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Climate change policy update

Draft decision*

The Board approves the climate change policy update (WFP/EB.2/2024/4-C).

I. Background

1. The evaluation of WFP's 2017 climate change policy and 2011 disaster risk reduction and management policy¹ recommended that WFP update the climate change policy to reflect evolving international circumstances and the cross-cutting nature of climate change in WFP's operations and to incorporate lessons learned from the policy's implementation to date.

II. Global context

The climate crisis is a humanitarian crisis

2. Climate change is a threat multiplier for food-insecure populations. It intensifies resource scarcity and worsens the existing social, economic and environmental factors that underpin hunger and malnutrition. Since WFP's first climate change policy was endorsed in 2017, the wide-ranging impacts of climate change have surprised even the scientific community.² It is now clear that these impacts will continue to stretch a humanitarian system that is already struggling to keep pace with current humanitarian needs.

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

¹ WFP. 2023. *Evaluation of WFP's Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Policies*.

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2023. *Climate Change 2023. Synthesis Report: Summary for Policymakers*.

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3. Between 2010 and 2020, 83 percent of all disasters caused by natural hazards were linked to climate extremes – especially floods, storms, droughts and extreme heat. Together these disasters affected 1.7 billion people, killing 410,000.³ In 2022, 70 percent of refugees and asylum seekers fled from highly climate-vulnerable countries.⁴ In 2023 climate extremes drove 72 million people into crisis or emergency levels of hunger⁵ and triggered over 20 million new internal displacements.⁶ Growing stress on water resources and shifting weather patterns are compounding people’s vulnerability in many hazard-prone locations.
4. Climate change is shifting the patterns of humanitarian crises as some hazards, such as extreme heat, become more common and others, such as tropical storms, intensify and behave less predictably. These shocks deepen social and economic inequality and reinforce social norms and structural barriers that already limit the capacity of women and girls, children and young people, persons with disabilities and other disproportionately affected groups to manage risk and adapt to changing conditions. One example in this regard is the projection that climate change could trigger the abrupt end of schooling for 12.5 million girls.⁷
5. Food insecurity and malnutrition are highest where the adverse impacts of climate change intersect with other drivers of hunger such as conflicts, structural poverty and economic inequality. In 2023, the 14 countries with the highest climate risk were also affected by conflict or fragility. Of these, 13 also had humanitarian response plans.⁸ This compound nature of many humanitarian crises makes it increasingly challenging to implement climate action and access climate financing in high-risk contexts.
6. Food systems contribute to and are impacted by climate change. Faced with growing losses and damages in the food and agriculture sector, governments are facing challenges in accelerating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the systems that produce food and bring it to people’s tables. With food systems accounting for 21–37 percent of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions,⁹ many countries are looking for coordinated international support and partnerships to de-carbonize and diversify food systems, increase the resilience and resource efficiency of value chains, and ensure that the food and nutrition needs of vulnerable communities can be met as the climate is changing.

Multilateral climate action remains too small-scale and too slow

7. The Paris Agreement on climate change aims to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Based on current trends in greenhouse gas emissions, the world is substantively off track from meeting this target and it could be permanently breached as early as 2030.¹⁰ This, in turn, would have wide-ranging consequences for food security. To prepare for such a future, countries are seeking to accelerate action to reduce greenhouse

³ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. 2020. *World Disasters Report 2020. Come heat or high water: Tackling the humanitarian impacts of the climate crisis together.*

⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 2024. *Focus Area Strategic Plan for Climate Action 2024–2030.*

⁵ Food Security Information Network and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2024. *2024 Global Report on Food Crises: Joint Analysis for Better Decisions.*

⁶ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2024. *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2024.*

⁷ Malala Fund. 2021. *A greener, fairer future: Why leaders need to invest in climate and girls' education.*

⁸ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2023. *Global Humanitarian Overview 2024: The spiralling climate crisis is intensifying needs and vulnerabilities.*

⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2019. *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems.*

¹⁰ United Nations Environment Programme, 2023. *Emissions Gap Report 2023: Broken Record – Temperatures hit new highs, yet world fails to cut emissions (again).*

gas emissions and transform fossil fuel-based economies while fast-tracking investments in institutions, systems and processes to adapt to climate change and manage the growing risk of climate disasters.

8. These investments are not happening at the speed and scale required to ensure the food security of vulnerable populations. Efficient responses to climate disasters are inhibited by a lack of adaptation finance¹¹ and by a shortage of pre-arranged disaster financing, which accounts for less than 3 percent of all crisis financing flows.¹² In the absence of timely investments in adaptation and disaster risk reduction, fragile and food-insecure communities are now experiencing the impacts of climate change on a timescale of weeks and months, rather than years and decades. Many remain cut off from the financing that is urgently needed to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity at the local level and to connect with national and international systems for emergency preparedness and response planning.^{13, 14}

Alignment with international policy

9. WFP's climate change policy is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and based on the scientific assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It supports countries in their efforts to advance the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its associated Paris Agreement. Specifically, WFP supports implementation of the Paris Agreement's global goal on adaptation¹⁵ and the UNFCCC objective of preventing dangerous human interference with the climate system within a timeframe sufficient to "ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner".¹⁶
10. At the country level WFP recognizes the unique vulnerabilities and challenges facing developing countries, which lack the technical and financial capacity to manage climate risks to livelihoods and food systems. By integrating climate-focused activities into country strategies and programmes and supporting access to climate financing, WFP supports governments in realizing their national climate change policies and strategies, national adaptation plans and nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement.
11. Recognizing the links between climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss, WFP affirms that these existential challenges must be tackled through coordinated and integrated action. WFP therefore supports the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, which provide complementary entry points and mechanisms for advancing food and nutrition security in a changing climate.
12. Food-insecure populations in developing countries have contributed the least to global warming yet suffer the consequences of the investment decisions and consumption patterns in fossil fuel-based economies. To address this inequality, WFP supports a global climate finance goal that brings new financing mechanisms to bear to address the priorities and needs of developing countries and help these populations address loss and damage from climate change. Further, WFP supports the participation of affected people and

¹¹ United Nations Environment Programme. 2023. *Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared. Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves world exposed.*

¹² Centre for Disaster Protection. 2023. *The State of Pre-arranged Financing for Disasters 2023.*

¹³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2023. *Development finance for climate and environment-related fragility: Cooling the hotspots.*

¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme. 2021. *Climate Finance for Sustaining Peace: Making climate finance work for conflict-affected and fragile contexts.*

¹⁵ UNFCCC. 2015. *Paris Agreement, Article 7, Global Goal on Adaptation.*

¹⁶ United Nations. 1992. *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.*

underrepresented groups in climate-related negotiations, planning and investment processes.

