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For consideration

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

Management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Colombia (2021–2024)

Background

1. This document presents the WFP management response to the recommendations in the evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for Colombia for 2021–2024. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide insights and recommendations to serve as a basis for the design of a new CSP for 2025–2028 and the country's next United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework.
2. The evaluation made six recommendations – three of which are strategic and three operational – and 14 sub-recommendations. The response presented below sets out whether WFP management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with those recommendations and sub-recommendations and presents the planned (or completed) actions, responsibilities and timelines for their implementation.

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| Recommendations and sub-recommendations | Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office | Management response | Actions | Action lead office | Action deadline | Status |
|--|---|---------------------|---|--|-----------------|-------------|
| <p>Priority: High Deadline: July 2024 1. Strategic and conceptual framework: Develop a conceptual and strategic framework for each thematic area of intervention, based on WFP's comparative advantages and changes in the operational environment.</p> | Country office (regional bureau, headquarters) | Agreed | | | | |
| <p>1.1 Maintain flexibility in the thematic areas of intervention so that they respond to changing circumstances and incorporate the core areas of the country office's work, including the triple nexus, peacebuilding, the fight against hunger, adaptation to climate change, social inclusion and differential approaches.</p> | | | <p>1. In preparation for the implementation of the new CSP for 2025–2028, complementary documents will be developed for each activity, detailing the objectives, implementation strategy and expected results of that activity. Feedback from the workshops carried out with the main government stakeholders and donors during the formulation of the CSP will be a key reference for deciding the documents' contents.</p> | Country office head of programme (activity managers) | October 2024 | Not started |
| | | | <p>2. The new CSP will include elements aimed at ensuring such flexibility by, for example, identifying the thematic areas of intervention under each CSP outcome and maintaining sufficient focus on cross-cutting themes, such as nutrition, and differential approaches. Peace and social cohesion will be a central theme in the design of the new CSP and an annex will be prepared indicating the expected contributions of each activity to peace and social</p> | Country office management – country office CSP consultant and programme – conflict analyst | July 2024 | Ongoing |

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| | | | cohesion. In order to achieve greater flexibility, the resource mobilization strategy (see recommendation 6) and advocacy with donors will be strengthened with a view to increasing the percentage of unearmarked contributions. The country office will continue to generate evidence that demonstrates the changing needs in the country. | | | |
| 1.2 Consider exchanging experiences with other WFP country offices that are developing strategies in similar settings. | | | 3. The country office will participate actively in the exchanges of programme-related experiences promoted and facilitated by the regional bureau. | Regional bureau (country office) | July 2024 | Ongoing |
| <p>Priority: High Deadline: October 2024 2. Capacity strengthening strategy: Develop a strategy for strengthening national capacities that clearly defines the role of WFP in a middle-income country such as Colombia.</p> <p>The strategy should have a vision of sustainability, encompass all capacity strengthening interventions in all thematic areas, and be tailored to the country setting and based on the comparative advantages of WFP in each thematic area of intervention.</p> | Country office (regional bureau, headquarters) | Agreed | 1. Following the approval of the CSP for 2025–2028, the country office will develop a country capacity strengthening strategy articulating the priorities, plans and indicators for its cross-cutting approach. The new CSP incorporates aspects of national capacity strengthening in all CSP activities based on the situation and needs of national and local institutions and the comparative advantages of WFP in Colombia. | Country office head of programme (country office research, assessment and monitoring, and supply chain units, activity managers, cross-cutting team, and CSP consultant, regional bureau country capacity strengthening adviser) | October 2024 | Not started |

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| <p>Priority: Medium Deadline: July 2024 3. Thematic and geographical focus: Define clear criteria for setting the thematic and geographical focus of interventions so as to avoid the dispersion of effort and optimize internal synergies. In defining the criteria, consider carrying out a systematization exercise on the lessons learned from the two country strategic plans.</p> | Country office (regional bureau, headquarters) | Agreed | <p>1. For geographical targeting, an evidence-based targeting and prioritization strategy will be established in line with WFP targeting guidelines and taking into consideration the results of food security assessments, public policy priorities, donor strategies and the geographical areas covered by field offices. WFP will also try to concentrate its interventions geographically, based on the prioritized themes.</p> <p>Thematic targeting will concentrate on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ preparation, anticipation, emergency response and early recovery for various types of crises; ➤ support for public policies for zero hunger, social protection, school feeding and nutrition; ➤ resilient livelihoods and food systems, climate change adaptation and ecosystem restoration; and ➤ a cross-cutting axis that includes “total peace” comprising social inclusion, a territorially focused approach to technical assistance, gender equality and capacity building. | Country office vulnerability analysis and mapping unit (programme) | July 2024 | Ongoing |

