nutrition.	Country office senior management	August 2023	Completed
1.3 The new framing should embed gender, inclusion and protection considerations into all strategic outcomes (see recommendation 5). (In the design of the new CSP – November 2023)	Country office senior management	Agreed	In designing the upcoming CSP, the country office will direct due attention to embedding gender, inclusion and protection issues into all strategic outcomes.	Country office senior management	August 2023	Completed

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1.4 Building on the current country office staffing structure, WFP should identify and leverage internal synergies among all strategic outcomes and various activities, noting that a change in structure is a helpful first step in this, but that bringing change to ways of working takes time and does not necessarily happen automatically. The country office should consider what is necessary, including communications and opportunities for cross team collaboration, and ensure that by the time implementation of the next country strategic plan starts, there are more genuine linkages among the various areas of work, supported by and embedded in the new staffing structure. (November 2023)	Country office senior management	Agreed	In the lead-up to the new CSP, the country office will test various approaches that facilitate communication and will seek opportunities for cross-team collaboration, including meetings dedicated to the coordination of CSP outcomes, and more regular meetings between the country office and sub-offices.	Country office senior management	August 2023	Completed

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Priority: Medium Deadline: November 2028 – the end of the new CSP period 2. Operationalization of the new country strategic plan: Supported by a strong foundation based on evidence generation, WFP should build on the achievements of the current country strategic plan by leveraging the newly identified linkages across the three pillars and should focus on building evidence-based systems and structures to inform country strategic plan implementation and management in a timely manner.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters)	Agreed				
2.1 In the next country strategic plan, WFP should build on the successful restructuring of the current country strategic plan under the three pillars, with explicit linkages among pillars, including shock-responsive social protection activities under both the social protection and the integrated risk management pillars, and food security and nutrition as an overarching concept as well as a standalone pillar, as it is the core mandate of WFP. (In the design of the new CSP – November 2023)	Country office senior management	Agreed	In formulating the upcoming CSP, the country office will direct due attention to the inclusion of shock-responsive social protection in the social protection and integrated risk management pillars, and to food security and nutrition as an overarching concept as well as a standalone pillar.	Country office senior management	August 2023	Completed

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2.2 WFP should prioritize the setting up of the necessary systems and processes to ensure that the newly structured research, assessment and monitoring unit is able to provide equal levels of support under all strategic outcomes for informing decision-making in a timely manner and contributing to learning. (December 2023)	Country office senior management and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	The research, assessment and monitoring unit workplan will be updated to ensure that research, assessment and monitoring are supported under all strategic outcomes.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit	September 2023	Not started
			The evidence generation agenda will be finalized based on inputs from all programme activities.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit	December 2023	Under way
			A comprehensive framework for the monitoring and evaluation of country capacity strengthening interventions will be developed, with equal attention directed to all strategic outcomes.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit	April 2024	Under way
2.3 WFP should take the necessary steps to ensure that all the evidence produced from research, assessment and monitoring is fully gender-, inclusion- and protection-sensitive, beyond the simple gender disaggregation of data, and that it provides meaningful analysis of gender, inclusion and protection dimensions. (November 2028 – the end of the new CSP period)	Country office Deputy Country Director, gender focal point and programme and research, assessment and monitoring units	Agreed	Gender and protection dimensions will be fully integrated into a qualitative study that follows up on the school feeding outcome monitoring analysis of 2023.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit	April 2024	Not started

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			Gender and protection dimensions will be fully integrated into the baseline and the knowledge, attitude and practice surveys carried out in preparation for the resilience and nutrition programme.	Country office programme unit (research, assessment and monitoring unit)	August 2023	Completed
			Gender dimensions will be fully mainstreamed into the monitoring and evaluation system, including at the outcome level.	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit (gender focal point)	April 2024	Under way
Priority: Medium Deadline: June 2024 3. Partnerships: WFP should develop an overall partnership strategy focused on the sustainability of results. The strategy should be coherent with the various partnerships that WFP has in Cambodia – with the Government, other United Nations entities, civil society and the private sector – and, in line with recommendations 1 and 2, it should explicitly highlight the opportunities for linkages and alignment across various strategic outcomes and partnerships.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters partnerships function)	Agreed				

