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Compendium of policies relating to the strategic plan

Introduction

1. At its second regular session in 2010, the WFP Executive Board requested the Secretariat to prepare an annual update of its compendium of WFP policies relating to the strategic plan as an information paper for the Board. The annual update presents an overview of new and existing policies and policy updates, reflecting recent progress in their implementation and related evaluation findings.

2. The policy compendium provides an opportunity for strategic exchange with the Board on the latest developments in WFP's normative framework and on areas where additional work may be required to ensure that WFP's body of policies remains relevant and effective in the global and organizational contexts.

3. In the 2023 edition of the compendium, at the request of the Board, WFP included an analysis of policy gaps. This year, in response to a similar request made at the Board's second regular session in 2023, an update of that analysis has been included as an annex to the compendium. This analysis covers the strategies, circulars and guidance issued or planned, thus providing a comprehensive picture of the normative work and tools that support the design, delivery and monitoring of WFP's programmes and operations.

4. The submission of this compendium coincides with the presentation of several key policies and policy updates for approval in 2024, including policies on resilience, climate change and school meals. A new policy on localization will be presented in 2025, possibly along with an updated policy on policy formulation, depending on the outcomes of ongoing discussions with the Board's governance review working group.

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5. Looking ahead to the two-year programme of work, this will be the final compendium under the strategic plan for 2022–2025, as a new strategic plan is currently scheduled for presentation to the Board for approval in 2025. The new plan will be informed by the findings and recommendations from the mid-term evaluation of WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025, to be presented at the Board's second regular session in 2024. Additional evaluations that are planned or ongoing in a number of areas covered by the compendium are highlighted in the relevant sections.

6. This document includes a table listing the corporate policies under the Board's purview, followed by a summary of each policy, its status and information from related evaluations. The document references the strategies, guidelines and administrative and financial directives whose approval is within the purview of management.

7. To facilitate the Board's review, the compendium arranges the policies in the following four categories: drivers of food and nutrition insecurity; principles and approaches; strategic outcomes and cross-cutting priorities; and enablers and corporate policies.

Drivers of food and nutrition insecurity		
	2013	Peacebuilding in transition settings *WFP's Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings (WFP/EB.2/2013/4-A/Rev.1)*
	2017	Climate change *Climate Change Policy (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-A/Rev.1)*
	2006	Economic analysis *The Role and Application of Economic Analysis in WFP (WFP/EB.A/2006/5-C)*
Principles and approaches		
	2000	Participatory approaches *Participatory Approaches (WFP/EB.3/2000/3-D)*
	2004	Humanitarian principles *Humanitarian Principles (WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C)*
	2006	Humanitarian access *Note on Humanitarian Access and its Implications for WFP (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-B/Rev.1)*
Strategic outcomes and cross-cutting priorities		
	2005	Definition of emergencies *Definition of Emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2005/4-A/Rev.1)*
	2004	Emergency needs assessment *Emergency Needs Assessments (WFP/EB.1/2004/4-A)*
	2006	Targeting in emergencies *Targeting in Emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-A)*
	2005	Exiting emergencies *Exiting Emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2005/4-B)*
	2017	Emergency preparedness *Emergency preparedness policy – Strengthening WFP emergency preparedness for effective response (WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1)*
	2023	Aviation *Aviation Policy (WFP/EB.1/2023/4-A)*
	2003	Food aid and livelihoods in emergencies *Food Aid and Livelihoods in Emergencies: Strategies for WFP (WFP/EB.A/2003/5-A)*
	2023	Cash policy *Cash policy (WFP/EB.A/2023/5-A)*

	2012	Social protection and safety nets *Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy (WFP/EB.A/2012/5-A)*
	2013	School feeding *Revised School Feeding Policy (WFP/EB.2/2013/4-C)*
	2002	Urban food insecurity *Urban Food Insecurity: Strategies for WFP (WFP/EB.A/2002/5-B)*
	2011	Disaster risk reduction and management *WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A)*
	2015	Building resilience for food security and nutrition *Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-C)*
	2019	Local and Regional Food Procurement policy *Local and regional food procurement policy (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-C)*
	2022	Country Capacity Strengthening *Country capacity strengthening policy update (WFP/EB.A/2022/5-A)*
	2023	South–South and triangular cooperation *South–South and Triangular Cooperation Policy Update (WFP/EB.A/2023/5-C)*
	2020	Protection and Accountability *WFP's Protection and Accountability Policy (WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2)*
	2022	Gender *Gender Policy 2022 (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-B/Rev.1)*
	2017	Nutrition *Nutrition Policy (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-C)*
	2010	HIV and AIDS *WFP HIV and AIDS Policy (WFP/EB.2/2010/4-A)*
	2017	Environment *Environmental Policy (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-B/Rev.1)*
	2016	Country strategic plans *Policy on Country Strategic Plans (WFP/EB.2/2016/4-C/1/Rev.1)*
Enablers and corporate policies		
	2021	Workforce management *WFP People Policy: (WFP/EB.A/2021/5-A)*
	2018	Oversight *WFP Oversight Framework (WFP/EB.A/2018/5-C)*
	2018	Enterprise risk management *Enterprise Risk Management Policy (WFP/EB.2/2018/5-C)*
	2021	Fraud and corruption *Revised Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy (WFP/EB.A/2021/5-B/1)*
	2022	Evaluation *WFP Evaluation Policy 2022 (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C)*

Summary discussion of policies

Drivers of food and nutrition insecurity

8. As emphasized in the strategic plan for 2022–2025, the key drivers of hunger and malnutrition – new wars and unresolved conflicts, the global climate crisis and recurrent economic shocks – are also opportunities for renewed action and learning. The drivers also provide entry points for WFP's programming, new partnerships and the generation of evidence.

WFP's role in peacebuilding in transition settings

9. An evaluation of the policy on peacebuilding in transition settings (WFP/EB.2/2013/4-A/Rev.1) was conducted between 2021 and 2022 and subsequently endorsed by the Board at its first regular session in February 2023. The evaluation concluded that overall, the policy had realistic and practical principles that can guide the organization's approach to conflict sensitivity and contributions to peace.

10. WFP's policy underlines that all programming in conflict and post-conflict settings should, as a minimum, do no harm and be conflict sensitive. In settings where there is no peace process endorsed by the United Nations but where there are opportunities to support local reconciliation, WFP can support local-level peacebuilding efforts. This could involve activities such as strengthening social cohesion through the provision of assistance to communities experiencing tension, or enhancing access to contested natural resources through food assistance for asset activities. In settings where there is a peace process endorsed by the United Nations, WFP can support broader national efforts to promote peace, particularly government-led efforts that address hunger.

11. The policy asserts that peacebuilding should not become WFP's overriding priority in any country: WFP must be guided by humanitarian principles, and its entry point must be addressing hunger-related needs. WFP supports the principle of United Nations coherence and recognizes that in certain high-risk environments this requires a carefully calibrated approach. The 2014 update of WFP's peacebuilding policy (WFP/EB.2/2014/4-D) provides information on the progress made and lessons learned during early implementation of the policy.

12. In line with recommendations from the evaluation of the policy, WFP has developed a strategy for the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity, which details how the organization will amend its business practices, build capacities and change its culture in order to ensure that its programmes, operations and staff at all levels are conflict sensitive. Guidance on the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity into programme and functional areas will be complemented by short training modules, capacity building missions and support for regional bureaux and country offices, which will build WFP's capacities for conflict analysis and conflict risk management. The strategy also calls for the appointment of conflict sensitivity focal points in major country offices and the establishment of peace and conflict adviser posts in each regional bureau.

13. WFP is developing a framework that sets out the pathways for its contribution to peace, ensuring alignment with humanitarian principles. The framework ensures that addressing hunger remains the main entry point for WFP's peacebuilding efforts, which primarily focus on building social cohesion.

Climate change

14. An evaluation of WFP's disaster risk reduction and management and climate change policies took place in 2022 and was considered by the Board at its annual session in 2023 (WFP/EB.A/2023/7-C). The evaluation concluded that while WFP's 2017 climate change policy (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-A/Rev.1) provided clear conceptual frameworks, guiding principles and

programmatic options for managing the climate risks in food systems and contributing to climate action, it is now outdated.