III. WFP's value proposition and comparative advantage

13. **Leveraging partnerships to support the most vulnerable.** WFP maintains a consistent focus on food-insecure communities and on groups that are left behind by international climate action. These groups include Indigenous and displaced communities, pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, children and older people, and persons with disabilities. Building on an extensive network of local partners and institutions, WFP also advances climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in fragile and conflict-affected settings and in contexts where national climate change policies are not implemented effectively at the local level. Its familiarity with the risks faced by vulnerable populations in the most challenging of circumstances puts WFP in a unique position to leverage partnerships and empower local groups and grassroots organizations with skills and resources for community-based adaptation.
14. **Knowledge-based services to manage climate risks.** Building on an extensive track record in emergency preparedness and response planning, WFP has internalized a range of skills and services that are increasingly relevant for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. For example, WFP uses its capabilities and partnerships in integrated context analysis, impact-based forecasting and vulnerability-based targeting to prioritize programme activities in hazard-prone settings. WFP's capacity to work with anticipatory action and climate risk insurance mechanisms – which are applied in close partnership with other United Nations, non-governmental organization (NGO) and private sector partners – speed up support for food-insecure communities by providing specific services that minimize and address loss and damage.
15. Harnessing its purchasing power and knowledge of local markets, WFP promotes the local sourcing of food across its programmes and when supporting school meals and other food-based social safety nets. This encourages more diversified agricultural production, improves nutrition and provides smallholder farmers with additional income and risk reserves. As the largest cash provider in the humanitarian community, WFP can stimulate demand for environmentally sustainable products and technologies and mitigate demand for unsustainable consumption patterns.
16. In the aftermath of climate disasters, WFP supports communities and governments in “building back better and greener” during the phases of disaster recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Where the food security cluster is operational, WFP leverages its cluster coordination capacity to ensure that the transition from humanitarian to development action is risk-informed and that climate risk analysis and adaptation options are factored into reconstruction planning and decision making.
17. **Supporting innovative climate solutions at the nexus of humanitarian and development action.** WFP has demonstrated that ambitious integrated programmes at the nexus between humanitarian and development action can have positive impacts on the resilience and adaptive capacity of local communities. This is evident from programmes such as the Sahel Integrated Resilience programme, which has improved the adaptive capacity of 4 million people in five countries and reduced the dependency of local communities on food assistance during drought.¹⁷

¹⁷ WFP. 2024. *Resilience: Harvesting Hope in the Sahel*.

18. WFP also keeps demonstrating how the humanitarian system can evolve and adapt to better support people as they confront the reality of a worsening climate crisis. WFP is the first United Nations entity to connect food-insecure communities to climate risk insurance solutions;¹⁸ leverage sovereign climate risk insurance for humanitarian operations;¹⁹ trigger anticipatory action in conflict-affected settings;²⁰ and use machine learning for hazard early warning applications.²¹ Through its Innovation Accelerator, WFP leads dedicated innovation challenges that make climate-relevant technologies accessible to multilateral climate funds and public and private sector partners.²²

IV. Scope of this policy

19. This policy focuses on climate-specific and climate-relevant action in the context of chronic and acute food insecurity. WFP is adopting an integrated perspective focused on solutions that avert, minimize and address loss and damage in livelihoods and food systems.²³ This integrated perspective recognizes climate change mitigation as an integral element of comprehensive climate action but puts a clear emphasis on WFP's core capabilities in climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and disaster response.

Climate change mitigation

20. From a global perspective, the most important entry point for protecting food security from the impacts of climate change is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The greater the reduction of human-induced emissions, the lower the climate risk faced by food-insecure populations. WFP's climate change policy is therefore aligned with the climate change mitigation targets of the 2015 Paris Agreement and supports the call for ambitious emission reductions at a global level.
21. While greenhouse gas emission reductions are not a principal objective of its country strategic plans (CSPs), WFP is committed to reducing its own carbon footprint by implementing environmental management systems, standards and safeguards across its operations. These activities are governed by WFP's environmental policy and environmental and social sustainability framework.²⁴ In line with the United Nations "greening the blue" initiative²⁵ and the strategy for sustainable management in the United Nations system, WFP is increasing the energy efficiency of its fleet and buildings and adopting carbon-sensitive travel guidance and circular economy principles. In supply chain operations, WFP applies innovative solutions to enhance environmental sustainability, from sourcing to transportation and warehousing.

¹⁸ WFP. 2023. [The R4 Rural Resilience Initiative](#).

¹⁹ WFP. 2024. [Climate Risk Insurance Annual Report 2023](#).

²⁰ WFP. 2024. [Scaling up anticipatory actions for food security: Anticipatory Action Year in Focus 2023](#).

²¹ WFP. 2023. [Machine Learning for Early Warning Systems](#).

²² WFP. 2023. [Climate Adaptation Innovation Accelerator Programme – Adaptation Fund](#).

²³ Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2023. [Key Messages on Averting, Minimizing and Addressing Loss and Damage from a Humanitarian Perspective](#).

²⁴ WFP. 2021. Executive Director's circular OED2021/018: [Establishment of the WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework](#).

²⁵ United Nations Environment Programme. 2023. [Greening the Blue Report 2023: The UN System's Environmental Footprint and Efforts to Reduce it](#).