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3.1 WFP should build on its current strong relationships with various government entities to identify and maximize the linkages among strategic outcomes within WFP and its relationships with government partners related to various areas of work, in line with increasing internal synergies. (In the overall partnership strategy – by June 2024)	Country office senior management, partnerships officer, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	The country office will direct due consideration to maximizing the linkages and synergies between WFP and government partners under all strategic outcomes. This will be reflected in the upcoming country office partnership and resourcing strategy.	Country office partnership officer	December 2023	Under way
			To enhance synergies, the country office will hold biannual meetings with representatives of the Government involved in the areas of work linked to all WFP strategic outcomes.	Country office senior management (partnerships officer and heads of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit)	June 2024	Not started
3.2 WFP should build on its current good partnerships with other United Nations entities, ensuring that linkages and WFP's contributions and areas of leadership are embedded in the new United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework and that WFP's close relationship with the other Rome-based agencies is maximized. (In the overall partnership strategy – by June 2024)	Country office senior management, partnerships officer, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	The country office will ensure that the CSP is derived from the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF).	Country office senior management	November 2023	Under way

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			The country office will ensure that WFP's contribution and leadership are considered within the emerging United Nations architecture of support for UNSDCF implementation.	Country office senior management	December 2023	Under way
			The country office will continue to advocate with the other Rome-based agencies on the establishment of a strategic framework for collaboration, based on the corporate memorandum of understanding signed by the three agencies in August 2023.	Country office senior management (partnerships officer)	June 2024	Under way
3.3 WFP should build on its current partnerships with civil society, the private sector and academia, ensuring that – as part of a partnership strategy – those partners are clearly recognized as key to achieving the sustainability of results alongside the Government. (In the overall partnership strategy – by June 2024)	Country office senior management, partnerships officer, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	In its partnership strategy, the country office will provide guidance on how partners from civil society, academia and the private sector can be recognized as key actors in ensuring the sustainability of results, alongside the Government.	Country office senior management, partnerships officer, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	June 2024	Not started

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3.4 WFP should explore the broadening of the donor base, particularly with a view to strengthening support for the Government's capacity to implement and manage priority programmes under the funding to financing agenda. (In the overall partnership strategy – by June 2024)	Country office senior management and partnerships officer	Agreed	The country office will consider ways of positioning WFP to support the shift from funding to financing as part of its partnership and resourcing strategy for guiding efforts to broaden the donor base.	Country office senior management and partnerships officer	June 2024	Under way
3.5 In the partnership strategy, WFP should include a clear monitoring plan that ensures the visibility of results from various partnership types and informs robust management decision-making with regard to continued and new partnerships. (In the overall partnership strategy – by June 2024)	Country office senior management, partnerships officer and monitoring and evaluation team	Agreed	The country office will include a clear monitoring plan in its partnership and resourcing strategy.	Country office senior management, partnerships officer and monitoring and evaluation team	June 2024	Under way

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Priority: High Deadline: November 2023 4. WFP support for the Government: WFP should develop an overarching conceptual framework for its support for the Government based on the mapping of existing national capacity needs and strengthened partner coordination, customizing and contextualizing the corporate policy framework and in line with updated corporate guidance and the corporate results framework for 2022–2025.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters Country Capacity Strengthening Unit)	Agreed				
4.1 The country office should develop an overarching conceptual framework for the provision of support to the Government that is aligned with corporate key documents and applicable to all relevant strategic outcomes in the next CSP. The framework should be used to ensure that all WFP staff have a consistent understanding of WFP's work in support of the Government at the national and subnational levels. (November 2023)	Country office Deputy Country Director, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	To guide its support for government partners under the next CSP, the country office will develop a country capacity strengthening strategy that is aligned with the global strategy and encompasses all strategic outcomes. This will be done with support from the regional bureau and headquarters. The strategy will be complemented by a measurement framework that incorporates indicators from the corporate results framework or specific to the country office.	Country office Deputy Country Director, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	November 2023	Under way

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			To ensure that all staff have a common and consistent understanding of its country capacity strengthening strategy, the country office will train all relevant staff members in its approach to the provision of technical support to government partners at the national and sub-national levels, and the role of country capacity strengthening under the new CSP.	Country office Deputy Country Director, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	November 2023	Under way
4.2 WFP should build on the capacity needs and mapping exercises conducted for the current CSP, but with more systematic and predictable planned processes in place to ensure that the exercises are fully used as implementation and monitoring guides. (November 2023)	Country office Deputy Country Director and research, assessment and monitoring, and programme units	Agreed	The country office will establish a process that ensures the systematic review or mapping of capacity needs prior to the signature of agreements with partners in country capacity strengthening. The process will include milestones for monitoring progress.	Country office programme unit (research, assessment and monitoring unit)	November 2023	Not started
4.3 The country office should ensure that there is documented evidence from the piloting of new corporate indicators that the country office has volunteered to take part in with the regional bureau. WFP should ensure that learning from the piloting process includes documentation of the support received	Country office Deputy Country Director, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	The country office will document evidence from the recently piloted corporate indicators, including country capacity strengthening and gender outcome indicators. The office will make available to all staff, relevant partners and the	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit	November 2023	Under way