15. The evaluation recommended an update of the climate change policy "to incorporate recent changes in the external context, convey the evolving cross-cutting nature of WFP climate change actions and reflect lessons learned and new internal priorities." WFP will update the policy, which will be presented to the Board at its second regular session in November 2024, concurrent with the updated WFP resilience policy, which is being developed simultaneously. The updated climate change policy will articulate WFP's value proposition and comparative advantage in taking an integrated approach to climate action that seeks to contribute to efforts to avert, minimize and address loss and damage from climate change.

Economic analysis

16. WFP's 2006 policy on the role and application of economic analysis (WFP/EB.A/2006/5-C) stresses the importance of economic analysis, coupled with analysis of nutrition, social, political, gender and environmental issues, as essential for a full understanding of the causes and effects of hunger. WFP's economic analysis is an integral part of food security analysis, supports the design and implementation of country strategies and activities for achieving zero hunger by 2030 and contributes to the development of local economies.

17. At the strategic, programmatic and operational levels, economic analysis is necessary in fostering an understanding of how markets can help households to meet their essential needs and achieve food security. It also increases the resilience of WFP's operations to economic shocks and volatility, in line with WFP's cash policy (WFP/EB.A/2023/5-A). This is achieved through analyses of global and local markets, prices and exchange rates, food production, household incomes and expenditures, and other economic variables that directly or indirectly affect the food and nutrition security of people who are hungry and poor, and the efficiency and effectiveness of WFP's operations.

18. Economic analysis informs the design and any required adjustments of WFP's programmes and facilitates the assessment of the feasibility, risks and impact of WFP's interventions. It enhances WFP's operations through several key activities, including analysing the economic factors that contribute to household food insecurity at both the macro and micro levels; conducting market assessments that inform the choice of appropriate assistance modalities; continuously monitoring trends in food prices, exchange rates and other significant economic indicators; evaluating operational impact, effectiveness and efficiency; assessing the upcoming economic risks that have the potential to affect food security, incorporating those risks and related scenarios into country offices' risk management tools and contingency plans, and allowing the design of timely preparatory actions; and performing economic simulations that contribute to early warning and help to assess the food security implications of global shocks, such as the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the global food crisis, and the expected impacts of local shocks and cash transfer programmes. Economic analysis also supports the development of local and global policy, informs evidence-driven communications and advocacy, and provides WFP and its partners with the knowledge they need for evidence-based decision-making. In addition, it offers technical support to governments and informs the alignment of WFP's operations with national development policies and poverty reduction efforts.

19. As this policy was approved prior to 2011, the Office of Evaluation will consult management on whether and when to include it in the office's workplan.

Principles and approaches

20. WFP is committed to the core humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence. This section covers WFP policies on the principles that guide the organization's work.

Participatory approaches

21. WFP's policy on participatory approaches (WFP/EB.3/2000/3-D) stresses that the participation of affected populations improves the design and implementation of WFP's programmes and enhances the achievement of food security objectives. WFP integrates participation into all phases of the programme cycle.

22. While participation is tailored to the setting, WFP works to ensure that decision-making is inclusive, actively involves representative community structures and does not discriminate against marginalized groups. WFP's approach links top-down and bottom-up planning by actively involving communities with other stakeholders who influence the processes that affect the lives of the people WFP serves.

23. WFP's experience has shown that participatory approaches are as relevant in emergencies as they are in development settings. However, the constraints that are characteristic of emergency situations can differ from those in development settings.

24. In 2011, with WFP's endorsement of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's commitments on accountability to affected populations, participation became a key component of WFP's approach to such accountability, which aims to ensure that the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes are informed by and reflect the views of affected people. In 2017, WFP endorsed the standing committee's revised commitments and, as a signatory of the Grand Bargain, it is committed to the 2021 updated commitment to providing greater support for local leadership and the participation of affected communities, and longer-term and flexible support for humanitarian responders. As a result, the participation and leadership of local actors will guide the formulation of the localization policy that is currently under development.

25. WFP followed a participatory approach to the development of its protection and accountability policy, which was approved by the Board in November 2020 at its second regular session (WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2); the development of the strategy for supporting social protection; and the rollout of its disability inclusion road map (WFP/EB.2/2020/4-B). Focusing on consultation, the provision of information and the gathering of feedback from stakeholders, WFP's strategy for community engagement in support of accountability to affected people ensures that its programming is relevant, dynamic and responsive to feedback.

26. As this policy was approved prior to 2011, the Office of Evaluation will consult management on whether and when to include it in the office's workplan.

Humanitarian principles

27. At the request of the Board, in 2004 WFP produced a summary of its core humanitarian principles – humanity, neutrality and impartiality. The strategic plan for 2014–2017 added operational independence as a fourth humanitarian principle to guide WFP's work.

28. The summary also lists respect, self-reliance, participation, capacity building and coordination as foundations for effective humanitarian action and sets out the following two standards:

   ➢ *Accountability.* WFP will keep donors, host country governments, beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders informed of its activities and their impacts through regular reporting.

   ➢ *Professionalism.* WFP will maintain the highest standards of professionalism and integrity among its international and national staff.

29. A summary report on the evaluation of WFP's policies on humanitarian principles (WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C) and humanitarian access (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-B/Rev.1) during the period 2004–2017 was presented to the Board at its 2018 annual session. In response to the evaluation's findings, WFP has conducted research aimed at supporting learning across the organization on the dilemmas that arise in implementing the humanitarian principles. The first paper on those dilemmas was published in 2018 and the second is due to be published by the end of 2024. Guidance on operational independence is being developed and will support country offices in implementing global assurance standards.

30. Following a request from the Board, the Office of Evaluation is considering commissioning a strategic evaluation of WFP's adherence to the humanitarian principles to be carried out in 2026.

Humanitarian access

31. The policy on humanitarian access (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-B/Rev.1) states that humanitarian access is a precondition for principled humanitarian action and that WFP must have safe and unhindered access to people in need in order to assess the situation and deliver and monitor its assistance. Obstacles to access include conflict and insecurity, physical constraints and political and bureaucratic impediments. WFP is committed to strengthening its capacity to obtain and maintain humanitarian access and its ability to reach civilians affected by crises.

32. WFP's corporate approach to humanitarian access acknowledges the organization's supporting role in broader United Nations efforts and recognizes that every case is situation-specific and demands flexibility and creativity in balancing needs and risks. Ensuring safe and sustained access requires sound situation analysis and risk management, work across functional areas, adherence to international law and humanitarian principles, coordination and partnerships among stakeholders, strong engagement with community and local actors, and advocacy at various levels.

33. While humanitarian coordinators lead advocacy for access, WFP often builds community acceptance of its operations and negotiates permission for them so as to ensure that timely assistance can be delivered to people in need, especially when food insecurity is a major element of a crisis or when WFP is working on behalf of other humanitarian actors, for example, as the logistics cluster lead. In all cases, WFP ensures that governments and other parties are informed of and in agreement with its activities.

34. A summary report on the evaluation of WFP's policies on humanitarian principles (WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C) and humanitarian access (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-B/Rev.1) was presented to the Board at its annual session in 2018. The report includes eight recommendations that inform evolving practice within WFP and in coordination with its partners. Guidance materials were developed in response to the recommendations, including operational guidance on engaging with non-State armed groups, published in May 2024.

35. In response to the ongoing internal audit of WFP's corporate approach to humanitarian access, the related strategy will be updated by the end of 2024.

Strategic outcomes and cross-cutting priorities

36. The magnitude and complexity of today's shocks and stressors require that multi-partner and multisectoral programmes, first and foremost, meet urgent needs while seizing opportunities to build resilience and address the root causes of vulnerability. WFP's strategic outcomes and cross-cutting priorities are grounded in the set of policies listed in this section. WFP's strategic plan and normative framework are articulated at the country level through country strategic plans (CSPs), the policy for which is also covered in this section.

Definition of emergencies

37. The policy on the definition of emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2005/4-A/Rev.1) defines emergencies as "urgent situations in which there is clear evidence that an event or series of events has occurred which causes human suffering or imminently threatens human lives or livelihoods and which the government concerned has not the means to remedy; and it is a demonstrably abnormal event or series of events which produces dislocation in the life of a community on an exceptional scale". The revised emergency activation protocol – in effect since February 2022 – is implemented in accordance with this definition.

38. Emergency situations include earthquakes, floods, locust infestations, health crises and similar unforeseen events; human-made emergencies that force people to leave their homes as refugees or internally displaced persons or that cause other distress; food shortages or food insecurity resulting from slow-onset events such as drought, crop failure, pests and diseases that affect people or livestock; restricted access to food resulting from economic shocks, market failure or economic collapse; and complex situations in which a government or the Secretary-General of the United Nations requests the support of WFP.