22. WFP is generating mitigation co-benefits through land restoration and livelihood support activities that promote regenerative practices, strengthen carbon sinks and sequester carbon in improved soils and vegetation.²⁶ Local procurement from short and resource-efficient value chains, the use of cash and vouchers to stimulate the uptake of low-carbon technologies, and the adoption of renewable energy and clean cooking solutions are other ways in which WFP country programmes generate co-benefits for climate change mitigation.

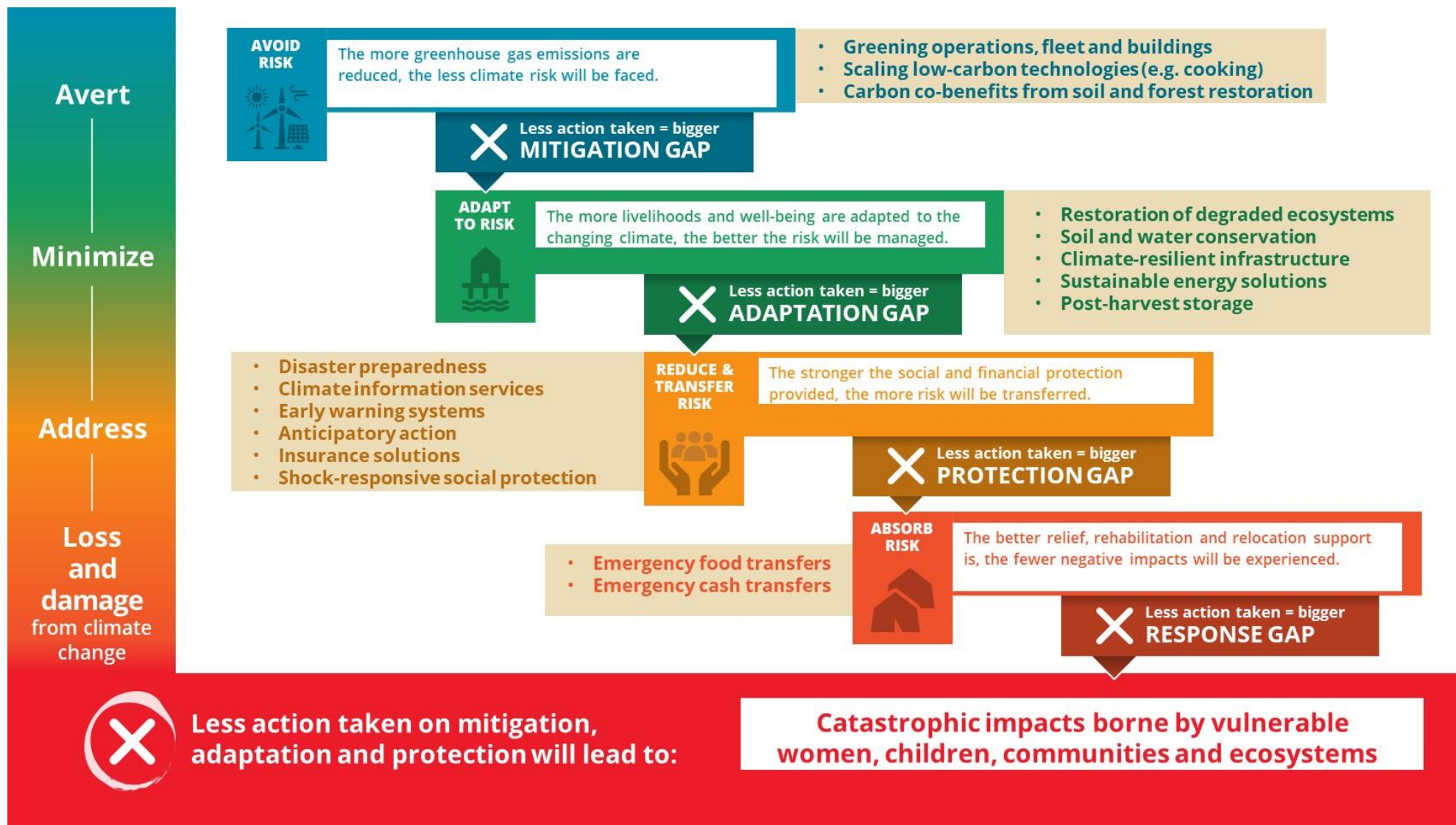
Climate change adaptation

23. Adaptation to the impacts of climate change is a critical priority for sustaining food security in a changing climate. WFP applies a context-specific and community-based approach to adaptation that involves structural measures such as physical infrastructure and ecosystem-based approaches; social measures related to education, information and behaviour change; and institutional adaptation focusing on government policies and programmes, laws and regulation, and economic planning and investment.
24. Consistent with its resilience policy, WFP's climate change adaptation programming prioritizes food-insecure settings²⁷ where a climate-induced disruption to food availability or access can trigger a food security crisis or emergency. In such contexts, WFP country strategies and programmes incorporate specific activities that increase the adaptive capacity of livelihoods and food systems. Such activities are rooted in collaboration with a wide range of partners – including national and local government institutions, United Nations entities, NGOs, community-based organizations, farmer groups, women's groups and schools. They take a medium- to long-term approach to restoring degraded landscapes, promoting diversified and regenerative livelihood practices and strengthening the uptake of sustainable energy, post-harvest processing and storage solutions in food systems and value chains. To de-risk investments in these areas, WFP aims to systematically integrate access to financial safety nets and climate information services into its climate change adaptation initiatives.

²⁶ WFP. 2024. *Greening the Sahel: How WFP's integrated resilience programme generates climate solutions at scale.*

²⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and others. 2024. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms.*

Figure 1: WFP's integrated approach to climate action



Disaster risk reduction

25. Alongside climate change mitigation and adaptation, the short-range reduction of disaster risk forms an essential line of defence in WFP's integrated approach to climate action. WFP aims to enable better preparedness for inevitable climate disasters and advance protection against the negative consequences of climate change that can no longer be averted or adapted to. Such protection requires a sharp focus on activities that yield risk reduction outcomes with shorter lead times, and a clear perspective on the possible failure of forthcoming agricultural seasons.
26. WFP is committed to strengthening local, national and regional protocols for climate early warning and emergency preparedness²⁸ and the expansion of shock-responsive social and financial protection in hazard-prone locations. This includes increasing the number of countries where anticipatory action protocols can be activated based on climate forecasts and connected with pre-arranged financing before climate shocks materialize.