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and the future support required from the regional bureau, and of the lessons learned from and for all upstream strategic outcomes. (November 2023)			regional bureau the documented evidence, including lessons learned and indications of the support that will be required in the future.			
4.4 WFP should use the learning from the current utilization of capacity needs mapping exercises, the learning from the piloting exercise on corporate indicators and the process of developing the new country strategic plan to develop a comprehensive systems-building approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the support provided to the Government by WFP under the various strategic outcomes, including the related theories of change, capacity needs assessments and monitoring and evaluation plans. Monitoring and evaluation plans should be based on monitoring at various output and outcome levels, such as those assessing pre- and post-test knowledge, and more sophisticated measurements (developed with the support of the regional bureau and headquarters) for outcome-level results, within the parameters of corporate frameworks (see recommendation 4). (November 2023)	Country office Deputy Country Director, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit (regional bureau and headquarters)	Agreed	The country office will use evidence and lessons learned from capacity needs mapping, indicator piloting and the CSP design process to inform the development of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system that is based on a sound theory of change and measures the results of the country capacity strengthening support provided to government partners, under various strategic outcomes and at various result levels. In consultation with headquarters, the country office will also explore more complex evaluation methods such as outcome harvesting and the use of the most significant change to measure outcome-level changes.	Country office Deputy Country Director, head of programme and research, assessment and monitoring unit (regional bureau and headquarters)	March 2024	Under way

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4.5 The country office should take the necessary steps to ensure that gender, inclusion and protection considerations are embedded in the overarching conceptual framework for the provision of support to the Government. (November 2023)	Country office Deputy Country Director, gender focal point and research, assessment and monitoring unit	Agreed	In formulating the new CSP, the country office will consider ways of including gender, inclusion and protection dimensions as part of its enabling role of supporting the Government.	Deputy Country Director	November 2023	Under way
Priority: High Deadline: In the design of the new CSP – November 2023 5. Cross-cutting issues: WFP should strengthen and mainstream gender-transformative approaches, inclusion and accountability to affected populations in the design and implementation of the new country strategic plan as much as possible, while remaining aligned with corporate guidance.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters Gender Equality Office and programme function)	Agreed				

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5.1 The country office should ensure that gender, inclusion and disability considerations are fully incorporated into the design of the next country strategic plan, along with the corporate cross cutting indicators that cover those considerations, including those that look beyond physical disabilities. The considerations should be: ➤ applicable to all strategic outcomes and activities in the country strategic plan; and ➤ supported by meaningful output and outcome indicators. The cross-cutting issues incorporated into the next country strategic plan should be aligned with WFP's corporate direction, including the cross-cutting indicators in the corporate results framework for 2022–2025. (During the design of the new CSP, by November 2023)	Country office Deputy Country Director, gender and inclusion officer and programme units	Agreed	In designing the next CSP, the country office will direct due attention to incorporating gender, inclusion and disability considerations, with relevant output and outcome indicators, under all strategic outcomes.	Deputy Country Director	November 2023	Under way
			The country office will include all relevant indicators of inclusion, accountability to affected populations (AAP) and gender in the monitoring, review and evaluation plan for the upcoming CSP. It will also include other corporate gender indicators piloted in Cambodia by the country office, as they become corporately available.	Research, assessment and monitoring unit	November 2023	Under way

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5.2 With support from the regional bureau, the country office should ensure that the most up-to-date accountability to affected populations complaints and feedback mechanisms are in place for strategic outcomes with tier 1 beneficiaries. (November 2023)	Country office Deputy Country Director, AAP officer, research, assessment and monitoring unit and relevant programme units	Agreed	With support from the regional bureau, the country office will review and update its complaints and feedback mechanisms for ensuring AAP.	AAP officer	November 2023	Under way
			Following that review, the country office will update its standard operating procedures for AAP and share them with all staff and partners.	AAP officer	November 2023	Under way
			Country office staff and partners will be trained on the revised standard operating procedures.	AAP officer	November 2023	Under way