39. This policy was included in the strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies, which was completed in 2020 (WFP/EB.1/2020/5-A).[1]

Emergency needs assessment

40. In emergency situations, WFP determines whether external food assistance is needed to preserve lives and livelihoods. Emergency needs assessments must be accurate and timely so as to ensure that people are not left at risk and that humanitarian resources are allocated effectively (WFP/EB.1/2004/4-A).

41. Needs assessments gather information regarding the number of people affected by a crisis, the magnitude and location of the crisis; food and nutrition gaps; differences in vulnerability among men, women, children and different social groups; local capacities and livelihood systems; household coping capacities in terms of the ability to produce or otherwise obtain food; the extent to which food needs can be met through market interventions or existing safety net programmes; and when livelihoods can be expected to return to normal.

42. WFP's emergency needs assessment policy was evaluated in 2007. A summary report on that evaluation is set out in document WFP/EB.2/2007/6-A. The policy is also referred to in the strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies during the period 2011–2018, the report of which was presented at the Board's first regular session in 2020 (WFP/EB.1/2020/5-A).

Targeting in emergencies

43. WFP's policy on targeting in emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-A) articulates WFP's position on targeting, which involves the identification of people in need of assistance, with special consideration of systemically marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, and the selection of delivery and distribution mechanisms that ensure that targeted women, men, girls and boys receive assistance when they need it.

44. The policy is complemented by a series of context-specific targeting guidelines and tools, such as the targeting and prioritization operational guidance note (2021) and the joint WFP and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees guidance on targeting of assistance to meet basic needs (2020), which is specific to refugee settings.

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[1] The strategic evaluation covers aspects of WFP's policies on emergency needs assessment, the definition of emergencies, exiting emergencies and targeting in emergencies.

45. Robust processes and tools are particularly important in facilitating the meaningful participation and representation of affected people throughout the programme cycle. This policy – together with the policy on protection and accountability (2020) – stresses that communities should be engaged throughout targeting processes, be consulted on and informed about clear targeting criteria and have access to a functional feedback mechanism or process. To achieve the best possible outcomes with the available resources, targeting and prioritization decisions should, to the extent possible, aim to promote coherence and complementarity among CSP activities, the activities of locally active humanitarian and development partners, and the relevant initiatives of host governments.

46. An Executive Director's circular on the management of targeting processes by WFP offices (OED2022/026) was released in December 2022, partly in response to internal and external audits and evaluations. The circular aims to re-establish targeting as a core component of WFP activities, to define key roles and responsibilities for targeting, and to set minimum standards related to key targeting principles. It also establishes a corporate approach to targeting which encompasses needs and context analysis, targeting and prioritization, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Cross-cutting community and partner engagement and two-way communication with affected people should also be ensured throughout the targeting process.

47. This policy was included in the strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies, which was completed in 2020 (WFP/EB.1/2020/5-A). The Office of Evaluation has commissioned a strategic evaluation of WFP's targeting and prioritization, including in emergencies, to be started in 2024.

Exiting emergencies

48. Decisions regarding when and how to exit from an emergency can be as important as the decision to respond, as outlined in WFP's policy on existing emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2005/4-B). WFP exits from emergencies either by withdrawing resources or by shifting to long-term programmes that protect and improve livelihoods and increase resilience.

49. Exiting presents opportunities for engaging in early recovery activities but also introduces challenges for the communities involved. A sound exit strategy requires the following:

➢ clear criteria for exiting;

➢ benchmarks for assessing progress in meeting the criteria;

➢ steps for reaching the benchmarks, and identification of the people responsible for implementing such steps;

➢ the periodic assessment of progress, and modifications to minimize risks;

➢ a flexible timeline for reaching benchmarks and conducting assessments;

➢ triggers such as progress towards objectives, improvement in the humanitarian situation, increased government capacity to meet needs, declining levels of donor contributions and willingness to allocate funding to a recovery programme; and

➢ the alignment of long-term objectives with government plans or donor priorities.

50. This policy was included in the strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies, which was completed in 2020 (WFP/EB.1/2020/5-A). An internal review of WFP's emergency-related policies is being conducted by the Emergency, Preparedness and Response Service to inform normative efforts in this area.

Emergency preparedness

51. The emergency preparedness policy (WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1) provides the framework and overarching principles for WFP's work in an increasingly complex operational environment, and its approach to treating each emergency setting and response as unique. It informs WFP's partnerships with national and local governments, regional bodies and local communities, civil society entities and the private sector.

52. Recommendations from the strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies (WFP/EB.1/2020/5-A) led to the development of the emergency activation protocol which requires WFP to proactively anticipate and prepare for emergencies, including by investing in early warning and preparedness activities. Enhancements to the corporate alert system facilitate inter-functional early warning and early action. WFP continues to strengthen its staff deployment capacity and other corporate tools and guidance for responding to emergencies in an efficient, effective and timely manner.

53. In accordance with the coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation commissioned an evaluation of the emergency preparedness policy in 2023. The summary report on that evaluation will be presented to the Board at its first regular session in 2025.

Aviation

54. WFP's aviation policy (WFP/EB.1/2023/4-A) provides the basis for the operational framework of WFP's aviation service and underscores the organization's commitment to ensuring that it provides safe, efficient, effective and adaptable aviation services. At its first regular session of 2024, the Board received an update on the policy's implementation which outlined the progress made in WFP's provision of air transport services and in the related safety protocols and compliance, measures for ensuring environmental sustainability and a high-performing workforce, sustainable and flexible financing, innovation in humanitarian air transport solutions, and strategic partnerships.

55. Overall, the update highlighted that in its first year of implementation, WFP's aviation policy had strengthened the aviation service's ability to respond rapidly to emergencies, maintain high standards of safety and efficiency, and pursue environmental sustainability, while fostering innovation and strategic collaboration.

56. The Office of Evaluation will commission an evaluation of the aviation policy within four to six years of the start of its implementation.

Food aid and livelihoods in emergencies

57. The policy on food aid and livelihoods in emergencies (WFP/EB.A/2003/5-A) states that protecting livelihoods is critical in helping people to meet their immediate needs during emergencies and to move towards recovery once a shock has passed. The policy emphasizes that food assistance programmes can help to preserve essential assets, prevent negative coping strategies and support livelihoods during crises. The policy indicates that, whenever appropriate, WFP shall systematically assess and analyse livelihood-related issues in emergencies; strengthen its capacity to design, implement and monitor livelihood interventions when they are deemed appropriate; and build synergies between its emergency and longer-term interventions, including by strengthening its partnerships with key actors such as community-based organizations, other United Nations entities – including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the International Labour Organization – non-governmental organizations and technical organizations engaged at the humanitarian–peace–development nexus.

58. The policy is complemented by a range of subsequent WFP policies, including those on emergency needs assessment (2004), targeting in emergencies (2006), cash (2023), social protection and safety nets (2012), gender (2022), building resilience for food security and nutrition (2015) and protection and accountability (2020).

59. Since the release of the policy in 2003, WFP has further strengthened its approach to the protection and support of livelihoods in emergencies in a range of thematic areas, including emergency assessments, analysis and targeting; early warning, emergency preparedness and early response capacity; cash transfers and market support; food assistance for assets and food assistance for training schemes in emergency settings; the use of the three-pronged approach[2] to link emergency responses and resilience-building activities; self-reliance and livelihood support in displacement settings; urban programming; and the mainstreaming of gender and disability considerations.

60. This policy was included in the strategic evaluation of WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies, which was completed in 2020 (WFP/EB.1/2020/5-A).

Cash

61. WFP's cash policy (WFP/EB.A/2023/5-A) articulates how WFP conceptualizes and enables the use of cash transfers to contribute to the achievement of zero hunger. Building on more than 15 years of experience, the policy shows how cash transfers can support the people WFP assists in meeting their immediate food, nutrition and other essential needs, while helping them to break the cycle of poverty and food insecurity.

62. The policy puts the stories and experiences of the people WFP assists at the centre of WFP's cash operations. It seeks to ensure flexibility and choice for those people and to maximize the efficiency of its programmes by expanding the use of unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance.