Disaster response

27. As the world's largest humanitarian organization, WFP is frequently called upon to provide emergency relief in places where climate disasters have caused loss and damage to livelihoods and where food systems have broken down. In doing so, WFP deploys all of its tools and capacities to identify and reach those most in need, quickly, effectively and in line with humanitarian principles. WFP also recognizes the relevance of its disaster relief experience in enabling more efficient government responses to loss and damage, particularly in relation to emergency response and contingency planning, early humanitarian action, cash-based transfers for affected populations, disaster relief in conflict settings, and the integration of resilience principles in disaster rehabilitation and recovery.

V. Principles of this policy

28. Drawing on lessons learned during the first policy cycle, and in alignment with the principles underpinning WFP's resilience, emergency preparedness and gender policies, this policy will apply the following people-centred principles.

Anticipate and protect

29. Most climate extremes are predictable. Their probability can be modelled, and the scientific methods used to forecast and assess their impacts are increasingly reliable. Pre-emptive action saves lives, saves time and saves response costs – as has been demonstrated by the evidence underpinning WFP-supported early warning, anticipatory action and climate risk insurance programmes. WFP continues to work with governments, other United Nations entities, NGOs and local partners to enhance multi-hazard forecasting capacities, reduce lead times for disaster responses, establish clear thresholds for preventive action and address different layers of climate risk faced by vulnerable populations.²⁹ As these efforts grow in scale, WFP and its partners will seize opportunities to increase evidence generation in order to augment the share of forecast-based financing in the humanitarian sector.

²⁸ WFP. 2023. *Anticipating Weather and Climate Risk – Weather Information for the Global Public Good*.

²⁹ WFP. 2022. *Climate Risk Financing: Anticipatory and Early Actions for Climate Hazards*.

Localize and integrate

30. Lessons learned from WFP-supported climate and resilience programmes^{30,31} show that the resilience of local communities to climate shocks is determined by the degree to which people have access to resources and can organize themselves prior to and during times of need. They confirm the need to adopt a context-specific, integrated and conflict-sensitive approach to climate action that seeks to strengthen human, social, natural, productive, financial and political capital. Chronic food insecurity often accompanied by a triple threat of social vulnerability, economic inequality and environmental fragility, requires that WFP shift away from a distribution- and execution-centred role and instead focus on social cohesion and the empowerment, capacity, leadership and governance of local actors.

Mobilize and partner

31. Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods and food systems to the impacts of climate change cannot be achieved by any single project or organization. It requires sustained partnerships and collaboration to address the complex and multidimensional factors that underpin vulnerability to climate impacts, which also include income poverty, economic and social inequality, and a lack of human security. Lessons from the implementation of WFP's climate and resilience policies to date have shown that effective approaches to climate change adaptation – such as the integrated resilience programme in the Sahel or WFP's portfolio of anticipatory action and disaster risk financing programmes – are institutionally and financially integrated. They sequence and combine various sources of financing and establish sustainable partnerships between government institutions, United Nations entities and programmes, private sector partners, NGOs, research institutions and local actors. Aside from a more sustainable financing base, these partnerships also raise awareness of climate change adaptation and catalyse evidence generation and knowledge sharing.

VI. Theory of change

32. WFP subscribes to a vision of the future in which people who are exposed to climate shocks and stressors have food security and can continue to meet their food and nutrition needs in a sustainable manner as the climate is changing.
33. **Goals.** To achieve this vision WFP pursues two complementary and interrelated objectives: to strengthen the resilience of food-insecure populations to climate hazards and their capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change; and to strengthen government capacity to manage climate risks to food systems and prepare for, respond to and recover from climate disasters.
34. **Outcomes.** Both goals are mediated by measurable outcomes at the local and national levels that relate to the empowerment of local communities and the ability of government institutions and systems to realize climate change adaptation plans and address loss and damage. A complementary third outcome relates to WFP's contributions to regional and global policy processes, which anchor food security and nutrition objectives in international climate policies, funds and programmes. These outcomes intersect in when community-based adaptation efforts connect with or complement efforts to strengthen government systems within international climate change policy and climate financing frameworks.

³⁰ WFP. 2024. *Resilience Learning in Niger: Impact evaluation endline report*.

