



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

Executive Board
First regular session
Rome, 26–28 February 2024

Distribution: General

Agenda item 5

Date: 11 December 2023

WFP/EB.1/2024/5-A/2/Add.1

Original: English

Evaluation reports

For consideration

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Management response to the recommendations from the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Madagascar (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 Madagascar for 2019–2023.
2. The evaluation was conducted between April 2022 and April 2023 and covered WFP's strategy, interventions and systems in place between 2018 and September 2022.
3. Taking a utilization-focused and consultative approach, the evaluation served accountability purposes and generated learning to inform the preparation of a new CSP for Madagascar.
4. The evaluation team made five recommendations, of which one is strategic and four are operational.
5. The response sets out whether WFP management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with each evaluation recommendation and sub-recommendation and presents the 30 planned (or completed) actions together with the responsibilities and timelines for their implementation. In some instances, the country office has agreed to a recommendation while proposing a different timeline to ensure consistency between actions and to facilitate implementation.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUMMARY REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MADAGASCAR (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
<p>Recommendation 1: Invest in one of the country office's comparative advantages that is less often highlighted: integrated risk management, including preparedness. Centring the line of sight for the next country strategic plan on integrated risk management would help the country office to “get back to basics” and invest more in institutional capacity strengthening over the next five years, with very tangible results. Once the new line of sight has been formulated, and the Government actively assumes its role, the next country strategic plan can be transformed into a robust portfolio for resilience building.</p> <p>Priority: High Deadline: March 2024</p>	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau/ headquarters technical units)	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>The country office disagrees with the formulation of the recommendation, specifically the phrase “would help WFP Madagascar get back to basics”. This is not correct as the CSP for 2019–2023 already focuses on government capacity building including through the provision of logistical and financial support for the National Office for Disaster Management. The country office further notes that the expression “once it is done” indicates that the previous action must be completed before the next is begun; however, the CSP for 2019–2023 already contains a large resilience-building portfolio.</p>				

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1.1 Plan and implement preparedness work in a more consolidated manner through integrated risk management, forecast-based funding, anticipatory action, risk transfer and insurance, and stronger, more clearly defined capacity strengthening interventions for all the key Government actors involved in the response.	Country office	Agreed	1. The country office will work with the Government to develop an institutional capacity building strategy on shock and disaster preparedness, including the emergency preparedness capacity indicator process, which will be the reference in integrated risk management for all projects and stakeholders.	Country office programme unit (headquarters capacity strengthening unit/regional bureau capacity strengthening unit)	September 2024	Not started
			2. The new CSP will be formulated to integrate sub recommendation 1.1, with focus on preparedness.	Country office management	July 2023	Completed
			3. In the area of anticipatory action, the country office will identify specific early action triggers for each type of risk and prepare related action plans according to the affected areas for which there are already resources allocated for rapid response.	Country office resilience unit (regional bureau anticipatory action unit)	March 2024	Under way

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1.2 Position the humanitarian response in relation to the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. Work with development actors to assess and strengthen their capacity to take responsibility for relevant aspects of the humanitarian response from the outset or design of the response and identify when and how both humanitarian and development activities will lead to collective outcomes.	Country office management and relevant country office units	Agreed	4. In collaboration with the resident coordinator’s office and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, WFP will work with other United Nations entities and development partners to establish a plan for implementing a humanitarian–development nexus approach in the humanitarian response, with an accent on coordination between humanitarian assistance and development actions.	Country office management with programme unit	September 2024	Under way
			5. The country office will leverage the inter-agency coordination group and food security and livelihood cluster to adjust ongoing actions and improve coordination between humanitarian and development agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme.	Country office management with the country office research, assessment and monitoring (RAM) unit	March 2024	Under way

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1.3 Through a joint capacity strengthening strategy (shared with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction or other partners) and a WFP exit strategy, hold the Government accountable for clear results, as evidence of ownership, within a results-based management framework. Refer to the capacity development work of the Lesotho country office for inspiration.	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau technical units)	Partially agreed “Exit strategy” cannot be applied in the context of Madagascar for the next five years CSP but rather to contribute to sustainability of actions with a gradual transfer of capacity to Government.	6. WFP will develop a capacity building strategy for CSP actors and stakeholders. This strategy will include an organizational and institutional diagnosis and a joint capacity building plan.	Country office programme unit (regional bureau capacity strengthening unit)	September 2024	Not started
			7. The country office will approach the country capacity strengthening unit at the regional bureau to explore the Lesotho case study on capacity development and examine how it can be adapted to Madagascar.	Regional bureau capacity strengthening unit	September 2024	Not started