63. To achieve the envisaged outcomes of the policy, WFP seeks to provide people in emergency situations with money to cover their essential needs, protect the purchasing power of households during times of economic volatility, use cash transfer programmes as a platform for enabling people's digital financial inclusion, and support governments in strengthening their cash transfer programmes and payment systems. In addition, whenever WFP transfers money to people, it prioritizes women as the recipients of the transfers on behalf of their households.

64. To enable its use of cash transfers, WFP puts in place end-to-end assurance mechanisms that ensure that the money is received by the intended recipients and that the risks of potential fraud and diversion are mitigated.

65. An update on the implementation of the cash policy will be presented to the Board at its second regular session in November 2024. In accordance with the coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation will commission an evaluation of the policy within four to six years of the start of its implementation.

Social protection and safety nets

66. In October 2004, the Board approved the policy document "WFP and Food-Based Safety Nets: Concepts, Experiences and Future Programming Opportunities" (WFP/EB.3/2004/4-A). In 2012 it took note of the update of WFP's safety nets policy (WFP/EB.A/2012/5-A), which WFP had prepared in response to evolving global and internal debates and the results of a

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[2] The three-pronged approach to programming calls for the planning and implementation of initiatives at the national, sub-national and regional levels.

2011 strategic evaluation of WFP's role in social protection and safety nets (WFP/EB.A/2011/7-B).

67. In 2018, the update of WFP's safety nets policy was subject to an evaluation (WFP/EB.A/2019/7-B), which found that WFP's leadership should confirm and sustain the organization's commitment to supporting nationally led social protection programmes and generated five recommendations aimed at guiding strategic planning, including through the development of a corporate social protection strategy.

68. In response to those recommendations, WFP developed and launched its strategy for supporting social protection in July 2021.[3] The strategy provides a vision and a coordinating framework for WFP's organization-wide work in support of national social protection systems and programmes. Fully aligned with WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025, the implementation plan for the social protection strategy focuses on workforce development, cross-functional technical support and coordination, knowledge and learning, partnerships, and monitoring and reporting.

69. In 2025, the Office of Evaluation will commission a strategic evaluation on social protection to provide insights and recommendations for future programming and strategic direction.

School feeding

70. The WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025 (WFP/EB.2/2021/4-A/1/Rev.2) affirmed WFP's global leadership role in school health and nutrition. A strategic evaluation of the contribution of school feeding activities to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (WFP/EB.A/2021/7-B) was presented to the Board at its annual session in 2021. The evaluation recommended that WFP update its 2013 school feeding policy (WFP/EB.2/2013/4-C), which outlined its approach to the direct implementation of school feeding operations and related capacity strengthening initiatives in various country settings.

71. The new school meals policy update, to be considered by the Board at its second regular session in November 2024, aims to advance the school feeding agenda worldwide and to sustain the key role that school meal programmes play in connecting humanitarian and development work. The policy will reflect the latest global initiatives related to school meals, including the creation of the School Meals Coalition, while ensuring that WFP is well equipped to meet the expectations of countries and partners in this thriving sector. The update is expected to affirm that school meal programmes are one of the most significant social protection interventions, increasing resilience to poverty, food insecurity and social exclusion among children and households in vulnerable situations. It will also build on WFP's school health and nutrition strategy.

72. WFP's ten-year school health and nutrition strategy[4] was launched in early 2020, based on a comprehensive review of evidence on the support provided to schools through school meal programmes, lessons learned and best practices, and consultations with internal and external partners. WFP will continue to work with governments, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other United Nations entities, research institutes, regional organizations and other partners to ensure that all primary schoolchildren have access to good-quality meals in school, accompanied by an integrated package of health and nutrition services.

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[3] WFP. 2021. *World Food Programme Strategy for Support to Social Protection*.

[4] WFP. 2020. *WFP School Feeding Strategy 2020–2030. A Chance for Every Schoolchild: Partnering to scale up School Health and Nutrition for Human Capital*.

Urban food insecurity

73. Poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition affect many cities in the countries where WFP works. The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly strong impact on urban populations, leading to increased requests from countries for WFP's support. Working with its partners, WFP is strengthening its approaches and programmes for urban settings, focusing on robust multisector context analysis for a better understanding of vulnerability in urban areas; targeting approaches for use in heterogeneous urban settings; complementary programming, systems-level thinking and partnerships that facilitate adequate responses to poor service delivery in informal urban settlements; and well-planned exit strategies that foster local and national ownership of food assistance and social protection systems, while reducing vulnerability to future shocks and stresses.

74. In line with WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025, its mandate and its comparative advantage, the New Urban Agenda of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, and the World Humanitarian Summit, and through extensive consultation, an urban strategy has been developed to articulate WFP's priorities in urban areas, providing a framework and strategic direction for the organization's activities that can contribute to the achievement of zero hunger. The urban strategy[5] was launched in 2023.

75. As the policy paper introducing an urban strategy was produced prior to 2011 (WFP/EB.A/2002/5-B) and a new strategy has been developed since then, the Office of Evaluation will consider whether and how to include an evaluation of the urban strategy in its workplan.

Disaster risk reduction and management

76. WFP's policy on disaster risk reduction and management (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A) focuses on building resilience and capacity among the most vulnerable people, communities and countries in order to reduce the risk of disasters, thereby protecting lives and livelihoods in situations of vulnerability and preventing hunger and malnutrition.

77. The evaluation of WFP's disaster risk reduction and management and climate change policies (WFP/EB.A/2023/7-C) concluded that the disaster risk reduction policy has become increasingly outdated, despite the continued relevance of disaster risk reduction to WFP's work. Following the recommendations of the evaluation, the concept of disaster risk reduction will be repositioned through the development of a conceptual framework that will facilitate the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into other relevant policies and functions within WFP.

Building resilience for food security and nutrition

78. An evaluation of the WFP policy on building resilience for food security and nutrition (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-C) was presented to the Board at its annual session in June 2023 (WFP/EB.A/2023/7-D). The evaluation concluded that while the policy is relevant to WFP's mandate, it no longer fulfils its role in positioning WFP in the resilience landscape and should be updated for greater conceptual clarity.

79. Following the evaluation, WFP engaged with Board members through a series of roundtables and informal policy dialogues, workshops and consultations aimed at informing the development of an updated resilience policy. The updated policy will aim to clearly define resilience in the context of WFP's programming and comparative advantage in

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[5] WFP. 2023. *WFP Urban Strategy. Achieving zero hunger in an urbanising world.*

resilience-building interventions, particularly in settings where there are recurring shocks and where WFP's resilience interventions can contribute to reducing needs.

80. The resilience policy will be presented to the Board at its second regular session in November 2024, concurrent with the updated climate change policy which is being developed simultaneously.

Local and regional food procurement

81. Over the years, WFP has steadily increased the share of food procurement it carries out at the local and regional levels. Building on the previous policy[6] and in response to a request of the Board in June 2018, a consultative process with Board members and other stakeholders led to the development of a local and regional food procurement policy, which was approved at the Board's second regular session in 2019 (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-C). The policy sets out three of WFP's strengths in relation to food procurement – purchasing power, knowledge of food markets, and convening capacity – and its complementarities with the other Rome-based agencies and other actors.

82. The local and regional food procurement policy proposes a set of guiding principles aimed at sustainably increasing WFP's purchase of food at the local and regional levels. The policy also outlines how WFP will leverage its purchasing power to support smallholder farmers and contribute to the achievement of food security by fostering the enhancement of local and regional value chains and food systems. The policy promotes further integration of WFP's procurement and programme functions in order to leverage local and regional procurement and enhance the performance of food systems at the local and regional levels.

83. The leveraging of local procurement and pro-smallholder farmer sourcing, combined with programme interventions, has become a key tool in WFP's contribution to reducing hardship among the most vulnerable people and promoting systemic changes that reduce humanitarian needs and build more resilient food systems in the long term. In addition, the tools and systems developed within the policy framework are being applied in countries in two regions – Western Africa, and the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe – as well as the core countries for implementation of the policy. In 2023, WFP purchased 60 percent of the food used in its operations in local and regional markets.[7]

84. WFP provided an update on the implementation of the local and regional food procurement policy at the Board's annual session in 2023. In 2024, the Office of Evaluation is commissioning an evaluation of the supply chain strategic road map for 2022–2025, which includes the local and regional food procurement policy as one of its pillars. The policy will therefore be assessed as part of that strategic evaluation.