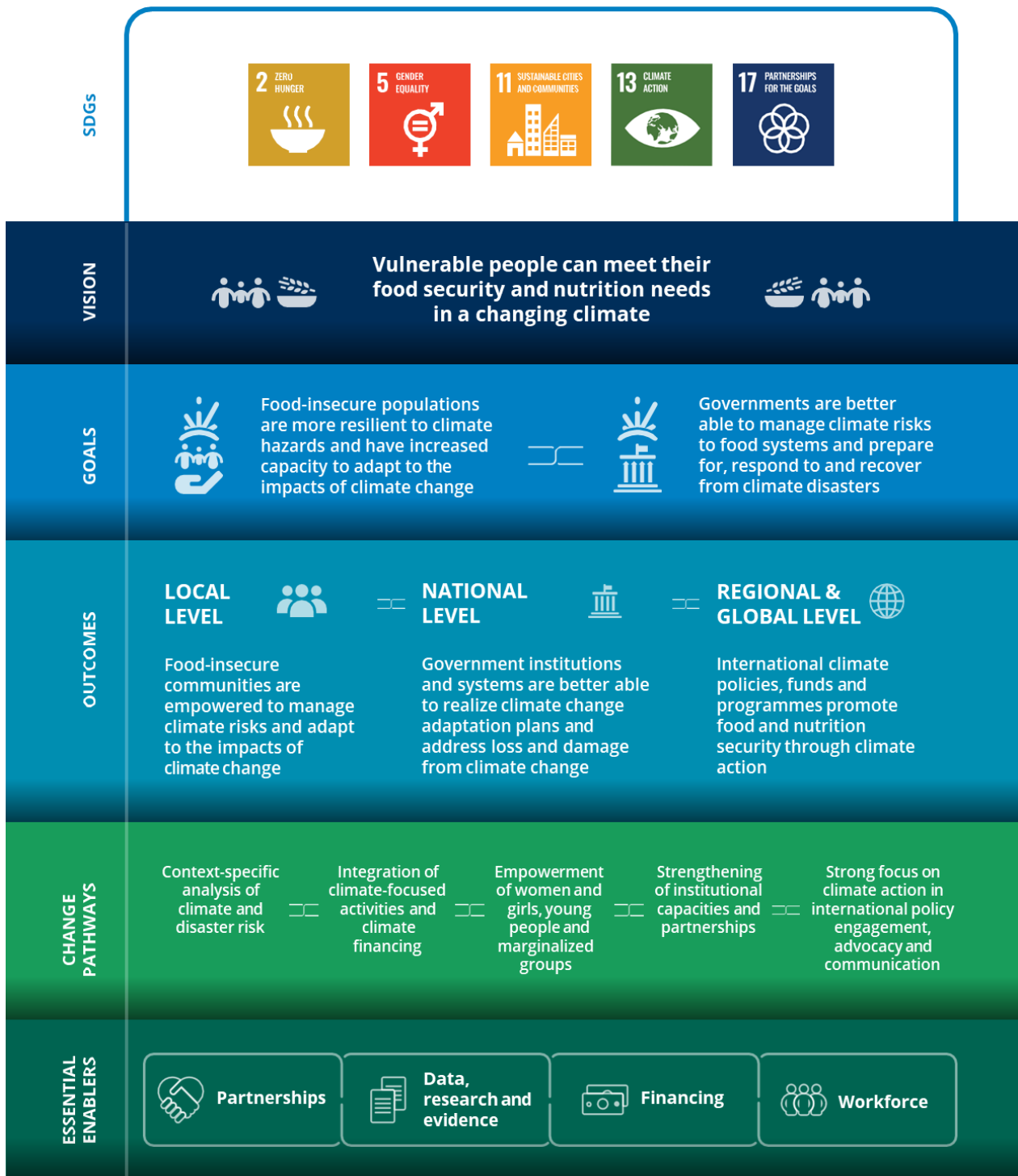
³¹ WFP. 2021. *Acting Before a Flood to Protect the Most Vulnerable: An Independent Review of WFP's Anticipatory Cash Transfers in Bangladesh*.

35. **Change pathways.** The achievement of these outcomes is linked with complementary pathways for change that facilitate the integration of climate-focused activities in WFP country strategies and programmes. Building on the context-specific analysis of climate and disaster risk, and in alignment with government priorities for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, WFP country offices can prioritize climate-focused activities under specific CSP outcomes and focus areas. These activities strengthen the agency of women and girls, young people and marginalized groups and improve the climate action capacities of government and local partners. To integrate food and nutrition security in international climate policies, funds and programmes, WFP needs to deepen its engagement with international climate change policy and climate financing institutions and embed a strong climate focus in its corporate advocacy and communication.
36. **Enablers.** This policy is underpinned by four enabling factors that describe the inputs required at various functional levels of WFP to activate the change pathways and implement this policy:
- a) *Partnerships.* Collaboration and coordination with public and private sector partners, local institutions and other humanitarian and development actors is necessary to address multi-layered vulnerability through integrated and context-specific climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction programming.
 - b) *Data, research and evidence.* To ensure that climate-specific actions are well integrated in CSPs, WFP country offices and their partners must be equipped to analyse climate-specific problems and appraise the effectiveness of adaptation and disaster risk reduction activities for different livelihood groups and target locations. The choice and technical design of such activities needs to be informed by technical knowledge and guidance that is often consolidated at WFP headquarters or regional bureaux.
 - c) *Workforce capacity.* Business mechanisms such as contracting modalities, on-boarding routines, rotational staffing plans, expert rosters, training and certification practices need to be reviewed and improved to help build and retain climate-specific expertise in WFP. Effective change management processes need to accompany these changes to enable successful staff engagement across the organization on climate action and climate financing.
 - d) *Financing.* WFP needs to improve its strategies and partnerships for mobilizing climate-specific and climate-relevant financing and strengthen its abilities to sequence and combine such financing with other investments in food security.
37. Climate change is a risk multiplier for many WFP programme and operational functions. This policy is therefore closely aligned with WFP's updated policies on resilience (2024) and school meals (2024) and pre-existing policies on the environment (2017), emergency preparedness (2017), WFP's role in peacebuilding in transition settings (2013), local and regional food procurement (2019), country capacity strengthening (2022), gender (2022), and protection and accountability (2020).³² The review of the effectiveness of the climate change policy is governed by the requirements of WFP's policy formulation process.³³

³² WFP. 2023. "Compendium of policies relating to the strategic plan" (WFP/EB.2/2023/4-C).

³³ WFP. 2011. "WFP Policy Formulation". (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B).