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<p>Recommendation 2: Establish and orchestrate an advocacy programme for the establishment of an enabling environment at the government level for integrated risk management, including crisis preparedness and response. In the programme, detail the objectives in terms of funding, institutional set-up, policies and – especially – the budgets needed for the Government to take autonomous responsibility for protecting people and saving lives through crisis preparedness and response. In addition, specify how WFP will work to promote and support the necessary changes.</p> <p>Priority: Medium Deadline: January 2024</p>	Country office management and relevant country office units	Agreed	1. The country office will implement the annual action plan established with government institutions and decentralized structures (including the National Office for Disaster Management and partner ministries) as part of the national-level preparation for and response to emergencies related to risks and disasters.	Country office programme unit (other country office units: country capacity strengthening, information technology, support)	March 2024	Under way

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			2. The country office will ensure that the CSP for 2024–2028 integrates the strategy on increasing the transfer of capacity and funds to the Government through the use of national social protection systems, working with the <i>Fonds d'intervention pour le développement</i> , the Ministry of Population, Social Protection and Women's Empowerment and others).	Country office management (country office technical unit)	July 2023	Completed
			3. The country office will promote capacity building projects for government institutions involved in disaster preparedness and response that improve their human resources structure and staffing capacity and their logistic capacity in relation to infrastructure, materials and other matters.	Country office management (country office technical unit)	April 2024	Under way

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<p>Recommendation 3: Establish a stronger evidence base for determining the value of WFP's activities beyond humanitarian response. This would allow WFP to demonstrate its performance more convincingly in other sectors (primarily resilience building) with a view to informing the funding decisions of partners and donors. Use the many resilience actions that have recently been funded as an opportunity to enrich the evidence base.</p> <p>Priority: Medium Deadline: Continuing</p>	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau/ headquarters technical units)	Agreed				

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3.1 Conduct a multi-site cost-benefit analysis of preparedness activities, including community-level, government and WFP actions.	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau technical units)	Agreed	1. In collaboration with WFP, the Economic Commission for Africa will conduct cost-benefit and impact analyses for rapid rural transformation (RRT) sites (through the Economic Commission for Africa study) and take a more systematic approach to such analyses for regular programmes such as home-grown school feeding, the integrated approach to fighting malnutrition and the implementation of resilience activities (through decentralized evaluations and a systems dynamics study).	Country office management with monitoring and evaluation/RAM (regional evaluation unit)	December 2024	Under way

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3.2 Monitor and promote the ways in which WFP's investment in preparedness reduces, on average, the need for humanitarian response funding over the period of CSP implementation.	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau technical units)	Agreed	2. The country office will use the studies and evaluations mentioned in point 1 above to show the results of investing in preparedness in terms of reducing humanitarian costs by embedding the study results in regular country office reports, such as annual country reports, advocacy papers and appeals.	Country office communication and partnership unit with activity managers and RAM unit (regional bureau reporting units)	December 2024	Under way
3.3 Produce a robust, evaluative proof of concept for any resilience activities, including traditional food assistance for assets interventions and ongoing pilots, to determine whether they merit expansion. Work closely with donors to this end and compare the findings with similar work being undertaken in parallel by partners.	Country office management (relevant country office units)	Agreed	3. The country office will carry out robust joint evaluations of resilience activities to demonstrate and learn about their effectiveness and to better plan the scale up of such activities.	Country office RAM unit (monitoring and evaluation function) with programme unit (regional bureau evaluation unit)	June 2025	Not started
			4. The country office will conduct capacity strengthening sessions for WFP cooperating partners to transfer knowledge and skills to establish a culture of capitalizing on achievements.	Country office RAM unit (country office programme unit)	December 2024	Not started

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Recommendation 4: Develop, deliver (according to which modules are required) and monitor an awareness programme that encourages WFP staff to consider more carefully the potentially harmful impacts of humanitarian and development assistance. Based on the examples presented in this evaluation report, carefully consider the potential for people-centred and locally driven solutions, while taking into account the concept of “do no harm”. Provide staff with guidance to encourage them to learn and practise good habits based on a better understanding of	Country office management (relevant country office units)	Agreed	1. The country office will recruit a full-time protection officer who will be dedicated to the coordination and implementation of all aspects related to the protection of targeted populations and the “do no harm” approach.	Management with human resources unit	December 2023	Under way
			2. The country office will adapt and strengthen the community feedback mechanisms to emphasize the community aspect and ensure a consistent response to the feedback received.	Country office programme unit (headquarters Sugar CRM team)	March 2024	Under way

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<p>the social dynamics of each community, better knowledge of the risks of dependency, and ways of reducing them, and awareness of the dynamics created by wearing the WFP logo. Set up a capacity development programme that includes face-to-face sessions with videos (in a training-for-trainers format), written modules (for self-paced training) and, if budgets allow, an online module that is required for all staff. Note that this can also serve as an important model for other countries in which WFP is active.</p> <p>Priority: High Deadline: December 2023</p>			<p>3. WFP will provide training and systematic awareness-raising sessions on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, accountability to affected populations, gender issues and the “do no harm” approach for all stakeholders including WFP staff and cooperating and governmental partners.</p>	Country office programme unit (regional bureau and headquarters to support the design of information-education-communication tools)	March 2024	Under way

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<p>Recommendation 5: Establish or reactivate an internal unit or permanent or temporary committee that oversees vision and integration within the country office. This new unit would aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ develop, maintain and monitor the links among the strategic outcomes established in future CSPs; ➤ ensure that field offices and antennae are closely associated with and share the same vision and objectives; and ➤ ensure that all staff have the required skills that reflect the values and technical scope of such vision. <p>Priority: Medium Deadline: March 2024</p>	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau/ headquarters technical units)	Agreed		Management and country office programme team	November 2023	Completed The country office refocused its regular strategic meetings through a predefined agenda aimed at producing an integrated overview of programmes and programmatic issues.

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5.1 <i>Human resources</i> : Change the contracts for special service agreements so as to allow staff to work for a minimum of two to three years and, generally, to reduce staff turnover at the country office level. In addition, invest in new staff profiles and training so that staff are conversant with the humanitarian–development–peace nexus and both short- and medium-term approaches and acquire both general skills and specific competences in key technical areas such as hydrology and anthropology.	Country office management (relevant country office units)	Agreed	1. The country office will implement the new organizational structure resulting from the country office review of its units. The final organizational structure produced by the regional bureau and headquarters human resources teams was reviewed and amended by the country office units and the new structure is under implementation.	Country office human resources unit (country office management)	February 2024	Under way
			2. The country office will increase the use of fixed-term contracts to build internal capacity and ensure continuity including for the humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach.	Country office human resources unit (country office management)	February 2024	Under way

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			3. WFP will build staff capacity through the inter-agency nexus groups to increase knowledge of the management of integrated activities.	Country office human resources unit with management and the United Nations Nexus Team	February 2024	Not started
5.2 <i>Partnerships with development actors</i> : Formulate an entirely new strategy entailing strong long-term in-country relationships with development actors such as the other Rome-based agencies, key ministries and national agencies (the Development Intervention Fund, the private sector, etc.).	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau/ headquarters technical units)	Agreed	4. WFP will elaborate and implement a new partnership action plan to support the new CSP with regard to the visibility of collaboration and engagement with development actors including private sector and government entities.	Management with partnerships/ communication, advocacy and marketing unit	June 2024	Completed
			5. WFP will reinforce the staffing of its partnerships and communications, advocacy and marketing team with full-time national and international positions to ensure continuity and build internal capacity in the areas of partnerships and capacity strengthening for national institutions.	Management/ country office human resources unit	October 2023	Completed

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			6. WFP will advocate with other United Nations entities a common nutrition agenda and participate in the implementation of more joint actions.	Country office nutrition unit (country office programme unit)	March 2024	Under way
			7. WFP will develop a specific strategy for public–private partnerships based on current experiences to support resilience activities in the new CSP in order to increase efficiency.	Country office resilience unit (regional bureau partnership unit)	December 2024	Not started
			8. The country office will finalize the Rome-based agency joint work plan in line with existing joint initiatives with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.	Country office resilience unit (country office programme unit)	March 2024	Under way

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5.3 <i>Monitoring and evaluation:</i> Rethink ways of collecting data that capture the needs of affected people and communities in the medium to long term, beyond their immediate and short-term needs. Explore and select indicators that best represent resilience, starting with those in the WFP corporate results framework.	Country office management and relevant country office units (regional bureau technical units)	Agreed	9.A.The country office will draw up the new CSP logical framework by choosing new resilience indicators from the corporate results framework for 2022–2025 and considering other indicators that can provide evidence of the quality of interventions.	Country office RAM – monitoring and evaluation unit (programme unit, regional bureau monitoring team)	December 2023	Under way
			9.B.The country office will regularly review the CSP outcomes and systems for data and information sharing.	Country office management (RAM and programme units)	December 2024 ¹	Under way

¹ The regional bureau suggests that the deadline should be the end of CSP with continuous implementation but this has been amended to reflect the deadline of the main recommendation.

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			10. The country office will conduct a baseline study on resilience-related projects with a focus on corporate resilience indicators while looking at country context specific resilience indicators (as for the RRT project: baseline/decentralized evaluation on RRT).	Country office RAM unit (regional bureau monitoring and evaluation units)	July 2024	Under way
			11. The country office will establish agreements with universities on the monitoring of the anticipatory action project or other resilience related activities.	Country office resilience unit (country office programme unit)	December 2024	Not started