Country capacity strengthening

85. The WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025 gives prominence to WFP's role in country capacity strengthening (CCS). The plan emphasizes the importance of strengthening national programmes and systems so that they reach people at scale and achieve sustainable results. It incorporates a dedicated corporate strategic outcome.

86. At its annual session in 2022, the Board approved a policy update on CCS (WFP/EB.A/2022/5-A), addressing a recommendation from the 2021 synthesis of evidence and lessons on CCS from decentralized evaluations (WFP/EB.A/2021/7-C), which called for renewed corporate commitment to CCS and greater clarity on the concept of CCS. The policy

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[6] WFP's 2006 policy on food procurement in developing countries stressed that all else being equal, and considering donor funding criteria, preference is to be given to suppliers from developing countries. The 2006 policy was superseded by the local and regional food procurement policy, but WFP maintains its commitment to that principle.

[7] "Annual performance report for 2023" (WFP/EB.A/2024/4-A/Rev.1), paragraph 114.

update builds on WFP's 2004 policy on strengthening country and regional capacities (WFP/EB.3/2004/4-B) and the 2009 update on implementation of that policy (WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B). The update sets out the purpose of WFP's engagement in CCS, articulates key concepts and terminology and outlines an approach that draws on the latest theories and good practices for capacity strengthening.

87.   The policy update proposes a systemic approach to CCS that embraces the complementarities and interdependencies between capacities at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels and promotes the engagement of stakeholders from all areas of society – governments, civil society, the private sector, academia and communities – acknowledging their collective importance in achieving sustainable and transformative outcomes in terms of strengthened capacities. WFP's CCS approach takes into consideration and builds on existing national capacities, is rooted in locally led and owned solutions and is applicable in diverse settings, including fragile and conflict-affected states.

88.   A supplementary information note presented to the Board outlines WFP's implementation plan for realizing the strategic vision set out in the policy update. It identifies key objectives and activities that focus on policy dissemination, internal capability development, programme support, monitoring and evidence generation, knowledge management and learning, and partnerships.

89.   The implementation and effectiveness of the CCS policy update will be reviewed through an independent evaluation carried out within four to six years of the approval of the update, in line with evaluation coverage norms.

South–South and triangular cooperation

90.   The Board approved the update of WFP's policy on South–South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) at its annual session in 2023 (WFP/EB.A/2023/5-C). The update deepens WFP's corporate commitment to SSTC as a vital tool for empowering the Global South to achieve a more stable and prosperous future by sharing solutions for zero hunger.

91.   In direct response to the 2021 evaluation of the original policy from 2015 (WFP/EB.2/2021/6-A) and in line with WFP's strategic plan, the policy update enables WFP to expand its role as a facilitator, broker and matchmaker for SSTC, based on its comparative advantages and a set of standards and principles aligned with the United Nations system-wide SSTC strategy. The aim is to ensure that governments and other national and local stakeholders can benefit from WFP's specialized support for SSTC in pursuit of SDG 2 and that country-led SSTC initiatives are recognized, developed and widely embraced as an integral tool in delivering inclusive solutions for zero hunger.

92.   Informed by extensive internal and external consultations, the policy update focuses on three strategic areas: consolidating current SSTC efforts by moving from the piloting of SSTC arrangements to the provision of programme support for SSTC; responding to emerging demands in areas such as supply chain management, emergency preparedness and response, and disaster risk reduction, among others; and ensuring high-quality SSTC arrangements and results based on international standards and principles. For the policy to succeed, WFP will focus on seven key enablers: partnerships, financing, institutional capability, a skilled workforce, guidance, communication and evidence generation. These enablers are included in a costed policy implementation plan for 2023–2027.

93.   A year after the approval of the SSTC policy update, WFP organized a side-event at the Board's annual session in June 2024, where Board members were briefed on progress in implementing the policy and discussed opportunities for further enhancing WFP's support for countries that share their innovations and learn from each other.

94.   In accordance with coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation will commission an evaluation of the SSTC policy update within four to six years of the start of its implementation.

Protection and accountability

95.   In November 2020, the Board approved WFP's protection and accountability policy (WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2), which updated the organization's 2012 humanitarian protection policy (WFP/EB.1/2012/5-B/Rev.1). The update responds to evolving needs and addresses recommendations from a 2018 policy evaluation of WFP's policies on humanitarian principles and access in humanitarian contexts (WFP/EB.A/2018/7-C), including through an enhanced focus on accountability to affected people. Protection is understood as encompassing activities that aim to prevent, reduce, mitigate and respond to the risks and consequences of violence, coercion, deprivation and abuse against individuals, groups and communities.

96.   Through the protection and accountability policy, WFP commits to preventing and responding to the protection risks associated with hunger in all settings and to achieving successful protection outcomes for the people it assists. In line with a cross-cutting priority of the strategic plan for 2022–2025, WFP seeks to ensure that affected people are at the centre of programme planning and delivery and that their voices influence its decision making and action.

97.   The policy enables WFP to better define protection risks and needs and the role that it can most effectively play, in partnership, in the various environments in which it works. The policy also highlights the differential impacts that food insecurity can have on different populations and how to deliver responses to the people who are at heightened risk, such as women and adolescent girls, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples. These efforts are complemented by the implementation of the gender policy, the disability inclusion road map and guidance on community engagement and Indigenous Peoples.

98.   In 2024, WFP continued to implement the policy, including through the scale-up of the integrated context analysis and risk assessment tool, which combines cross-cutting analyses into a single exercise; the finalization and rollout of the cooperating partner toolkit, which provides partners with guidance on key protection and accountability issues throughout the programme cycle; and the design and delivery of a package of integrated capacity strengthening interventions on key people-centred approaches for the staff of WFP's country offices and partners. Other important achievements in 2024 include the development of guidance on protection and cash-based transfer operations, and on how to assist unaccompanied children and households headed by children.

99.   WFP has carried out a mid-term review of the protection and accountability policy which assesses progress to date and makes recommendations for future action. The findings of the review will be available in the last quarter of 2024. The Office of Evaluation will commission a further evaluation of the policy in 2026 to provide insights and recommendations for future programming and strategic direction.

Gender

100.   WFP's 2022 gender policy was approved at the Board's first regular session in 2022 (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-B/Rev.1). The policy builds on WFP's long-standing commitments to, and work in, fostering gender equality and women's empowerment, and addresses the key findings of an evaluation of the previous policy (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-A). The 2022 policy focuses on WFP's programmatic work on gender and is aligned with and complementary to WFP's people policy and its policies on protection and accountability and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

101. WFP's gender policy calls for a shift in focus towards addressing the root causes of the gender inequalities that affect food security and nutrition, which is essential to the achievement of SDGs 2, 5 and 17. WFP's strategic plan positions gender equality and women's empowerment as a cross-cutting theme to be integrated into all WFP initiatives, while the gender policy focuses on the leadership role that WFP must play in achieving equitable access to and control over food security and nutrition for women and men and advancing the economic empowerment of women and girls in food security and nutrition. The policy places an emphasis on the use of effective partnerships, robust gender analyses and specific data, and the strengthening of evidence creation as key technical areas for improvement.

102. In direct response to the 2020 evaluation of the previous policy for 2015–2020 (WFP/EB.A/2020/7-B), the 2022 gender policy was accompanied by an implementation plan. Key advances in the implementation of that plan in 2023 to 2024 include the development of tools to support the findings from a study of unequal access and the gendered barriers to humanitarian assistance; implementation of the integrated risk and context analysis tool; the recalibration of the gender equality certification programme for country offices; the launch of three new indicators in the corporate results framework, two of which are based on qualitative assessment methodologies; the piloting of the social norms exploration tool and multiple guidance documents developed under the Rome-based agencies' joint programme on gender-transformative approaches; and the development of the gender equality accountability for results approach to track results, budgets and expenditure related to the pursuit of gender equality, in accordance with CSP commitments.

103. WFP's corporate restructuring in 2024 led to the amalgamation of the offices and units responsible for gender equality, protection and accountability to affected people, disability inclusion, Indigenous Peoples, women's economic empowerment and digital financial inclusion, and localization into a single Gender, Protection and Inclusion Service. The restructuring will promote greater synergies and efficiencies in WFP's delivery on its people-centred programming and policy commitments.

104. In line with the coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation will commission an evaluation of the gender policy between four and six years of the start of its implementation.