Figure 2: Theory of change of WFP's updated climate change policy



VII. Policy outcomes

Outcome 1: Food-insecure populations are empowered to manage climate risks and adapt to the impacts of climate change

38. The capacities of food-insecure populations to manage climate risks and adapt to the impacts of climate change are locally specific and determined by their risk exposure, vulnerability and abilities to prepare, anticipate, absorb, recover from and transform in the face of climate shocks and stressors. Strengthening community-based adaptation – whether in rural, peri-urban or urban areas – therefore requires an inclusive and participative approach to resilience strengthening. WFP’s updated resilience policy (2024) lays out the principles of WFP’s approach to community resilience and the importance of community-led land and ecosystem restoration, regenerative practices and agroecology in repairing and maintaining the physical and natural capital that people and communities depend on for effective adaptation. In this context, WFP also leverages its role as a food systems actor to facilitate access by schools and households to clean and modern energy and cooking solutions that prevent deforestation, increase economic opportunities for local businesses, and mitigate health risks.
39. Reducing humanitarian needs in the face of stronger and more frequent climate disasters requires linking community-based adaptation with systemic interventions that reduce disaster risk and protect adaptation-related investments from loss and damage. Building on its experience connecting smallholder farmers to disaster risk financing and climate risk insurance, WFP is steadily increasing the access of communities to financial protection³⁴ before, during and after climate shocks. The early availability of such risk financing has been shown to prevent the use of negative coping mechanisms which set back development gains.
40. Community capacity to connect with early warning systems and take anticipatory action when imminent climate shocks are forecast is critical to managing climate risks. Building these capacities requires WFP and local partners to agree financing and plans in advance. When a climate shock is forecast to hit a local community, WFP works with government authorities, other United Nations entities and local NGOs to release early warning communications, cash transfers and other protective services before households are affected. Such early support allows people to prepare for shocks and reduce their impact rather than depend on humanitarian response.
41. The impacts of climate change affect everyone, but not equally. For all context-specific activities under this outcome WFP will follow a people-centred approach and apply principles of inclusion and participatory engagement, which include the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples.³⁵ Social groups that are disproportionately affected such as displaced people, persons with disabilities, women and young people will be involved in decisions related to efforts to reduce the vulnerability of their livelihoods. With regard to the disproportionate impact of climate disasters on children and their families, WFP will intensify its collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to ramp up protection for children in hot spots of climate risk.
42. Unequal social roles and responsibilities make it challenging for women and girls to exercise control over climate-sensitive natural resources; access financial services and risk information; and participate in decision making about climate change adaptation. This results in disparities between their exposure to climate impacts and their adaptive capacity

³⁴ WFP. 2023. *Payouts from WFP-supported Climate Risk Insurance Programmes: Safeguarding food security through financial protection for the most vulnerable*.

³⁵ WFP. 2020. “WFP protection and accountability policy” (WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2).

and power to shape disaster response and participate in the development of climate-responsive policies.³⁶ To understand the differential impacts of climate change on various social groups and identify effective adaptation options, it is necessary to equitably and intentionally include the voices and needs of women and girls and to empower women-led institutions as agents of change for climate action. To increase financial inclusion and enable more equitable access by women to risk reserves and financial protection, it is essential for WFP to continue to strengthen women's access to climate risk insurance mechanisms.³⁷

Outcome 2: Government institutions and systems are better able to realize climate change adaptation plans and address loss and damage from climate change

43. WFP will intensify its support to national and local governments seeking to strengthen institutional capacities for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in food systems. While government demand for such services has been growing, it is highly context-specific and includes a wide range of requests related to policy design, programme and investment planning for food security. WFP recognizes that in some conflict-affected settings, partnering with host governments can pose a challenge to WFP's adherence to humanitarian principles and conflict sensitivity. In such cases WFP will ensure that climate-focused programmes do not run counter to the central principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence that underpin its humanitarian operations.
44. To improve the evidence base for adaptation planning, WFP works with government institutions to strengthen the analysis of climate risks to food security,³⁸ which is essential for the development of national adaptation plans, food security policies, disaster risk reduction strategies and nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement. This technical assistance leverages WFP's expertise in integrated context analysis³⁹ and climate risk profiling,⁴⁰ as well as its operational partnerships in climate modelling and forecasting.
45. In close alignment with other thematic policies, such as the policy on local and regional food procurement, WFP leverages the transformation of food systems as a pathway for climate action and supports the development of low carbon and climate-resilient food value chains. Strengthening adaptive capacity and resilience at the local level, WFP supports the capacity of smallholder farmers and other value chain actors to employ resource-efficient technologies for food production, processing and storage. This approach puts special emphasis on the inclusion of people who are often excluded from access to markets and technologies, including women and young people. Through its support for locally sourced school meals, particularly as part of national school meals programmes, WFP supports governments in harnessing predictable demand to scale up sustainable agricultural practices, disseminate clean energy solutions and promote education about climate action.⁴¹

³⁶ UN Water and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. 2023. *Spotlight on goal 6. From Commodity to Common Good: A Feminist Agenda to Tackle the World's Water Crisis*.

³⁷ WFP. 2022. *Gender & Risk Finance: How climate risk insurance can turn four women's lives around*.

³⁸ WFP. 2019. *WFP Guide to Climate and Food Security Analyses*.

³⁹ WFP. 2014. *The integrated context analysis and the three-pronged approach*.

⁴⁰ WFP. 2022. *Climate Response Analysis – Country Profiles*.

⁴¹ WFP. 2023. *WFP's approach to Planet-Friendly School Meals*.

46. In countries that lack climate financing investment, WFP is committed to increasing the ability of governments to mobilize climate-specific funding for strategic projects that strengthen food security. This includes improving government access to multilateral climate financing, including through the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund, and the reduction of climate risks in government-led investments that are supported by international financial institutions.
47. Faced with stronger and more frequent climate shocks and stressors, governments require greater fiscal space to respond to climate disasters and address the impacts of loss and damage on national economies. They also need to upgrade emergency preparedness and response systems to be ready for future climate impacts.⁴² Relevant contributions by WFP include support for national disaster preparedness, risk reduction and response plans, sovereign climate risk insurance mechanisms, shock-responsive social protection systems and anticipatory action systems that trigger pre-arranged financing when critical warning thresholds are crossed in advance of a climate disaster. During and after climate disasters, WFP will continue to support the provision of cash-based transfers to accelerate local recovery from loss and damage.