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| <p>Priority: High Deadline: September 2024 4. Evidence generation: Generate evidence from analysis and the systematization of lessons learned, focusing on the following:</p> | Country office (regional bureau, headquarters) | Agreed | <p>1. The country office will design and implement a plan for the systematization of lessons learned and evidence generation.</p> <p>The activities and projects to be systematized include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ mobile unit agreements (five agreements by the end of March 2024); ➤ projects aimed at rural women; ➤ <i>SAN, Paz y Cohesión Social</i> (food and nutrition security, peace and social cohesion) projects; ➤ <i>Frutos de la Restitución</i> (fruits of restitution) projects; and ➤ the plan for assessments, evaluations and reviews of the new CSP. | Country office reporting officer (research, assessment and monitoring; programme) | September 2024 | Ongoing |
| 4.1 Articulate a more explicit model for work at the triple nexus based on an intervention approach that allows the capture of results in social cohesion and contributions to peace. | | | 2. An annex to the CSP will indicate the contributions of each activity to social cohesion and peacebuilding. | Country office programme unit – conflict analysis coordinator (monitoring and evaluation) | July 2024 | Ongoing |
| 4.2 Based on corporate updates, identify mechanisms for tracking long term progress under the country strategic plan in terms of the non-traditional results that have little visibility in the corporate results framework (such as social cohesion). | | | 3. Based on the new corporate indicators and experiences at the regional and global levels, a plan will be developed for measuring medium and long-term results in the areas of social cohesion, resilience building, socioeconomic integration and peacebuilding. | Country office monitoring and evaluation unit (regional bureau programme office) | July 2024 | Ongoing |

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| 4.3 Develop monitoring mechanisms for verifying the transition of beneficiaries from crisis response to early recovery and development support. | | | 4. The country office programme unit will design a strategy for its work at the triple nexus. Based on that strategy, the monitoring and evaluation unit will develop a plan for using a sampling process to verify the transition of beneficiaries from crisis response to early recovery and development support, in compliance with the targeting criteria for each activity established by the vulnerability analysis and mapping unit. | Country office monitoring and evaluation unit (country office programme unit) | September 2024 | Not started |
| 4.4 Identify mechanisms for reporting on the long-term effects on beneficiaries who participate in programmes and link those mechanisms to other types of medium- and long-term programmes for early recovery and development, including those that contribute to social cohesion, resilience building and economic integration. | | | 5. The country office will develop a project monitoring plan for measuring the long-term effects of programmes on beneficiaries, subject to the availability of funds (noting that corporate guidelines cover monitoring during the implementation of WFP interventions, not beyond). | Country office monitoring and evaluation unit (country office programme unit) | August 2024 | Ongoing |

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| <p>Priority: High Deadline: May 2024 5. Review of internal processes: Conduct a review of internal processes with a view to improving internal coordination and expediting the implementation of programmes. As part of the consolidation and review exercises that are already under way, the country office may consider the following:</p> | Country office (regional bureau, headquarters) | Agreed | | | | |
| 5.1 Continue the ongoing review of the corporate framework for internal processes. | | | 1. The country office will develop a proposal and implement actions for strategic workforce planning and organizational alignment based on the recommendations from the regional bureau human resources mission of January 2024. | Country office management (country office human resources office, heads of unit and heads of field offices, and regional bureau human resources office) | December 2024 | Ongoing |

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| 5.2 Identify critical processes and ways of improving them. | | | 2. The country office will carry out a critical review of problematic processes in each area of its work, directing particular attention to the areas under the reassurance plan – targeting, monitoring and evaluation, cash-based transfers, supply chains, and programming – and based on an internal audit report that will be received in February 2024. The heads of unit and heads of field offices will identify at least one process that is creating a bottleneck and will review that process. | Country office risk and compliance unit (heads of unit, heads of field offices) | July 2024 | Ongoing |
| 5.3 Seek to reduce the number of approval lines and points in internal processes. | | | 3. The country office will review the processes that it currently uses for approving actions and expenditures and applying delegations of authority with a view to identifying any processes that are creating bottlenecks and assessing whether and how those processes could be optimized so as to reduce the time they require. | Country office supply chain unit (heads of unit, heads of field offices) | July 2024 | Ongoing |
| 5.4 Develop process indicators, such as improvements in the achievement rates of output targets or the timeliness of those achievements, for measuring the effect of the internal adjustments. | | | 4. The country office will design process indicators based on the results of actions 5.2 and 5.3 above. | Country office monitoring and evaluation unit (heads of unit, heads of field offices) | August 2024 | Not started |

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| <p>Priority: High Deadline: July 2024 6. Systematization of resource mobilization processes for project management: Standardize design and management processes with a view to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the country office's mobilization efforts. For example, the country office could do the following:</p> | Country office (regional bureau, headquarters) | | | | | |
| 6.1 Standardize the process for writing proposals, clarifying who does what and when. | | | 1. The country office will design and implement standard operating procedures for the design of proposals for resource mobilization. | Country office partnerships unit (programme) | July 2024 | Ongoing |
| 6.2 Standardize the processes for reviewing and adjusting interventions, allowing sufficient flexibility to adapt them to the varying needs of different donors. | | | 2. The standard operating procedures will include a section on dialogue with donors as part of the proposal design phase, aimed at ensuring that the reporting and indicator requirements of donors, and the other needs of both parties, are met. | Country office partnerships unit (country office monitoring and evaluation unit) | July 2024 | Ongoing |

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| 6.3 Systematize the learning from projects so that it can be used to mobilize new resources. | | | 3. Together with the donor(s) concerned, the country office will identify lessons learned during the project design phase and incorporate them into the standard operating procedures for resource mobilization. | Country office partnerships unit (country office reporting and programme units) | July 2024 | Ongoing |
| 6.4 Exchange experiences with other WFP country offices in similar situations. | | | 4. The country office will participate actively in the exchanges of programme related experiences promoted and facilitated by the regional bureau, including the monthly partnership meetings. | Country office partnerships unit (regional bureau programme office) | July 2024 | Ongoing |