Nutrition

105. At its first regular session in 2017, the Board approved a nutrition policy for 2017–2021 (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-C), which supersedes the previous nutrition policy for 2012–2014 (WFP/EB.1/2012/5-A).

106. The current policy reinforces WFP's commitment to addressing all forms of malnutrition as a primary means of achieving SDG 2, through direct implementation and CCS activities. The policy takes into consideration the availability of, access to, demand for and consumption of nutritious foods and articulates an evidence-based, life-cycle approach to addressing nutrition needs and achieving the goal of adequate and healthy diets for vulnerable people of all ages.

107. The strategic plan for 2022–2025 recognizes the integration of nutrition considerations into all WFP programmes as a cross-cutting priority. WFP is committed to leveraging its systems, strategies and capacity so as to maximize its contribution to improving diets and reducing malnutrition. Assisting vulnerable people in meeting their nutrition needs is at the core of WFP's mandate. This includes reaching people living in extreme poverty, people with disabilities, older people and people living with HIV and tuberculosis, among other population groups. WFP focuses on ensuring the nutrient adequacy of food assistance while providing life-saving malnutrition treatment and prevention services for women and children. It works with governments to improve access to healthy diets through

interventions in areas such as nutrition-sensitive social protection. WFP also aims to strengthen food systems for nutrition by working along food supply chains, scaling up food fortification initiatives and changing consumers' behaviours.

108. The evaluation of WFP's work on nutrition and HIV/AIDS, presented to the Board at its first regular session in 2023 (WFP/EB.1/2023/5-A), concluded that nutrition plays a central role in the current strategic plan and WFP's portfolio of programmes, and that the existing nutrition policy remains largely relevant. The evaluation reinforces the important role that WFP plays in addressing malnutrition and promoting healthy diets. Based on recommendations from the evaluation, a WFP nutrition strategy and implementation plan is being developed through a consultative process, building on a concrete definition of successful nutrition integration throughout WFP's programmes, corporate systems and people. The new strategy will be developed by the end of 2024.

HIV and AIDS

109. Despite four decades of action, HIV remains a global public health challenge. People living with HIV face increased food insecurity, which can force them to adopt risky coping mechanisms in order to feed themselves and their households, especially in emergency and fragile settings. Food insecurity and the associated coping strategies often have negative impacts on adherence to life-saving HIV treatment. Malnutrition also affects the well-being of people living with HIV, as inadequate diet and poor nutrition can increase the risk of morbidity and mortality.

110. To support the most vulnerable people, WFP's operational and technical expertise contributes to saving and changing lives by facilitating the inclusion of vulnerable, food-insecure and malnourished population groups, including people living with HIV, into its existing programmes and platforms, promoting long-term health and development outcomes at scale. WFP continues to integrate food and nutrition programming into national HIV and tuberculosis responses, increasingly leveraging social protection to tackle vulnerability and inequality at scale, in line with the global AIDS strategy.

111. An update on the implementation of WFP's policy on HIV and AIDS (WFP/EB.2/2010/4-A) is presented to the Board annually. The strategic evaluation of the policy was presented at the Board's first regular session in 2023 (WFP/EB.1/2023/5-A). The evaluation found that while the policy was relevant at the time that it was written, its relevance had diminished over time given the developments in life-saving HIV medication and low-cost testing. The evaluation concluded that HIV remains a highly relevant issue for WFP in delivering on its mandate of reaching the most vulnerable people and recommended that WFP determine how best to optimize and integrate the response to HIV into its programming so as to ensure that it meets its global commitments to the HIV response and to "leaving no one behind". In response, the WFP Nutrition Division has developed a strategy that articulates WFP's position on HIV, identifying new opportunities for the integration of HIV issues into programming and enhancing accountability throughout WFP in the period up to 2030.

Environment

112. WFP recognizes that care of the environment is essential to food security and sustainable development. WFP's environment policy (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-B/Rev.1) commits the organization to developing mechanisms for systematically identifying, avoiding and managing the risks to the environment that arise from WFP's activities. It also recognizes that WFP's food assistance activities can generate environmental benefits and commits WFP to pursuing such benefits, while seeking to avoid harm.

113. Guided by a set of overarching principles, the policy calls for progressively enhancing the environmental sustainability of WFP's activities; protecting the environment; increasing resource efficiency and minimizing WFP's carbon footprint; aligning WFP's actions with good

international practice and global standards for environmental sustainability; and strengthening the capacity of WFP's partners to plan and implement environmentally sound activities for food security and nutrition.

114. The policy commits WFP to developing planning and implementation tools, including environmental standards that lay out essential protection measures and minimum expectations, a screening and categorization process for identifying and managing environmental risks, and an environmental management system consistent with standard ISO 14001 of the International Standards Organization.

115. Since the adoption of the policy, an environmental and social sustainability framework has been developed to guide the establishment and maintenance of a set of core environmental and social standards, a process for screening, categorizing and managing environmental and social risks, and an environmental management system. The framework is designed to limit the potentially negative impacts that WFP may have on the environment, people or communities as a result of its programme activities, support operations or any other action it carries out or funds, and to progressively increase the environmental and social sustainability of those activities, operations and other actions.

116. In accordance with coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation commissioned an evaluation of the environment policy in 2023. The summary report on that evaluation will be presented to the Board at its first regular session in 2025.

Country strategic plans

117. The CSP policy marked a substantial shift in WFP's approach to programme planning, oversight and approval. The 2023 evaluation of the policy found that it continues to be a valid document that is not in need of immediate updating and that the policy enabled WFP to shift to in-country planning and articulated a medium-term guiding vision for its work.

118. With CSPs now an established part of WFP's programme portfolio, the CSP policy includes a set of instruments, accompanying measures and staff technical and other skills that are essential to successful CSP planning and implementation. As country offices move into new generations of CSPs, the normative reference point for staff at all levels has shifted from the CSP policy to the array of programme, planning, budgeting, performance management and reporting guidance that has been developed to guide implementation of the policy.

119. In line with evaluation recommendations, WFP is developing a new approach to country strategic planning that embraces a more strategic and "leaner" approach to the CSP framework, strengthening the focus on CSP development, quality assurance and learning and simplifying procedures and processes for the review, revision and approval of CSP documents. WFP will put in place a revised, more consistent approach to the attainment of its ambitions through focused CSPs and related realistic budgets.

120. Under its CSPs, WFP prioritizes strategic and programmatic alignment with the priorities of countries and partners and engages in new and innovative areas of work while deepening its experience in more established areas. This is reflected in better positioning and a more mature relationship with governments, while common country assessments and United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks guide and frame the development aspects of all CSPs, bringing new opportunities and areas of work.

121. WFP is focusing on strengthening the implementation of the CSP policy through enhanced accountability and learning for results-based management, and the scale-up of strategic workforce planning and skills development in line with its people policy.

Enablers and corporate policies

Workforce management

122. WFP's approach to developing its people and workplace culture continues to evolve following the Board's approval of the strategic plan for 2022–2025. In this context, WFP's people policy (WFP/EB.A/2021/5-A) provides a vision of the workforce and a coherent framework for achieving excellence in people management and supporting the development of a respectful, ethical and inclusive workplace culture, all of which are necessary for the accomplishment of WFP's mission.

123. The people policy identifies four priority areas for people management, and 12 elements that frame the implementation of activities in each priority area. The four priority areas are "nimble and flexible", "performing and improving", "diverse and inclusive" and "caring and supportive". The corporate results framework for 2022–2025 (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-A/Rev.1) is anchored in the people policy. Management result 2, "People management", includes key performance indicators for each priority area and reflects WFP's ambition for a future workforce and a respectful and inclusive workplace culture that promotes and safeguards the highest standards of ethical conduct and behaviour.

124. After the Executive Director authorized and instructed all directors and heads of office to review existing policy instruments, strategies, frameworks, action plans and other administrative issuances, revising them as necessary to bring them into line with the people policy, in 2022 100 percent of regional bureaux and 92 percent of country offices had included a "people dimension" in their workplans, while 83 percent of WFP offices globally reported that they had started reviewing policies, strategies, frameworks and practices in line with the policy. Overall, 91 percent of all WFP offices had included a people dimension in their annual workplans.