Outcome 3: International climate policies, funds and programmes promote food and nutrition security through climate action

48. WFP is an active observer of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC and provides input to the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage.⁴³ As an accredited entity with the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund, WFP interacts with fund boards and secretariats to review and improve policies so that they better serve the needs of food-insecure communities in fragile settings. WFP continues to engage with the UNFCCC Santiago Network, which catalyses the provision of technical assistance to developing countries on loss and damage. WFP is also a leading voice in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on how the humanitarian system can link with climate action.
49. To advance resilience to climate shocks and adaptive capacity in drylands, WFP engages with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification on solutions for reversing land degradation and building resilience to drought as the basic conditions for food and water security. Other international policy platforms to advance climate action for food security include working groups of the Group of Seven and the Group of Twenty.
50. WFP puts particular emphasis on international policy processes and advocacy efforts that advance climate action in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Through strategic engagement with international partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the World Bank, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, WFP is strengthening advocacy coalitions to better serve the needs of people who face compound crises. Following through on its pledge to support the COP28 declaration on climate, relief, recovery and peace,⁴⁴ WFP has committed to quantifiable global targets and developed a pipeline of projects to scale up climate action in fragile settings.⁴⁵

⁴² Inter-agency Standing Committee. 2023. *Key Messages on Averting, Minimizing and Addressing Loss and Damage from a Humanitarian Perspective*.

⁴³ UNFCCC. 2022. *Technical Expert Group on Comprehensive Risk Management*.

⁴⁴ Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. 2023. *COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace*.

⁴⁵ WFP. 2024. *WFP's Climate Resilience Investment Pipeline. Partnering for Actions to Reduce Humanitarian Needs and Boost Food Security*.

51. As a signatory of the Agenda for Humanity's "Peace Promise" and in line with the 2020 recommendation of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD-DAC) on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, WFP is committed to ensuring conflict sensitivity in its programmes and addressing compound risks. To this end, WFP seeks to advance the integration of climate-specific action into international policy discussions about humanitarian action, conflict and fragility, with a particular focus on the empowerment and resilience of women and girls.⁴⁶
52. Complementary to its engagement in intergovernmental policy processes, WFP contributes to technical platforms such as the Early Warnings for All initiative,⁴⁷ the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership,⁴⁸ the Systematic Observations Financing Facility,⁴⁹ the Global Shield against Climate Risks, the Insurance Development Forum and the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative.⁵⁰ In collaboration with FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, WFP supports the transformation of food systems as a pathway for climate action and provides analytical and technical input in relation to the implementation of the COP28 declaration on sustainable agriculture, resilient food systems and climate action.⁵¹ Complementing these efforts, WFP provides case studies, good practices and lessons learned from climate-focused programmes to the United Nations Food Systems Summit process and Food Systems Coordination Hub.

VIII. Essential enablers

Partnerships

53. WFP relies on strong partnerships to implement this policy. Since WFP's first climate change policy was approved, there has been a proliferation of partnership and cooperation opportunities in the international, regional and national governance of climate action. Partly, this trend has been spurred by the growing manifestation of climate change on people and planet and the urgent need to move from ambition to action, but it has also been driven by new developments in the international climate policy discourse – notably the concept of loss and damage and the recognition of food systems as a pathway for climate action.
54. The implementation of this climate change policy is rooted in sustained collaboration with government institutions and local and non-state actors on realizing climate change adaptation priorities and minimizing loss and damage. To achieve these objectives, WFP is harnessing a range of partnership opportunities that can be broadly characterized as follows:
- **Technical partnerships** with government bodies, NGOs, other United Nations entities and private sector partners, to enable and coordinate high-quality design and implementation of climate-focused projects.

⁴⁶ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. 2023. *Feminist Climate Justice: A Framework for Action*.

⁴⁷ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and World Meteorological Organization. 2023. *Global Status of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems 2023*.

⁴⁸ Global Public Policy Institute. 2023. *2023 Stocktake for the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP): Final report*.

⁴⁹ WFP. 2023. *Anticipating Weather and Climate Risk: Weather Information for the Global Public Good*.

⁵⁰ Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems. 2021. *Delivering at Scale 2021–2025*.

⁵¹ Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. 2023. *COP28 Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action*.

- **Implementation partnerships** with local service providers, NGOs, community groups and women- and farmer-led organizations, to implement and sustain climate-focused activities in specific locations.
 - **Knowledge partnerships** with academic and research institutions, to analyse climate-related risks and vulnerability, appraise adaptation and disaster risk reduction priorities, monitor the impacts of climate-focused projects and innovations and codify “what works” in different settings.
 - **Financing partnerships** with bilateral donors, multilateral climate funds, international financial institutions and philanthropic and private sector partners, to enable sustained long-term investments in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.
 - **Advocacy partnerships** with other United Nations entities and programmes, intergovernmental institutions and platforms, civil society and advocacy groups and NGOs, to highlight priorities for climate action and communicate effective solutions to internal and external audiences.
55. The costed implementation plan for this policy will cover the mapping and categorization of global and regional partnerships that can be harnessed to strengthen the implementation of this policy. The mapping will highlight joint initiatives with key partners, including work with FAO on implementing a joint strategy for anticipatory action.⁵² Joint programming and advocacy between WFP and FAO will promote the coordinated design and implementation of multilateral climate finance projects; strengthen implementation partnerships in fragile and conflict-affected settings; and reinforce support for food security and regenerative agriculture in international climate policies, funds and programmes.^{53,54}
56. WFP’s partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development will continue to focus on the resilience and adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers and agricultural value chains, including through the scale-up of climate risk insurance solutions and the de-risking of agricultural investment programmes. Collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization will focus on the connection of hydro-meteorological observational networks with last-mile climate information and early warning services for food-insecure communities. WFP’s partnership with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction will facilitate coordinated support for the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction⁵⁵ and aligned advocacy for disaster risk reduction in the context of international climate action.
57. With regard to partnerships at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, WFP will continue to partner with FAO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, UNICEF, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Climate Security Mechanism to address climate and conflict drivers of food crises in an integrated manner and advance climate protection for marginalized and particularly vulnerable groups such as refugees, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities and children.

⁵² FAO and WFP. 2023. *FAO-WFP Anticipatory Action Strategy: Scaling up anticipatory actions to prevent food crises*.