125. Since the approval of the policy, a dedicated unit has been established as part of the Workplace Culture Department. The People and Culture Coordination Unit supports the organizational change process involved in implementing the people policy by coordinating, providing oversight of and reporting on cross-cutting activities in the areas of people management and organizational culture. The unit also coordinates the critical corporate initiative on investing in WFP people, which was approved as part of the management plan for 2022–2024 and which enables WFP to go further and faster in support of its goals relating to people and culture.

126. In accordance with coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation will commission an evaluation of the people policy in 2026 which will provide insights and recommendations for future programming and strategic direction.

Oversight

127. At its annual session in 2018, the Board approved the WFP oversight framework (WFP/EB.A/2018/5-C). In response to a recommendation included in the report of the External Auditor on oversight by management (WFP/EB.A/2022/6-I/1), an Executive Director's circular on the framework for management oversight at WFP (OED2023/007) was issued in March 2023 to clarify the expectations related to the oversight conducted by management in regional bureaux and global functions as part of their role in providing "second line" oversight, and to outline the principles and responsibilities for delivering, reporting on, reviewing and following up on management oversight findings.[8]

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[8] See also "WFP management response to the recommendations in the report of the External Auditor on oversight by management" (WFP/EB.A/2022/6-I/1/Add.1).

128. As an integral part of the system of governance, oversight provides reasonable assurance that the activities of WFP are fully in accordance with legislative mandates; the funds provided to WFP are fully accounted for; the activities of WFP are conducted in the most efficient and effective manner; and the staff and other officials of WFP adhere to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and ethics.

129. Based on findings from the Joint Inspection Unit's system-wide review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2023/3),[9] there is a need to update the oversight framework. The Risk Management Division aims to ensure that the updated framework facilitates a holistic approach to accountability by providing a stand-alone accountability and oversight framework that takes into account the results of various oversight reviews, including the Joint Inspection Unit's system-wide review and the governance review commissioned by the Board. The consolidated accountability and oversight framework is expected to be submitted to the Board for approval at its first regular session in February 2026, but the timeline may be amended pending the outcomes of the governance review.

Enterprise risk management

130. WFP first established an enterprise risk management policy in November 2005 (WFP/EB.2/2005/5-E/1). The policy was updated in May 2015 (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-B) and again in November 2018 (WFP/EB.2/2018/5-C). WFP has also had an internal control framework in place since 2011, which was revised in 2015 (OED2015/016) and which forms the basis for the organization's approach to internal control, in line with international best practice.

131. The 2018 policy establishes a pragmatic, systematic and disciplined approach to the identification and management of risks throughout WFP that is clearly linked to the achievement of WFP's strategic objectives. Specifically, WFP's vision for enterprise risk management is to maintain a consistent risk management framework within which risks can be identified, analysed and addressed and accountability can be assigned; achieve a common understanding of WFP's exposure to risks in relation to its risk appetite, enabling it to articulate its risk profile coherently throughout WFP and with its donors and external stakeholders; and establish a culture in which risk management is linked to the implementation of WFP's strategic plan and considered proactively in operational decision-making.

132. The 2018 policy explains the processes for assessing and monitoring risks and "escalating" them to the appropriate level of management for response, in line with the risk appetite. Risk appetite statements reflect an office's intentions in relation to the management of risks and provide support for managers in analysing, monitoring and responding to risks and establishing relevant performance targets. The policy also defines risk management roles for country, regional and headquarters directors.

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[9] The definitions outlined in the Joint Inspection Unit report on the *Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations System organizations* are as follows:

> *External oversight*: Oversight carried out by individuals or entities that are external to the organization, appointed by the legislative organs and/or governing bodies of the organization, and independent of its executive head.

> *Independent oversight*: Oversight carried out by staff members (or consultants reporting to staff members) who are independent of the executive head of the organization.

> *Management oversight*: Oversight carried out by or on behalf of units or departments of the organization that report directly or indirectly to its executive head.

133. Numerous developments since the adoption of the first policy have contributed to the mainstreaming of risk management into WFP's strategies, CSP design and operations and to an increased understanding of risk management as an integral part of WFP's internal control environment. These efforts continue as WFP seeks to embed aspects of risk management into planning and decision-making at all levels of the organization.

134. In accordance with coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation commissioned an evaluation of the enterprise risk management policy in 2024, which will provide insights and recommendations for future programming and strategic direction.

Fraud and corruption

135. WFP's revised anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy (WFP/EB.A/2021/5-B/1) supersedes the previous policy adopted in 2015 (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-E/1). WFP is highly risk-averse regarding fraud and corruption in its activities and operations and has zero tolerance for inaction in the face of potential cases of fraud or corruption. Accordingly, WFP will take measures to prevent, detect and deter any fraud or corruption perpetrated to its detriment by its own personnel or by cooperating partners, suppliers or other third parties, and will take robust action when fraud or corruption occur.

136. The revised policy reiterates WFP's low risk appetite in relation to fraud and corruption; expands the scope of the policy to include any type of contracted entity or other third party that has a relationship with WFP; expands the definition of "fraud and corruption" to include theft, money laundering and the financing of terrorism; presents a "life-cycle" view of the fraud risk management process; and clarifies the requirements of employees and managers in reporting and "escalating" potential cases to appropriate levels of management.

137. In line with the coverage norms for policy evaluations, the Office of Evaluation will consider commissioning an evaluation of the anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy in 2027, between four and six years after the start of the policy's implementation.

Evaluation

138. Following the third peer review of WFP's evaluation function by the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an updated evaluation policy was approved by the Board at its first regular session in 2022. The update supersedes the previous evaluation policy (WFP/EB.2/2015/4-A/Rev.1), adopted in 2015.

139. The updated policy reaffirms WFP's commitment to adhering to international evaluation principles, norms and standards and continues to strengthen the strategic direction and normative framework for WFP's evaluation function under the United Nations development system reform and the 2030 Agenda. The policy's vision is to strengthen WFP's contribution to the achievement of zero hunger by 2030 by establishing a culture of accountability and learning supported by evaluative thinking, behaviour and systems. The policy's goals are to ensure that evaluation evidence informs decisions on WFP policies, strategies, plans and programmes and that the evaluation function contributes to global knowledge and supports decision-making and the achievement of the SDGs at the global, regional and national levels.

140. The policy will be achieved through the achievement of the following outcomes:

   i) Evaluations are independent, credible and useful, embedded in the policy and programme cycle, and managed in accordance with United Nations norms and standards and the WFP evaluation quality assurance system.

   ii) Evaluation coverage is balanced and relevant and supports both accountability and learning purposes, in line with the coverage norms for evaluations.

iii) Evaluation evidence is systematically accessible and available to meet the needs of WFP and its partners.

iv) There is enhanced capacity to commission, manage and use evaluations throughout WFP.

v) Partnerships contribute to strengthened evaluation practice by humanitarian and development actors and to United Nations coherence.

141. The 2022 policy integrates the roles and accountabilities of different stakeholders, which are also articulated in a separate evaluation charter. A new corporate evaluation strategy sets a phased implementation plan, with costings provided in the regular three-year evaluation function workplan annexed to the WFP management plan submitted annually to the Board.

142. According to the evaluation policy (paragraph 65), a review of the policy is proposed for 2025–2026 to inform any necessary revisions identified through the external peer review process of the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Development Assistance Committee.

ANNEX

Analysis of policy gaps

1. This annex provides an updated analysis of policy gaps, and the related normative work, as identified and discussed with the Board in 2023.

Food systems

2. Following the United Nations Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment in 2023, and building on the momentum triggered by the 2021 food systems summit, WFP is working closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other key stakeholders as part of the inter-agency United Nations food systems coordination hub aimed at facilitating progress on the operationalization of national pathways for advancing food systems transformation.

3. While a specific policy on food systems is not currently planned, the updated resilience policy provides an opportunity to articulate WFP's contributions to the transformation of food systems through integrated programming and strategic partnerships informed by a robust body of evidence. Moreover, to promote internal coherence regarding WFP's role in food systems and to strengthen the organization's external positioning in the food systems environment, a strategic paper is currently being prepared. Through a strong participatory process involving key divisions in headquarters and regional bureaux, this paper aims to reflect the wide range of solutions that WFP is delivering to promote food systems transformation in each of its operational settings.

Global assurance

4. Implementation of the global assurance project is a top corporate priority. In mid-2024, an Executive Director's circular on the global assurance framework was issued, setting out four global assurance standards and eight minimum assurance measures for general food assistance operations – in-kind, cash and vouchers. The standards and measures will be adapted to, and applied in, all WFP programme areas. Enhancements to assurance measures and systems are being implemented in operations identified as being at high risk. By the end of 2024, these operations are expected to meet the assurance standards or have appropriate controls and mitigation measures in place to address identified risks and ensure that people who need assistance receive it safely, in full and without interference. In 2025, WFP will roll out the enhancements to the remaining operations.

Humanitarian–development–peace nexus

5. WFP is committed to better operationalizing the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, grounding its approach in its strategic plan and the recommendation of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development on the prioritization of work at the nexus: "prevention always, development wherever possible and humanitarian action when necessary".

6. WFP continues to make progress in embedding its nexus approach into existing and upcoming policies. The nexus is a cornerstone of the organization's peacebuilding policy (2013). In addition, WFP is currently developing new policies on climate and resilience, which articulate its efforts to sequence, layer and integrate at scale activities that both address and reduce needs over time in a principled and conflict-sensitive manner, and the ways in which those efforts may contribute to social cohesion and local peacebuilding efforts. The upcoming policies also emphasize WFP's commitment to establishing the sustained financial, operational and institutional partnerships and collaboration, including with local systems and actors, required to enable effective nexus programming, circumstances permitting.

7.   In addition, WFP works to strengthen its nexus implementation through sustained efforts to enhance programme design and tools. WFP continues to include nexus approaches in the design and implementation of its CSPs, which encompass both crisis response and activities for building resilience and addressing root causes within an integrated framework. In United Nations reform efforts and in close collaboration with its United Nations partners, WFP actively contributes to the advancement of joint analysis and planning in the common country analyses and humanitarian needs overviews that inform United Nations cooperation frameworks and humanitarian response plans.

8.   Efforts to strengthen the nexus approach throughout WFP's normative portfolio include mainstreaming the conflict sensitivity strategy, elaborating pathways that detail the entry points for WFP's contributions to peace, and updating the CSP guidance manual and establishing a repository of best practices and tools for country offices.

Inclusion

9.   Building on the disability inclusion roadmap of 2020 and the gender policy of 2022, WFP undertook a review of the intersectional dimensions of poverty and exclusion that affect its capacity to ensure the inclusive and equitable delivery of programmes. This analysis examined WFP's programming approaches related to gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, issues related to age, Indigenous People, internally displaced persons, refugees, social cohesion and other complex, people-centred dynamics. The review informed WFP's policies, operational documents, training and tools for inclusion, including but not limited to those in the areas of targeting and prioritization, capacity strengthening, performance measurement, and compliance. This work also informed the recent corporate restructuring exercise that brought together matters related to protection and accountability to affected populations, gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, digital financial inclusion and women's economic empowerment, Indigenous People and localization into the purview of the Gender, Protection and Inclusion Service of the Programme Policy and Guidance Division.

Innovation

10.   WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025 embraces innovation as a strategic enabler that supports WFP's efforts towards SDGs 2 and 17. WFP's approach to innovation has already shown significant impact and scalability in addressing the critical challenges faced in WFP's country operations. As a result, WFP has been recognized as a leading partner in innovation within the United Nations system, and with the public and private sectors in work on global and local social innovations.[1]

11.   Building on this foundation, WFP is currently developing a new innovation strategy which aims to guide its approach to leveraging innovation to address critical humanitarian and development challenges, unlock efficiency and effectiveness gains and facilitate organizational transformation. WFP is also mainstreaming innovation in its operations by including guidance on how to integrate innovation in specific settings throughout the programme cycle and in the development of CSPs. In addition, WFP has developed a "playbook" for innovation practitioners in country offices and regional bureaux, and an innovation database which provides an overview of innovative solutions implemented at, or in collaboration with, WFP in all of its operations.

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[1] This recognition was reflected in the mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan for 2022–2025 and in WFP's recognition by the Fast Company awards.

Innovative finance

12. Following extensive internal and external consultations and the piloting of projects over recent years, WFP is finalizing its first innovative financing strategy as an enabler of corporate resource mobilization. During the preparation of the strategy, gaps were identified that may require revisions to the financial framework and partnership and governance arrangements so as to support successful implementation of innovative finance transactions. WFP's management will seek to learn from the implementation of the innovative financing strategy and will present proposals to the Board for their decision, where required. Through the consultation process, WFP country offices have also indicated an interest in linking private sector value chain actors to "impact investment" opportunities. WFP is exploring new models of partnership with the private sector, which may necessitate an updated private partnerships policy in the future.

Localization

13. Based on the commitment articulated in WFP's strategic plan to strengthening the capacity of local governments and organizations to prioritize local partnerships, and following consultations with Board members, WFP is formulating a localization policy. The development of the policy will entail an in-depth review of evidence and best practice in localization, a series of rigorous internal and external consultations, the mapping of the full spectrum of WFP's localization efforts in humanitarian and development settings, an analysis of the risks associated with localization, and an examination of existing ways of working in order to determine the need for new approaches or modalities. The policy is expected to be presented to the Board at its annual session in 2025.

Partnerships

14. WFP's commitment to establishing and strengthening credible and relevant partnerships across the humanitarian and development system was reiterated in the strategic plan. WFP's corporate partnership strategy remains a relevant document in articulating the overarching vision for and corporate approach to partnerships with non-governmental organizations, governments, the private sector, other United Nations entities, international and regional organizations and academic and other knowledge-generating institutions. The strategy outlines the benefits of partnerships and the principles and practices that govern WFP's partnership arrangements. At the country level, a key element in the development of CSPs is the partnership action plan. Looking ahead, WFP will look to develop a new partnerships strategy by early 2025 which will outline its overall approach to partnerships in the latest global and operational environment. Among other areas, the new strategy will include a focus on WFP's approach to the development of sustainable and mutually beneficial models of partnership with emerging economies, and WFP's ability to adapt to changes in donors' priorities and recipients' needs.

Service provision

15. WFP is widely recognized for its role in leveraging its expertise and field presence to provide critical on-demand services to members of the humanitarian and development community, including fuel services, fleet management, technical assistance, government-to-person payment services, and services for the transport and storage of goods. Strategic outcome 5 of WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025 elaborates the circumstances in which WFP provides services to the humanitarian community, recognizing that accelerated progress towards the SDGs rests on effective collaboration and partnerships within and among the humanitarian, development and peace sectors.

16. The scope of WFP's on-demand service provision at the country office level is currently guided by Executive Director circular OED2023/006.

17.   In June 2024, an audit of WFP's on-demand service provision was published, assessing the extent to which management had established governance, risk management and internal controls for the effective delivery of on-demand services to external clients. The audit recommended that WFP clarify its strategic direction in relation to service provision and address fragmented approaches and processes.

18.   Guided by the initial findings of the mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan, and the recommendations of the internal audit, WFP management will develop a framework that further clarifies WFP's strategic direction for service provision by the end of 2025. WFP will also develop a catalogue of its global supply chain services and normative guidance documents on different supply chain themes, providing further support to country offices for the implementation of accepted service requests.

Technology

19.   Anchored on the strategic plan, the information and technology strategy for 2023–2026 sets out the ways in which digital technology and data will reinforce WFP's strength and reach. Through this strategy, innovative, secure and adaptive technology and better data and insights will contribute to WFP's capacities in emergency preparedness and response and resilience building. The strategy also focuses on strengthening the foundations of information and technology management as the basis for innovation and the development of solutions that support business processes and capabilities, including through data governance and management, operational agility, risk management, service management, and the development of an enterprise architecture and digital blueprints.

20.   In early 2024, the Executive Director approved the WFP global data strategy for 2024–2026, which recognizes WFP's data as a vital asset with the potential to accelerate progress towards the organization's core objectives, and positions WFP to navigate a rapidly changing technology landscape marked by data proliferation and the emergence of artificial intelligence and machine learning. WFP's artificial intelligence strategy is being developed under the oversight of the digital business and technology committee.

21.   WFP's normative guidance on information and technology is outlined in the Technology Division's policy portfolio, which is formally established by the Chief Information Officer and has been reviewed by the External Auditor. It is maintained in line with an annual cycle described in a Chief Information Officer's information note.[2] The Technology Division has also established a compendium of normative instruments, guided by relevant international instruments, which is continuously maintained through an annual cycle.

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[2] WFP. 2023. *Technology Division Information Note: Technology Division Policy Cycle Management*.

Acronyms

CCS	country capacity strengthening
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSTC	South–South and triangular cooperation