⁵³ United Nations Sustainable Development Group. 2020. *UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies*.

⁵⁴ FAO. 2022. *The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation*.

⁵⁵ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. 2015. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*.

58. Collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the World Bank Group and regional development banks will focus on the coordinated integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction solutions in government-led investment programmes.

Data, research and evidence

59. As also described in WFP's 2024 resilience policy, the availability of high-quality data, research and evidence enables context-specific and risk-informed policymaking, programme planning and funding decisions. For climate-focused programming, this includes combining evidence derived from climate models, climate attribution studies, hazard mapping, satellite monitoring and value chain analysis with data from household surveys, vulnerability assessments, focus group interviews and participatory appraisals. Seasonal food security monitoring, analysis and forecasting further supports the analysis of vulnerability to climate change.
60. To ensure that WFP country programmes are risk-informed, WFP will integrate climate risk and vulnerability information into the early stages of CSP design and combine the mapping of climate hazards with other socioeconomic data related to food security, poverty, gender and nutrition. Emphasis will be given to a joined-up analysis of climate risk and gender inequality data, with the end goal of increasing the participation of women and girls in climate change adaptation planning. Analysis of local food systems and value chains will include analysis of climate risks across the stages of food production, processing, storage, transport, retailing and consumption. Data-sharing with other United Nations entities will be intensified to facilitate more integrated risk analysis, climate-focused programming and targeting by United Nations country teams.
61. For results monitoring and impact analysis, WFP will draw on both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Priorities include the cost-benefit analysis of different approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and the tracking of humanitarian needs in the wake of acute or protracted climate disasters. Geospatial tracking tools provide a unique perspective on the effectiveness of ecosystem-based adaptation and its long-term impact on natural resources.⁵⁶ Mechanisms for the monitoring and assessment of programme progress are equally critical for stakeholder reporting and alignment with WFP's legal and ethical accountability.⁵⁷ In terms of qualitative evidence, WFP will continue to collect and interpret information from community feedback mechanisms and track people's own perceptions of their resilience to climate shocks – including from persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples. This work continues to build on evolving indicators in WFP's corporate results framework, such as the shock exposure index and the resilience capacity score.⁵⁸
62. As part of the costed implementation plan for this policy, WFP will develop its multi-year research strategy on climate action, prioritize countries and themes for impact evaluations, synthesize evaluations and decentralized evaluations, and develop a practical, low-cost methodology for tracking the implementation of this policy.

⁵⁶ WFP. 2020. [Asset Impact Monitoring System \(AIMS\)](#).

⁵⁷ Joint Inspection Unit. 2023. [Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations](#). (JIU/REP/2023/3).

⁵⁸ WFP. 2023. [Shock Exposure Index \(SEI\)](#); WFP. 2022. [Resilience Capacity Score \(RCS\)](#).

Financing

63. Over the past policy cycle WFP has mobilized over USD 1 billion for projects with a significant climate-related objective. These investments are essential to strengthening the adaptive capacity of food-insecure populations and building the systems needed to protect them from new climate disasters. The growing impact of climate change on humanitarian needs requires WFP to redouble its fundraising efforts to ensure that its programmes and operations are climate-compatible and risk-informed. To this end WFP will improve its ability to access, sequence and combine various sources of financing – including humanitarian, development, climate and peacebuilding funds – to enable integrated programming and ensure more flexible and predictable funding for climate and resilience outcomes.
64. The implementation plan for this policy foresees the development of a climate resource mobilization strategy that develops a fundraising outlook for the following types of resources:
- **Multilateral climate funds.** WFP is accredited with the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund and available to serve as executing partner to other accredited entities for projects funded through the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund administered by the Global Environment Facility.
 - **Bilateral climate and development funds.** WFP is an implementing and executing partner for climate-focused projects that are supported by bilateral donors and reported to the OECD, in line with the OECD-DAC Rio markers for climate.⁵⁹
 - **International financial institutions and programme country governments.** International financial institutions are key partners in increasing financing for climate change adaptation in developing countries. They facilitate the strategic allocation of government resources to projects that de-risk critical sectors of the economy and strengthen the adaptive capacity of the food and agriculture sector.
 - **Private sector.** WFP supports market-based mechanisms for climate-specific products and services such as parametric climate risk insurance, digital access to climate information, renewable energy and improved post-harvest technology. WFP is also an implementing partner in climate-focused projects financed by philanthropies, foundations and individual donors.
 - **Innovative finance.** WFP is a technical and implementing partner for blended finance and debt swaps. Over the course of the next policy cycle, WFP will continue to explore innovative finance instruments such as carbon finance and catastrophe bonds and expand its current range of partnerships to mobilize and leverage larger volumes of pre-agreed climate and disaster risk financing.

Workforce

65. As part of the policy implementation plan, WFP is proposing targeted investments in its workforce to unlock the change pathways for this policy. These investments will be anchored in a dedicated change management process that equips the WFP workforce to lead and support the organization's enhanced focus on climate action:
- **Strengthening staff capacity** on climate change policy, climate change science, climate finance and climate-focused programming – including through a dedicated climate training and certification programme.

⁵⁹ OECD. 2011. *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Climate Markers*.

- **Developing and disseminating knowledge and guidance materials** to integrate climate action in CSPs and inform the design and implementation of high-quality climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction projects.
 - **Simplifying the recruitment, retention and deployment of experts with specialized skills** to strengthen climate-related capacity in relevant functions across WFP.
 - **Developing service centre and deployment models** to make specialized technical expertise available to WFP country offices and regional bureaux with shorter lead times.
66. To strengthen the capacity of WFP employees as enablers of climate action, WFP will review climate-relevant staffing and skills profiles at the level of country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters and assess relevant rotational and contracting modalities. This includes recommendations for the recruitment, retention, training and re-training of climate-focused staff profiles and the sourcing of external expertise – including through secondments, junior professional officers and standby partnership agreements.

Acronyms

COP	Conference of the Parties
CSP	country strategic plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund