



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

Executive Board
Second regular session
Rome, 17–21 November 2025

Distribution: General

Agenda item 3

Date: 10 November 2025

WFP/EB.2/2025/3-B/1/Rev.1

Original: English

Strategic matters

For decision

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

WFP strategic plan (2026–2029)

Draft decision*

The Board approves the WFP strategic plan (2026–2029) (WFP/EB.2/2025/3-B/1/Rev.1).

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

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The global context

At a time of crisis, WFP's commitment to ending hunger stands firm

1. WFP aims for a world free of hunger, where all people have access to the nutritious food they need to live healthy and productive lives. The organization's driving mission is to support people caught up in crises and conflict in order to avert famine and suffering, consistent with the humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law.
2. For more than 60 years, WFP has worked towards this by providing food and nutrition assistance to those most vulnerable, while supporting people's capacities to feed themselves and their families and strengthening governments' capacities to identify and scale up sustainable solutions to hunger and malnutrition.
3. Today, WFP remains as committed as ever to ending hunger worldwide. Nonetheless, as this strategic plan is being written, global needs remain high, just as the food security and humanitarian community is dealing with an unprecedented funding crisis. Major donors are curtailing their assistance, impacting WFP and its partners in the United Nations system and spurring calls for reform. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that WFP works with to deliver assistance have also been severely affected.
4. Thus far in 2025, WFP's funding is approximately 40 percent less than the USD 9.8 billion raised in 2024, and well below the USD 14.2 billion raised in 2022. WFP expects lower funding levels to continue in forthcoming years. Country offices have made steep cuts to the number of people assisted and to rations provided. WFP has also addressed the funding cuts by putting in place strict cost-efficiency measures, reviewing its global footprint and reducing its workforce.
5. This strategic plan outlines WFP's response to the radical challenges facing the organization and the humanitarian community, setting out how it will increase its focus and integration in this new global landscape.

Box 1: A focused, prioritized and integrated plan

To meet the challenges of the moment and be fit for the future, WFP must evolve by delivering quality over quantity, reducing the dependency of people and countries on recurring support, and leveraging partnerships to increase efficiency and impact. In other words, *doing better with less*.

Accordingly:

- ✓ WFP's strategic plan for 2026–2029 has three integrated strategic outcomes, compared with five under the previous plan.
- ✓ The strategic plan prioritizes meeting urgent needs, leveraging WFP's comparative advantage in supply chain and in emergencies (strategic outcome 1).
- ✓ WFP will work to reduce humanitarian needs, consolidating its resilience programming in locations exposed to protracted food insecurity (strategic outcome 2).
- ✓ WFP's work with partners and governments (strategic outcome 3) will strengthen capacities and national systems that reach the most vulnerable and will generate system-wide savings and efficiencies.
- ✓ This strategic plan emphasizes WFP's localization and assurance efforts, in line with the localization policy and the global assurance framework.

Food insecurity and malnutrition in numbers

6. We are living in an era of unprecedented abundance. There has never been as much wealth or as much food produced in the world. Global gross domestic product surpassed USD 111 trillion in 2024, while the world produces enough calories to feed 10 billion people.¹
7. At the same time, an estimated 319 million people around the world are acutely food insecure, more than twice the number before the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The lives and livelihoods of 44.4 million people are at immediate risk across 47 countries.² A record 1.9 million people are facing catastrophic hunger, more than twice as many as in 2023.³ For the first time on record, there are two concurrent famines taking place, in the Gaza Strip and in the Sudan.
8. One in 12 people around the world – up to 720 million people – regularly consume insufficient calories to maintain an active life. Chronic food insecurity is most prevalent and on the rise in Africa, while Asia is home to more than half of the world's undernourished people. Women and persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected, with overlapping social disadvantages amplifying vulnerability. The food security gap between women and men narrowed at the global level between 2021 and 2023 but increased again in 2024, with the prevalence of food insecurity remaining consistently higher among women than among men, globally and in all regions. Projections indicate that 512 million people will be chronically hungry by the end of this decade.⁴

¹ World Bank Group. [GDP indicator](#) (accessed on 25 August 2025). Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2023. [Statistical yearbook](#).

² WFP. 2025. [WFP 2025 Global Outlook Mid-Year Update - June 2025](#).

³ Food Security Information Network (FSIN) and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2025. [Global Report on Food Crises 2025](#).

⁴ FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and World Health Organization (WHO). 2025. [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025. Addressing high food price inflation for food security and nutrition](#).

9. Despite some progress towards ending all forms of malnutrition, 43 million children under the age of 5 are affected by wasting and 152 million by stunting. More than one third of the world's population is unable to afford a healthy diet.⁵ At the same time, the “double burden of malnutrition” – the coexistence of under- and overnutrition – is a growing problem in many countries and has high socioeconomic impacts.⁶

Key drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition

10. There are more conflicts in the world today than at any time since the Second World War, and the rising number of minor conflicts increases the risk of a surge in major conflicts.⁷ Conflict and insecurity are, by far, the primary drivers of hunger worldwide.⁸ Conflict can be destructive to all aspects of food systems; it also hampers efforts to alleviate hardship and drives displacement.
11. The number of refugees, internally displaced persons and others forced to flee because of conflict and violence has increased every year for more than a decade, reaching 123.2 million people at the end of 2024;⁹ of this number, 73.5 million were displaced internally. Economic and climate shocks are also increasing forced displacement and migration. At 45.8 million movements, disaster-induced displacement was exceptionally high in 2024, nearly double the annual average of the past decade. Storms and floods triggered 97 percent of displacement. At the end of 2024, 9.8 million people were living in a situation of internal displacement owing to disasters, 29 percent more than a year earlier.¹⁰ Forcibly displaced people – who often have limited rights and access to jobs, land and basic services – are among the most vulnerable to acute food insecurity and malnutrition.
12. Globally, temperatures have risen by 1.5°C from pre-industrial levels, driving up the frequency and intensity of weather extremes, intensifying rainfall variability and increasing sea levels.¹¹ As has been noted in various intergovernmental forums, these climate-related shocks and stressors directly impact crop yields, soil fertility, livestock and infrastructure for processing and distributing food, among other factors. Coupled with environmental degradation, weather extremes increase the vulnerability of people whose food and livelihoods depend on affected ecosystems, and indeed, they are the principal driver of hunger for one in three acutely food-insecure people.¹² Moreover, droughts, floods, wildfires and other disasters can aggravate conflicts and uproot people. Ten percent of global migration is connected to water deficits.¹³

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. 2024. *The cost of the double burden of malnutrition: main social and economic impacts in eight Latin American countries*.

⁷ Institute for Economics & Peace. 2024. *Highest number of countries engaged in conflict since World War II*.

⁸ FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2025. *Global Report on Food Crises 2025*.

⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 2025. *Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2024*.

¹⁰ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). 2025. *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2025*.

¹¹ WMO. 2025. *WMO Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update (2025–2029)*.

¹² FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2025. *Global Report on Food Crises 2025*.

¹³ *IDMC Data Portal* (accessed on 29 April 2025); World Bank. 2021. *Going With The Flow: Water's Role in Global Migration*. Feature Story.

13. Land degradation, driven primarily by overgrazing, poor agricultural practices and deforestation, now affects 15 percent of total land in the world.¹⁴ In Africa, up to 65 percent of productive land is degraded. When combined with extreme weather events, this degradation leaves millions more people vulnerable to food insecurity and deepening poverty.¹⁵
14. Economic shocks are the drivers of hunger for one in five acutely food-insecure people– and economies remain under significant strain.¹⁶ During economic shocks, households shift to less healthy food choices, which lower their nutrient intake. This has immediate impacts on health and survival and longer-term impacts on health and development. In many places, slow economic growth, sustained food price rises and a high public debt burden risk pushing food-insecure people into crisis.
15. Socioeconomic disparities are widening. Discrimination and inequality are key drivers of food insecurity, as they systematically limit access to resources, services and opportunities for the most marginalized people. Poverty rates remain above pre-pandemic levels in many of the poorest countries – a trend that runs counter to the global recovery. Extreme poverty is increasingly concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa and in fragile and conflict-affected countries.¹⁷ Differences in human development between countries are widening.¹⁸ Up to 3.3 billion people live in countries where government spending on interest payments exceeds spending on education or health.¹⁹

Operating environment

16. The global order is in a state of flux, characterized by rising competition, instability and fragmentation.²⁰ As multilateral tools and institutions are increasingly seen as unable to resolve today's challenges,²¹ the system is experiencing a crisis of confidence, trust and legitimacy.²² The crisis has accelerated the reform of the United Nations, which seeks to make global institutions more legitimate, fair and effective with a view to restoring the relevance of the multilateral system.²³

¹⁴ GEF. [Land degradation](#) (accessed on 26 August 2025).

¹⁵ FAO. 2021. [Review of forest and landscape restoration in Africa 2021](#).

¹⁶ FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2025. [Global Report on Food Crises 2025](#).

¹⁷ World Bank. 2024. [Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report 2024: Pathways Out of the Polycrisis](#).

¹⁸ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2024. [Human Development Report 2023-24: Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world](#).

¹⁹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. 2024. [A world of debt. A growing burden to global prosperity](#).

²⁰ Singh, S. 2023. [15 Global Trends For 2024](#). Forbes; The Economist. 2022. [The new geopolitical epoch](#).

²¹ United Nations Secretary-General. 2024. [Secretary-General's remarks at the Opening Segment of the Summit of the Future Plenary](#); H. Ur Rehman Mayar. 2023. [Multilateralism in an age of crises – Where do countries at the last mile of development fit in?](#) Colombia University SIPA Blog; L. Gruszczynski, M. Menkes, V. Bilkova and P. Farah (editors). 2022. [The Crisis of Multilateral Legal Order. Causes, Dynamics and Implications](#).

²² U. Salma Bava. 2022. [Contested multilateralism and the crisis of cooperation](#). Foundation for European Progressive Studies.

²³ United Nations Secretary-General. 2024. [Secretary-General's remarks at the Opening Segment of the Summit of the Future Plenary](#)

17. Amid faltering cooperation, humanitarian operations face an increasingly complex operating environment, marked by sustained impediments to humanitarian access and growing protection risks.²⁴ International humanitarian law is being repeatedly undermined, and starvation has been used as a weapon of war.²⁵ A total of 384 aid workers were killed in 2024, more than double the average of the previous three years, underscoring the importance of taking a proactive response to growing operational complexities.²⁶
18. As governments focused on domestic and geostrategic priorities, international aid fell by 9 percent in 2024, after five consecutive years of growth.²⁷ Projections point to an additional decrease of 9 to 17 percent in 2025 and further potential reductions in the coming years.²⁸ Humanitarian funding already started to contract in 2023, when coverage of inter-agency coordinated appeals failed to reach 50 percent for the first time in history;²⁹ funding for appeals remained low in 2024.³⁰ Humanitarian food sector funding could fall by as much as 45 percent in 2025.³¹ Meanwhile, nine in every ten US dollars of appeal requirements are for protracted crises.³²
19. Artificial intelligence (AI) and other technology have the potential to revolutionize development, transforming healthcare, education, public services and access to finance.³³ However, technology could also undermine the competitive advantage of economies dependent on low-cost labour and embed cultural biases. Persistent digital divides could widen inequality and prevent poorer countries from reaping the benefits of technology.³⁴ Only one in four people in low-income countries has internet access.³⁵ Even so, AI can support development efforts, for example by predicting food demand in disaster-prone areas, while other technologies such as blockchain can enhance the traceability of assistance, ensuring that aid reaches those in need without being lost or diverted.

Looking ahead

20. Together with the dynamic drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition, demographic trends also shape the outlook for WFP. The population of sub-Saharan Africa is expected to rise from 1 billion to 2 billion in the next 30 years.³⁶ With working-age populations growing fastest, those countries can realize a demographic dividend – a unique opportunity to turbocharge economic growth – if enough new jobs are created.³⁷ Automation, however,

²⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). 2024. [OCHA Annual Report 2023](#).

²⁵ The Lancet. 2024. [Starvation as a weapon of war must stop](#). The Lancet, Volume 403, Issue 10434, 1309.

²⁶ [Aid Worker Security Database](#) (website, accessed 1 May 2025).

²⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2025. [Cuts in official development assistance. OECD projections for 2025 and the near term](#).

²⁸ OECD. 2025. [Cuts in official development assistance. OECD projections for 2025 and the near term](#); Institute for Economics & Peace. 2025. [Official Development Assistance: Geopolitical Tensions, Economic Constraints & Shifting Priorities](#).

²⁹ OCHA. 2024. [Global Humanitarian Overview 2024 Mid-year update](#).

³⁰ [OCHA Humanitarian Action](#) (accessed 24 June 2025).

³¹ FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2025. [Global Report on Food Crises 2025](#).

³² Development Initiatives. 2024. [Falling short? Humanitarian funding and reform](#).

³³ Qimiao Fan and Christine Zhenwei Qiang. 2024. [Tipping the scales: AI's dual impact on developing nations](#). World Bank Blog.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ International Telecommunication Union. [Time series of ICT data for the world, by geographic regions, by urban/rural area and by level of development, for the following indicators \(2005-2023\)](#) (dataset, accessed 6 January 2025).

³⁶ International Monetary Fund (IMF). 2024. [Building Tomorrow's Workforce: Education, Opportunity, and Africa's Demographic Dividend](#). In Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa – A Tepid and Pricey Recovery.

³⁷ IMF. 2024. [The Clock is Ticking: Meeting Sub-Saharan Africa's Urgent Job Creation Challenge](#). In Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa – Reforms amid Great Expectations.

could upend traditional economic growth models, increasing unemployment and thwarting the creation of good quality jobs.³⁸ Urbanization is also progressing rapidly,³⁹ fastest in Africa.⁴⁰

21. As megatrends reshape the world, strategic foresight analysis highlights three key potential future challenges for WFP. First, an increase in the volume and complexity of crises and conflicts – coinciding with a substantial reduction in funding and persistent humanitarian access constraints, including bureaucratic impediments and deliberate restrictions – could render WFP less well-equipped to respond. The drivers of humanitarian needs could grow ever more intertwined, and crises could become increasingly unpredictable.
22. Second, new digital technologies and rapid urbanization could reduce the relevance of WFP's advantage in traditional food delivery and logistics. The face of vulnerability could shift as vulnerable urban populations grow and youth bulges bring both a risk of mass youth unemployment and opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, a surge of small, innovative and agile players with cutting-edge technology could disrupt food assistance models, readily responding to new operating environments.
23. Third, international assistance could become less acceptable to host governments seeking to avoid external influence or dependence. As programme countries increasingly take centre stage as strategic partners and funders, they offer different approaches, which could pose challenges for principled humanitarian response and the way in which development assistance is currently delivered.

The global food assistance landscape

The United Nations' response to the crisis

24. The Secretary-General's UN80 initiative has been undertaken to modernize and strengthen the United Nations, making the system more efficient, transparent and responsive to rapidly evolving challenges. Within the UN80, WFP and other United Nations humanitarian agencies have contributed to the New Humanitarian Compact, "a six-step blueprint to deliver faster, leaner and more accountable support to people in crises; restore trust in multilateral action; and maximize impact from every dollar".⁴¹
25. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee's "Humanitarian Reset" was launched in March 2025 as both a response to constrained resources and a recognition that the system can be even faster, lighter, more accountable and more impactful. The reset will continue, grounded in three priorities: delivering effective crisis response within limited means; rethinking how humanitarian work is organized; and shifting power closer to local leaders and affected communities.
26. WFP is committed to facilitating the global implementation of both UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset, including through United Nations country teams and humanitarian country teams. This strategic plan aligns with the core priorities of both initiatives by emphasizing impact, collaboration and cost-effectiveness. To that end, WFP joined with

³⁸ Y. Liu, H. C. Boy, S. Khurana, and A. Sinha. 2023. *Artificial Intelligence: Revolutionary Potential and Huge Uncertainties*. From World Bank. 2024. Digital Progress and Trends Report 2023. Q. Fan and C. Zhenwei Qiang. 2024. *Tipping the scales: AI's dual impact on developing nations*. World Bank Blog; Y. Liu and C. Zhenwei Qiang. 2024. *Will Generative AI make good jobs harder to find?* World Bank Blog

³⁹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2019. *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision*.

⁴⁰ African Center for Economic Transformation. 2021. *African Transformation Report 2021*.

⁴¹ Executive Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Forthcoming. *Shifting Paradigms: United to Deliver* (unedited draft).

other agencies to prepare transformative proposals designed to benefit the United Nations system and humanitarian partners. The proposals will be presented to Member States and are outlined under strategic outcome 3 (paragraph 90).

Priorities and efforts of main stakeholders

27. People in need are at the heart of WFP's work. During the consultations for the strategic plan, people supported by WFP highlighted several challenges that prevent them from being independent, including conflict and insecurity, limited livelihood opportunities, poor access to farmland and agricultural inputs, and high food prices. In the short term, they called on WFP to expand its coverage, improve its targeting, increase its transfer values or rations and provide more diverse foods. Looking ahead, people emphasized their desire to be self-reliant, highlighting the importance of vocational training and access to jobs, and their wish for stronger collaboration between WFP and local actors in support of lasting solutions to food insecurity.⁴²
28. WFP's top institutional stakeholders are national governments. In recent years, at least seven countries in which WFP works have incorporated food sovereignty into their constitutions and laws. In some countries, national authorities are taking a more assertive stance in shaping and implementing their food security and humanitarian policies. WFP supports governments in designing, implementing and sustaining food security and nutrition programmes that align with national priorities. A total of 63 WFP programme countries have signed up to the school meals coalition, committing to ensuring school meals for all children, and 62 have enshrined this commitment into law.
29. United Nations entities are key partner organizations for WFP. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provides technical expertise and policy guidance that support the transformation of agri-food systems. Its Strategic Framework for 2022–2031 is currently undergoing governance review and approval. WFP and FAO collaborate closely on food security analysis, particularly in support of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), and on programmes that assist farming communities and smallholder producers. WFP also benefits from FAO's normative work, which helps to shape global standards and practices.
30. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) invests in small-scale agriculture and promotes inclusive rural development. It is currently preparing its Strategic Framework for 2025–2031. WFP partners with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to address the food needs of refugees, and with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on nutrition, school-based programmes and social protection.
31. In humanitarian settings, WFP actively engages with the IASC and works closely with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to ensure coordinated planning, prioritization and delivery of assistance in crisis-affected areas.

⁴² Note: According to in-person consultations with more than 1,500 people in 12 countries and an online survey answered by 4,000 people from 15 countries.

32. International and local NGOs remain essential cooperating partners for WFP, driving field operations and community engagement. WFP collaborates with over 1,000 NGOs – 85 percent of them local actors – reinforcing its local capacity and sectoral specialization in food security and nutrition programmes.⁴³ The close proximity of local actors to affected populations, combined with their deep local knowledge, is instrumental in improving access to vulnerable areas and enhancing the timeliness, relevance and overall quality of humanitarian response.
33. International financial institutions and regional banks are increasingly important partners for WFP. They are expanding financial and technical support for food security, nutrition, climate resilience and social protection. In 2022, the World Bank and the Group of Seven Presidency co-launched the Global Alliance for Food Security, which developed the global food and nutrition security dashboard.⁴⁴ That same year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) introduced the “food shock window”, designed to support broader international efforts to address the global food crisis.⁴⁵ This increased engagement in global food security opens further opportunities for tripartite partnerships in support of government-led initiatives.
34. Launched in 2024, the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty represents a renewed multilateral and multistakeholder effort to tackle the causes of deprivation. Engagement with the Global Alliance creates new opportunities for WFP to bridge short-term emergency needs with long-term strategies for resilience and social protection.
35. Governments that are party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement are pursuing nationally determined contributions to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.⁴⁶ WFP supports governments’ efforts to build resilience and adapt in a growing number of countries.
36. Academic partners, private sector actors and service providers are playing a growing role in shaping WFP’s operational and strategic direction. Their interest in working with the humanitarian sector is driven by the opportunity to access new markets and contribute to high-impact projects that align with their business objectives while also supporting progress towards social impact goals.

WFP in a changing world

Recent shifts in WFP operations

37. As crises have become increasingly protracted and overlapping, WFP has sought to identify and further integrate pathways for transitioning between addressing humanitarian needs, reducing humanitarian needs and enhancing resilience, and where possible, strengthening or shifting to national systems. Tightening funding has pushed WFP to strive to do better with less. This has involved reaching fewer people with higher-quality, more meaningful assistance; designing and aligning programmes more closely with WFP’s capacities and strengths; and incorporating and enabling the roles, capacities and plans of governments and other partners.

⁴³ “Annual performance report for 2022”, annex VIII (WFP/EB.A/2023/4-A/Rev.1).

⁴⁴ Global Alliance for Food Security. 2022. [Global Food and Nutrition Security Dashboard website](#).

⁴⁵ IMF. 2023. [Review of Experience with the Food Shock Window under the rapid financing instrument and the rapid credit facility](#).

⁴⁶ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

38. National systems enable crisis responses at scale that reduce dependency on external assistance. Strengthening national systems has gained further importance at WFP. The reach of national social protection systems is vast – 4.7 billion people in low- and middle-income countries – and growing,⁴⁷ enabling WFP to improve food security and nutrition for billions of people both by providing technical support to governments and by delivering on their behalf. The economic returns on systems strengthening investments are large, reaching up to USD 35 per dollar invested in the case of school meals.⁴⁸ WFP remains committed to transitioning school meal programmes to national and local ownership: WFP has reduced its direct implementation of such programmes in middle-income countries by nearly 50 percent since 2013.

WFP's policy framework

39. Over recent years, WFP has adopted or updated key programmatic and cross-cutting policies that position the organization to deliver on its strategic plan. WFP's policy framework is relevant, timely and responsive to the evolving cooperation and programmatic landscape. The following paragraphs provide examples of how previously identified policy gaps have been addressed effectively.
40. WFP's broader policy framework emphasizes the importance that the organization places on its ability to respond swiftly and effectively to humanitarian crises. WFP continues to adapt and strengthen this framework to meet the challenges of increasingly complex emergencies.
41. The resilience policy update⁴⁹ of 2024 renews WFP's commitment to strengthening resilience as a means of enabling people to better manage crises, ultimately reducing the need for humanitarian assistance in the long-term. Working in partnership with governments and partners, WFP strengthens the ability of people, institutions and systems to prepare for, anticipate, absorb, recover from, adapt to and transform in the face of shocks and stressors.
42. In 2023, WFP adopted the policy on cash⁵⁰ based on its expertise as the largest humanitarian cash provider as well as the accrual of evidence of the effectiveness and efficiency of cash-based transfers in meeting food, nutrition and other essential needs. WFP prioritizes cash transfers when food is available for purchase in markets and when funding allows. Evidence points to the unique benefits of cash, which can help people to break the vicious cycle of poverty and vulnerability and brings multipliers for local economies. The use of cash-based transfers, and the particular emphasis on channelling cash through women as the best way to meet household food needs, remains one of the most inclusive, dignified and cost-efficient modalities of assistance for both relief and resilience programming. The approach provides an additional opportunity to achieve long-term impact by supporting women in safely establishing bank and mobile accounts.

⁴⁷ World Bank. 2025. *State of Social Protection Report 2025: The 2-Billion-Person Challenge*.

⁴⁸ S. Verguet and others. 2020. *The Broader Economic Value of School Feeding Programs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Estimating the Multi-Sectoral Returns to Public Health, Human Capital, Social Protection, and the Local Economy in Frontiers in Public Health*.

⁴⁹ WFP. 2024. *Resilience policy update*.

⁵⁰ WFP. 2023. *WFP cash policy*.

43. The 2022 country capacity strengthening policy update⁵¹ reaffirmed the critical importance of strengthening national systems in order to address the structural drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition. The updated policy emphasizes that governments are primarily responsible for delivering services to populations that ensure that they can meet food security and nutrition needs. WFP's interventions prioritize national ownership, flexibility and responsiveness to local needs, providing targeted technical support that strengthens systems and facilitates the handover of WFP programmes to national and subnational institutions.
44. Country capacity strengthening is complemented by the localization policy adopted in 2025,⁵² which aims to change the way that WFP's work is designed and delivered in order to better support locally led efforts that are responsive to the needs and priorities of people in need. It recognizes that local and national actors are both first responders and last-mile actors delivering assistance in times of crisis, and that minimizing and recovering from the impact of multivariate shocks begins and ends with local capacities.
45. In addition to the policies referenced above, the strategic plan reflects WFP's continued commitment to the full set of policies and strategies that guide the organization's work, not least those policies⁵³ related to the drivers of food insecurity,⁵⁴ the humanitarian principles, strategic outcomes,⁵⁵ cross-cutting priorities,⁵⁶ enablers⁵⁷ and corporate governance. To enable the full implementation of the strategic plan, WFP will continue to strengthen and update its policy framework.

Insights from key reviews and evaluations

46. The mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan 2022–2025 acknowledged important shifts in WFP's strategic vision and approach, including a clearer articulation of WFP's ambitions in the "saving lives" and "changing lives" agendas. However, the scope of the plan was found to be too broad to guide the prioritization of country-level interventions. The evaluation also highlighted the need to better define WFP's comparative advantage, beyond its clear emergency response capabilities. A suboptimal division of labour between headquarters and regional offices, dependence on earmarked and short-term funding, transactional approaches to partnerships and overly complex internal processes also impeded WFP's efficiency and effectiveness.
47. The 2024 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment⁵⁸ underscored the need for WFP to clearly define and communicate its dual mandate in the context of reduced resources, including how it plans to integrate emergency response and resilience building programmes. To continue reaching vulnerable people, WFP will need to strengthen collaboration with governments and partners to maintain its funding for, and access to, those most in need, particularly in highly polarized conflict situations. It is also important for WFP to address concerns around aid diversion and adherence to the humanitarian principles and engage in open discussions with donors on risk tolerance.

⁵¹ WFP. 2022. [Country capacity strengthening \(CCS\) policy update](#).

⁵² WFP. 2025. [Localization Policy](#).

⁵³ This list of policies is not exhaustive. It contains only policies issued since 2020.

⁵⁴ WFP. 2024. [Climate Change Policy Update](#). WFP. 2022. [WFP Gender Policy](#).

⁵⁵ WFP. 2024. [School Meals Policy](#). WFP. 2023. [WFP Aviation Policy](#).

⁵⁶ WFP. 2020. [WFP protection and accountability Policy](#). WFP. 2017. [Nutrition Policy](#).

⁵⁷ WFP. 2021. [People Policy](#). WFP 2015. [South-South and Triangular Cooperation Policy](#). WFP. 2021. [Revised anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy](#). WFP. 2022. [WFP Evaluation Policy](#).

⁵⁸ MOPAN. 2024. [MOPAN assessment of WFP](#).

48. Independent evaluations⁵⁹ have praised WFP's agility and capacity to scale up in crisis situations, an essential strength amid persistent risks, even in stable contexts. They also noted improved integration of humanitarian response and development-focused interventions, and strong efforts by WFP to ensure timeliness and cost-efficiency. However, evaluations have also stressed the need to increase investment in emergency preparedness and ensure evidence-based approaches to targeting and prioritization, ensuring that all vulnerable population groups are included. Capacity strengthening efforts also needed a more systems-oriented and strategic approach. In upper-middle-income countries in particular, an evaluation synthesis report⁶⁰ recommended that WFP clearly articulate the rationale for its presence and its programme offer in terms of building national systems and capacities. It also advised that WFP communicate its strategies for handover and transition and, where appropriate, set out the pathway to exiting operations.
49. The findings and recommendations from reviews and evaluations have informed and shaped this strategic plan and continue to be addressed directly through the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies, including country strategic plans.

WFP's position and comparative advantages

WFP's vision and positioning

50. WFP is committed to global efforts to end hunger. WFP reaffirms its role as part of the United Nations system in advancing inter-governmentally agreed frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals with governments that have plans to do so.
51. In the current context of crises and resource constraints, WFP must strive for greater agility and efficiency. For example, WFP will place greater emphasis on cost-efficiency when choosing the modality of assistance (cash, vouchers, in-kind or hybrid). More than ever, WFP will need to anticipate, adapt to and respond to changes in the operating environment. This will require the organization to stand ready to scale up quickly when crises strike but also to reduce its footprint when appropriate, transitioning programmes to partners or handing over to governments. WFP will increasingly apply a food systems lens across its programming, strengthening local procurement, enhancing nutrition outcomes and supporting integrated approaches even in fragile conflict-affected settings.
52. In the period 2026–2029, WFP will focus on what it does best: meeting urgent food and nutrition needs in fragile and emergency settings, at scale, placing the needs of affected people – especially those most at risk – at the heart of all programming decisions. Meeting acute needs will remain the organization's top priority, yet WFP recognizes that it cannot provide emergency assistance to the same people year after year. It will therefore foster greater integration between its emergency and resilience interventions to deliver a cohesive range of programmes that strengthen self-reliance, reduce near-term humanitarian needs through investments in crisis-prone communities, and support local government capacities.
53. Targeting and prioritization remains at the heart of WFP's mandate and will play an even more central role under this strategic plan. WFP recognizes that the scale of needs today, coupled with unprecedented funding cuts, requires a principled, transparent and evidence-based approach to identifying and assisting the people in most severe need of

⁵⁹ WFP. *Country strategic plan evaluations*. WFP. 2024. *Evaluation of WFP's Emergency Preparedness Policy*; and WFP. 2024. *Évaluation de la réponse d'urgence du PAM aux crises prolongées au Sahel et dans d'autres pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest et centrale 2018–2023*. WFP. 2024. *Synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP's cooperating partners from centralized and decentralized evaluations*.

⁶⁰ WFP. 2025. *Evaluation synthesis on WFP's engagement in middle-income countries (2019–2024)*.

assistance. At the global level, WFP is strengthening its systems to guide the effective allocation of unearmarked resources, ensuring that priority is given to the most acute and life-threatening crises. At the community and household levels, updated guidance on prioritization sets out options regarding depth and breadth of assistance. In contexts where the magnitude of severe needs outstrips available resources, WFP will engage in collective dialogue with governments, partners and donors to define minimum coverage thresholds and to identify alternative pathways of assistance.

54. At the country level, WFP will ensure that its country strategic plans are aligned with United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks and humanitarian response plans. WFP remains committed to advancing inter-agency cooperation under the leadership of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators. The organization will continue to lead or co-lead humanitarian clusters.

Target comparative advantages

55. In fragile settings, WFP's deep-field presence often supports the entire humanitarian community. WFP will invest to maintain its comparative advantage in supply chains, emergency response and delivery. WFP is a leader in collecting real-time data and analysing acute food insecurity and malnutrition, informing efforts to identify operational requirements and providing data to partners, including the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system. WFP has the unique ability to bridge emergency response and systems strengthening work, which allows it to build, strengthen and maintain national government systems in the fragile settings in which it operates.
56. In transitional settings, WFP's comparative advantage lies in combining the implementation of programmes that support community resilience, such as by restoring degraded land and improving community infrastructure, with support for government efforts to strengthen their own systems. Such programmes capitalize on the partnerships and relationships that WFP builds for emergency response and on the organization's ability to speed recovery and transition between humanitarian and resilience programming at scale.
57. In more stable settings, WFP's comparative advantage lies in leveraging its expertise to support government and partner programmes. School meal programmes are recognized as an area of strength for WFP; over the past two decades, WFP's school meal programmes have evolved into one of its most mature and evidence-based areas of work. Another area of strength lies in supporting governments to better prepare for and respond to shocks or to operationalize national programmes such as cash transfer programmes that use WFP's expertise, for instance to establish or validate beneficiary lists.
58. In areas that fall outside WFP's comparative advantage, the organization will work with governments, other United Nations entities and other partners to draw on their expertise and capacity. Accordingly, this strategic plan de-emphasizes work in the areas of livestock, food production (seeds, tools, fertilizers and fisheries), as well as energy, engineering, digital education and software development for governments. These de-emphasized activities may still be pursued, in partnership with others, when they are integrated into national strategies that WFP supports, or when they lower the cost of WFP programmes. WFP will also seek to transition out of small-scale projects, as its comparative advantage lies in scale.

Handover strategy

59. WFP's overarching goal is ending hunger. As such, WFP will ensure that its programmes avoid creating dependence on aid and will focus on implementing programmes that promote self-reliance, or that may be handed over to host governments. WFP will also support government programmes through technical assistance that builds capacities. In line with its commitment to localization, WFP will strengthen the capacities of local actors such as community-based organizations and local private sector actors, with the aim of enabling them to take a leading role and WFP increasingly serving in a purely supportive capacity. Country-specific handover strategies will continue to be outlined in country strategic plans.
60. WFP will carefully consider its country presence to focus on the most acute needs in the most fragile settings including protracted crises, recurring shocks or the presence of forcibly displaced people. Because of reduced funding, WFP is examining its type of presence to ensure that it is the most adequate from an operational and strategic perspective. That analysis encompasses benchmarks pertaining to in-country food security and nutrition needs, country response capacities, the relevance and impact of WFP operations, and future funding prospects, including from host governments. There could be more cases in which WFP representatives cover more than one country, and where more operations become multi-country offices. Ultimately, in consultation with the host government, WFP may choose to phase out its presence from a country.

Strategic outcomes

61. This strategic plan provides for three focused, prioritized and integrated outcomes. Strategic outcome 1 is about meeting urgent needs for people in crisis, while strategic outcome 2 focuses on building self-reliance for communities that have experienced acute food insecurity. Strategic outcome 3 reflects WFP's work in helping governments to build or strengthen their own food security and nutrition programmes and in providing services to partners.

Strategic outcome 1: Effective emergency preparedness and response

62. WFP will provide rapid, principled and scalable emergency operations to save lives and avert famine. WFP recognizes that addressing acute food insecurity and preventing famine requires a combination of technical and programmatic emergency response interventions, high-level advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy. Humanitarian diplomacy allows WFP to secure safe and continuous humanitarian access and space to operate, as well as advocating for political and security solutions to humanitarian crises. WFP's operational reach, technical expertise and ability to deliver assistance at scale, even in the most difficult settings, position it as a leader in addressing humanitarian needs, while its deep field presence and knowledge also make WFP a powerful voice for action to prevent and end famine.
63. WFP's emergency preparedness and response efforts prioritize strengthening programme *quality*, delivering food assistance (in the form of in-kind or cash transfers) and nutrition support to the right people, at the right time and in the right way while ensuring the protection and dignity of affected people and the efficient and effective use of resources. The organization's commitment to quality means that, as resources dwindle, WFP reduces the number of people it assists by prioritizing the people who are the most acutely food insecure. The organization commits to providing adequate assistance, ensuring that transfers do not fall below levels required for survival or recovery and that, in the case of in-kind assistance, making efforts to ensure that the content of the rations are nutritionally adequate and meet the differing needs of the women, men, girls and boys with whom it works, including those with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

64. WFP is increasingly leveraging technology and implementing more agile and innovative methods in its operations, such as using self-registration to reach beneficiaries, including in the absence of a cooperating partner or financial service provider. WFP is advancing the operational integration of targeting and registration to facilitate a seamless flow of information throughout the programme cycle, even in highly dynamic emergency settings. WFP is also using digital solutions to take supply chain decisions in order to optimize the design of its operations and increase efficiency. Data and analysis are critical to WFP's ability to understand varied needs, vulnerabilities, markets and context and help to inform decisions on who and how to target and prioritize, and what assistance to deliver in the most appropriate way.
65. Emergency preparedness enables WFP and others to respond faster, more effectively and more cost-efficiently. WFP's preparedness work includes risk-informed contingency planning, the pre-positioning of food and other essential items, and readiness agreements with cooperating partners and service providers. These efforts help to ensure assistance reaches affected people where and when it is most needed.
66. As growing numbers of food-insecure people are exposed to recurrent and often predictable extreme weather events, early warning, pre-arranged finance, anticipatory action before shocks and early action immediately after shocks will help to save lives, time and money, particularly in fragile settings. Every US dollar invested in anticipatory action can yield up to USD 7 in avoided losses and added benefits.⁶¹ Coordination across all actors and alignment with nationally owned frameworks are crucial for effective anticipatory action. In partnership with others, WFP will continue to leverage early-warning data and analysis to time the delivery of assistance and information to vulnerable communities *before* an extreme weather event occurs and the organization will support governments in doing the same. WFP will continue to gather evidence on the most effective forms of anticipatory action and leverage data analytics, forecasting tools and emerging technologies, including AI, to enhance scenario planning and readiness.
67. WFP's emergency nutrition response prioritizes addressing wasting and micronutrient deficiencies in young children, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, and people living with HIV to support the overall goal of reducing mortality. WFP is working closely with UNICEF and WHO to implement the new global guidelines on wasting, including by placing prevention at the centre of its nutrition programming for young children and pregnant and breastfeeding women and connecting families with malnourished children and women to WFP and partners' broader relief programmes. WFP will continue its leadership role in the management of moderate acute malnutrition, coordinating closely with UNICEF, national authorities and community health workers to maximize coverage, efficiency and impact on the continuity of care for children suffering from acute malnutrition.
68. Refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons, vulnerable migrants and other displaced people often face different and compounding vulnerabilities that increase their food and nutrition insecurity and limit their access to national services, land and employment. WFP's operations in displacement settings aim not only to meet immediate needs and address protection gaps but also to support progress towards durable solutions, including enrolment of refugees in national systems and programmes, in collaboration with UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other partners.

⁶¹ FAO, OCHA and WFP. 2025. [Saving lives, time and money - evidence from anticipatory action](#).

69. To alleviate demands on the humanitarian system, WFP will increase its efforts to ensure that assistance delivered under its own programmes is made with a clear intent to contribute to improving national systems, supporting locally led solutions, local actors and community-based assistance mechanisms, all while being done in accordance with the humanitarian principles. This includes aligning operations with national programmes, modelling innovative approaches for programme design and delivery, and planning for a transition to national programmes.
70. In order to avoid dependence on humanitarian assistance, WFP will aim to work with communities and partners to layer in resilience activities in crisis-affected communities, as soon as possible after a shock. Further details are provided under strategic outcome 2.

Box 2: WFP's support for displaced populations

Displaced populations including refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and vulnerable migrants are critical groups to WFP given their disproportionate susceptibility to food insecurity. In 2025, WFP plans to support over 25 million forcibly displaced people and vulnerable migrants. WFP will leverage its operational presence and assessment expertise to develop evidence-based programming and support national and global advocacy efforts. WFP will design assistance in a conflict-sensitive way and take a context-specific approach to tailor it to the specific needs of displaced populations and the communities that host them.

While aid is critical in the immediate aftermath of displacement, humanitarian assistance is not a long-term solution for displaced people. WFP therefore aims to implement integrated programmes that advance durable solutions from the start while working to meet immediate needs. WFP will continue to work closely with UNHCR, IOM and others to ensure a coordinated, efficient and timely humanitarian response. The organization will also engage with development actors and international financial institutions to support national efforts to implement solutions in line with commitments set out in the global memorandum of understanding between UNHCR and WFP, the Global Compact on Refugees (and specific commitments to this in the Global Refugee Forum), the Global Compact on Migration, and the Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement.

Strategic outcome 2: Reduced needs and enhanced resilience to withstand shocks

71. To mitigate and avert future humanitarian needs – and ultimately reduce reliance on assistance – WFP will seize every opportunity, even amid crises, to strengthen resilience. While maintaining its priority focus on emergency response, WFP will design programmes that help to sustain food security and nutrition, while enabling at-risk communities to better withstand and recover from shocks – critical in a context of intensifying shocks and stressors and increasingly intersecting crises.
72. WFP's resilience work will focus on geographic areas and communities that experience protracted or recurrent acute food insecurity, prioritizing people whose food security and nutrition are most impacted by shocks, including women, girls, children, older people, persons with disabilities and Indigenous people. In keeping with relevant evaluation recommendations, WFP will also target communities affected by displacement –including refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities – in its resilience programmes.
73. WFP will work towards a situation in which communities meet their own needs after having experienced persistent acute food insecurity. WFP will implement integrated resilience programmes, coordinating and phasing its interventions to link crisis response, -resilience

building efforts and the transition of activities to longer-term development stakeholders, recognizing that governments are the central actors in strengthening resilience. Layering actions at the individual, community and systems levels will help to effect durable change, while supporting efforts that foster social cohesion. School meal programmes and other national safety nets are important vehicles for linking resilience programmes to national systems.

74. WFP will partner with others to promote land and ecosystem restoration, regenerative practices, and the rehabilitation of productive assets in order to sustain the physical and natural capital that underpins livelihoods. WFP will work on disaster risk reduction and adaptation measures, such as weather information services that support vulnerable people such as women and girls, internally displaced persons and other disadvantaged groups. Special attention will also be given to Small Island Developing States, whose high exposure to natural disasters and dependence on food imports require tailored responses and support.
75. WFP will rely on inclusive community-based approaches that build trust, nurture social cohesion, foster more equitable access and promote agency. These approaches consist in engaging all beneficiaries and, as appropriate, adjacent communities when working with displaced persons and refugees. When implemented at scale, these activities have been proven to increase resilience and reduce long-term humanitarian needs.⁶² WFP will also strengthen government systems by, for instance, bringing its expertise to help embed climate risk in national food security policies.
76. As part of integrated resilience packages or home-grown school feeding, WFP will, together with partners, support smallholder farmers and local value chain actors in food-insecure areas so that they can better withstand seasonal stressors and shocks. It will also work with governments, partners and communities to deliver weather and climate information services that help farmers make informed decisions throughout the growing season, enhancing adaptation.
77. In communities exposed to protracted or recurring food insecurity, WFP will leverage resilience programming to improve diet and nutrition outcomes, for example, by more routinely integrating nutrition considerations in the selection of assets, and in its work with markets. As part of its engagement with local value chain actors, WFP will promote food fortification – a cost-effective way to tackle micronutrient deficiencies at scale – and local processing, distribution and consumption of diverse, safe and nutrient-dense foods.
78. WFP will invest in community platforms for delivering programmes that prevent and manage moderate acute malnutrition, collaborating with UNICEF, FAO and other partners to address child wasting, including through the implementation of the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting. Social outreach strategies will promote the consumption of healthy, nutritious food, and WFP will work with local actors to improve nutrition outcomes in the long-term.
79. WFP recognizes that building resilience requires multi-year funding, and long-term partnerships with governments and other United Nations actors. Lessons learned from the Changing Lives Transformation Fund (CLTF) show that predictable, multi-year, flexible financial support can position WFP in strategic dialogues with government and international financial institutions, helping to establish important pathways towards sustainable and scalable programmes and securing long-term collaboration with other United Nations entities such as UNHCR, UNICEF and FAO. Achieving greater impact will require strong

⁶² *Ibid.*

synergies with FAO and IFAD in areas such as value chain development, natural resource management, early warning and risk management.

80. WFP will focus on resilience work that delivers impact at scale. The potential is substantial: evidence from the Government of the Niger shows that, thanks to participation in integrated resilience programmes run by WFP and partners, 80 percent of communities previously reliant on humanitarian support did not require food assistance in 2022, despite the country experiencing its most severe drought in a decade.⁶³
81. WFP will prioritize activities that are cost-effective in achieving lasting outcomes measured in terms of reduction in food insecurity and malnutrition and in humanitarian food assistance needs. WFP invests in gathering evidence of its contributions to reducing humanitarian food assistance needs. This includes working with research partners to develop metrics as well as leveraging routine monitoring and qualitative approaches, specialized studies, reviews and evaluations.
82. To foster resilience, WFP will support the transfer of knowledge, capacity and expertise between and among countries and will leverage synergies with the local private sector and local research institutions. WFP also expects that host governments will increasingly contribute to funding WFP resilience programmes in their countries.
83. Country strategic plans will define a clear strategy for the funding, transition and handover of resilience programmes to local and national management. WFP will strengthen the capacity of local partners and phase out its own participation as soon as the situation and their capacities allow.

Strategic outcome 3: Enabled government and partner programmes

84. The world needs WFP's operational expertise more than ever to support governments and partners. Under this strategic plan, WFP will more systematically and deliberately link its humanitarian efforts to its work on strengthening national safety net programmes and systems. WFP will also provide common services and bespoke, on-demand support to governments and humanitarian actors.
85. In its support for national safety net programmes and systems, WFP will focus on three key areas where it has a comparative advantage. It will support government efforts to reach and empower the most vulnerable people; assist people in managing the risks they face from extreme weather events and other shocks; and address food insecurity and malnutrition.
86. WFP will support government counterparts in designing and implementing their own cash and in-kind transfer programmes to positively contribute to local food systems and local economies. WFP will assist government actors in sustaining and adapting their programmes in the event of disasters and other disruption, strengthening the links between disaster management authorities and social protection. WFP will also support improvements to the national systems that underpin these programmes, within the area of its expertise. This includes coordination mechanisms, pre-arranged financing, strategies and operational protocols, and innovation and digital solutions. In this way it aims to increase the scale, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of national responses.

⁶³ WFP. 2024. *Estimating Averted Humanitarian Assistance Needs through WFP's Integrated Resilience Programme (IRP) in the Sahel*.

87. Enhancing national safety nets and social protection systems are an essential component of WFP's transition strategy. As has been demonstrated in the Sahel and elsewhere, building shock-responsive systems is possible even in fragile settings. However, years of experience show that transition is often not a linear process. Where national systems are severely disrupted or absent, WFP will work with other humanitarian and development partners to fill gaps in order to pave the way for future government-led systems. Where national systems exist, WFP will prioritize delivering assistance through them, where possible, and will progressively increase its enabling role by providing technical support.
88. WFP is the point of reference for school meals globally and the trusted source of information and expertise for governments and partners. School meals represent the world's largest safety net for children, reaching over 418 million across 176 countries; 99 percent of school meal programmes are domestically funded by governments. In stable low- and -middle-income countries, WFP mainly retains an enabling role, offering technical and policy assistance to governments seeking to establish and sustain nationally owned programmes. In fragile or crisis-affected settings, WFP will continue to provide direct operational support, ensuring access to good-quality school meals while building the foundations for future national ownership. WFP will continue to support home-grown school meals, facilitating government leadership while strengthening local economies and food systems.
89. As the host of the School Meals Coalition Secretariat, WFP will continue to nurture the global movement by coordinating efforts across countries and sectors, fostering political commitment and supporting inclusive, multisectoral collaboration. For WFP, this means continuing to expand collaboration and strategic partnerships with relevant actors, such as UNICEF, UNHCR, FAO and the International Labour Organization, international financial institutions and development partners and a vast range of national and local organizations, including from civil society, the private sector and academic institutions.
90. In line with the UN80 and Humanitarian Reset initiatives, WFP will spearhead an integrated United Nations delivery platform through which entities with strong supply chain capacity offer services to others, generating system-wide savings and efficiencies in areas such as centralized procurement and the transportation of goods and people to final distribution points. In the area of cash transfers, WFP will work with partners to ensure more streamlined collection and use of people's personal data and optimize current processes that allow agencies to coordinate, verify and deduplicate assistance more effectively. WFP has also committed to co-leading the working group on cash response. The organization intends to work with others to advance data integration and analytics to ensure that responses remain informed by data.
91. Through mandated services such as the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and the United Nations humanitarian response depot network, WFP provides trusted, reliable services where commercial or bilateral alternatives are not viable. UNHAS, managed by WFP Aviation, enables access to field operations for humanitarian responders as well as facilitating emergency evacuations. Looking ahead, WFP aims to find more predictable ways to finance UNHAS, including by diversifying the donor base, increasing cost recovery and making greater use of inter-agency pooled funds. WFP Aviation also provides cargo airlifts and airdrops, as a last resort.
92. Managing over USD 1.4 billion in procurement across 153 countries in 2024, WFP's procurement branch is a cornerstone of operational delivery and economic impact. WFP will build on this foundation to expand its support to governments and multilateral institutions.

The Humanitarian and Public Procurement Partnerships initiative will enable direct service provision, capacity-building and advisory support for public procurement frameworks.

93. As crises grow in scale and complexity, logistics coordination, including through clusters, is an essential component of the humanitarian architecture. WFP stands ready to offer its logistics expertise and leadership to continue to enhance collective logistics capacity. As of January 2025, WFP is delivering on-demand supply chain services in 44 countries, supporting governments and humanitarian actors in settings ranging from protracted crises to fragile transitions. In its support to national systems, WFP's ambition is to work with others to enable sovereign response capabilities and enhance long-term food security outcomes.
94. Humanitarian operations are increasingly digital, requiring both the response community and those receiving aid to be connected. WFP continues to provide critical shared communications services in emergencies, including through the emergency telecommunications cluster.
95. Leveraging its data and analytical capacity – from field assessments and near real-time monitoring to machine-learning-based predictive analytics and access to satellite imagery – WFP helps to bridge critical data gaps. WFP has a longstanding relationship with national and regional institutions in the field of acute food insecurity, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification and the Cadre Harmonise, contributing methods and tools. In addition, the organization provides administrative and infrastructure services that strengthen governments and partners.

Cross-cutting priorities

96. To support the achievement of the strategic outcomes, this strategic plan sets out six cross-cutting priorities that constitute non-negotiable areas of focus for WFP programmes. These priorities are mandatory, and they embody WFP's commitment to programme quality in all operational settings. Cross-cutting priorities are measured through the corporate results framework.

Enabling nutrition and healthy diets

97. Adequate nutrition is fundamental to preventing people from dying in humanitarian emergencies and averting lifelong damage to health, learning and economic productivity. It is key for both addressing and reducing humanitarian needs, and for setting populations on a path towards greater resilience.
98. With nutrition as a cross-cutting issue, WFP commits to maximize the contribution it makes to preventing malnutrition and improving diets – including in the face of shocks and crises. Integrating nutrition across WFP's systems, programmes and people will enable the organization to have greater impact directly and through its support for governments.
99. WFP will systematically use nutrition-related analysis and evidence-based programming to underpin country strategic plans, strengthen national systems and prioritize reaching women, adolescent girls, young children and other nutritionally vulnerable groups. A core objective will be to ensure the nutritional adequacy of food and cash assistance such as by systematically incorporating fortified foods and supporting nationally led fortification efforts. WFP programmes will include and support social and behaviour change interventions designed to enhance access to and the consumption of nutritious, healthy diets in a sustainable manner.

100. To address the multiple causes of malnutrition, WFP will collaborate with UNICEF, FAO, the World Health Organization, governments and others and will engage responsibly with the private sector.

Empowering women and girls and advancing equality

101. WFP is maintaining its commitment and accelerating its work on empowering women and girls, broadening its efforts to dismantle barriers to equality for all people, regardless of geographic location, mobility restrictions, socioeconomic status, sex, age, disability, race, ethnicity or indigeneity. Marginalized people are disproportionately affected by conflict, environmental instability and food insecurity and represent priority groups for WFP assistance.
102. WFP will design programmes that ensure that assistance is developed with and for those affected by crises, integrating their experiences, priorities, risks and preferences into operations. WFP will invest in strengthening the capacities of staff and partners in relation to the people-centred approach⁶⁴ and it will deliberately and consistently support women's empowerment while ensuring that no one is left behind. This includes ensuring that the root causes of discrimination and barriers to basic rights are well understood and that data collection, analysis and programming are context-specific and sensitive to social dynamics, with priority given to providing assistance to women and adapting programmes around their needs, recognizing the importance of promoting equitable treatment and access to resources, representation and decision making. Supporting women's empowerment reduces the vulnerability of women and their households to poverty, violence, hunger and malnutrition.⁶⁵
103. Systematic engagement of men and boys alongside women and girls will foster approaches that advance equality, ensuring a better understanding of the benefits derived from women's empowerment in terms of meeting household food needs, uplifting communities and promoting societal growth and prosperity.
104. WFP will pursue access for all to services and support. Efforts will include enhancing access to information and financial services and dismantling physical and structural barriers that inhibit equality. For example, cash transfers directed to women's own accounts can provide them with access to financial services for the first time and contribute meaningfully to their digital financial inclusion. Adjustment to the complex interrelations between people based on social norms, power dynamics, cultural traditions or discriminatory practices will be embedded in WFP's programmes with the goal of supporting food security for all members of a household.
105. WFP reaffirms its commitment to disability inclusion. WFP will invest in meaningful engagement with local organizations of persons with disabilities and will improve accessibility for all programmes. WFP will also invest in capacity-sharing initiatives, remove barriers to food assistance and create pathways for co-designing solutions. WFP will leverage data to improve targeting and accessible programme delivery.
106. Advancing equality is a shared responsibility. WFP will continue to strengthen partnerships with other United Nations entities, governments and local and national civil society groups, including organizations led by women, persons with disabilities, young people, Indigenous people, refugees and internally displaced persons.

⁶⁴ WFP. 2025. *People-Centred Programming Training* | WFPgo

⁶⁵ Hendricks. 2019. *The role of financial inclusion in driving women's economic empowerment*. Development in Practice; CGAP. 2022. *How Can We Build on COVID-19 Progress in Women's Financial Inclusion*;

Ensuring protection and accountability to affected people

107. WFP upholds protection and accountability to affected people as core, non-negotiable pillars of a principled response.⁶⁶ WFP commits to the delivery of assistance that is meaningful, safe, accessible, dignified and does no harm and places women and girls at the centre of its operations, while leaving no one behind. WFP adopts an evidence-based and context-driven approach that integrates protection and accountability considerations into food security analysis, programme design and implementation. WFP maintains a zero-tolerance policy for inaction on sexual exploitation and abuse, a serious form of sexual misconduct against the people served by WFP, and takes a victim/survivor-centred approach to its prevention and protection measures, reinforcing its commitment in line with recommendations of the 2024 strategic evaluation of its work on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.⁶⁷ WFP also upholds zero tolerance for child exploitation, abuse and harm, and ensures that all its actions and decisions respect the best interests of the child.
108. WFP conducts regular analysis to identify protection risks and understand how these risks interact with and are exacerbated by food insecurity. These efforts inform the design and adaptation of programmes to ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most in a safe, inclusive and transparent manner. WFP will identify barriers to food security and ensure meaningful access to assistance for all, with particular attention to women and girls, persons with disabilities, displaced populations and others who may face challenges accessing services. Furthermore, WFP will strengthen its efforts to promote prevention, response, and accountability related to sexual exploitation and abuse.
109. WFP will be guided by accountability to affected people, ensuring that individuals and communities can meaningfully participate in decision-making by sharing their views, preferences and priorities. WFP will ensure that communities are regularly informed about its work and have access to safe, inclusive and accessible two-way feedback mechanisms through which they can ask questions, voice concerns and provide input. This feedback will inform timely programme adjustments, enhancing responsiveness, effectiveness and overall programme quality.

Integrating environmental sustainability

110. WFP is embedding environmentally sustainable practices into the heart of its work.⁶⁸ The organization is firmly committed to reducing its environmental footprint and ensuring that its operations protect – not harm – the environment, people and communities it serves. A stronger approach and governance structure will ensure the operationalization of the environmental policy and the mainstreaming of sustainability throughout WFP. By leading through example, WFP demonstrates that responsible, transparent environmental stewardship is not only achievable but essential in humanitarian action.

⁶⁶ WFP. 2020. [WFP protection and accountability policy](#).

⁶⁷ WFP. 2024. [Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#).

⁶⁸ "Environmental policy" (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-B/Rev.1).

111. WFP's efforts span its programmes, supply chains and management services, involving partners, suppliers and communities. Key areas include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving waste management, eliminating wasteful water consumption, mitigating air pollution and protecting biodiversity, consistent with the priorities of the United Nations system. Current initiatives include procuring food commodities grown using low-impact techniques or derived from drought-tolerant crops, partnering with suppliers to improve their environmental footprint, using solar power for its facilities in order to cut greenhouse gas emissions and improve resilience, optimizing transport routes, and recycling waste from food packaging, warehouses and offices.
112. The transformation of WFP's procurement operations,⁶⁹ anchored in market segmentation and category management for food, goods and services, has positioned the organization to further enhance its sourcing strategies with a sharper focus on environmental sustainability. Local procurement is an example of WFP's efforts to increase sustainability and reduce the environmental footprint of supply chains.

Embedding the humanitarian principles and conflict sensitivity

113. Violence is not only driving global hunger but is also undermining WFP's ability to reach affected people in a safe and principled way. The humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence are WFP's highest guiding principles, providing the ethical framework for all programmes and operations, particularly in emergencies. Visible and consistent adherence to the humanitarian principles enables WFP to build trust, manage risks and ultimately, gain sustainable access to people in need. While adherence to the humanitarian principles may require trade-offs and flexible approaches depending on operating environments, it is essential to WFP's work and will continue to guide WFP in all programmes and operations.
114. Every environment in which WFP operates has unique social, political, ethnic, cultural and historical dynamics that not only impact WFP operations but are also impacted *by* WFP operations. WFP is committed to using a context-specific and conflict-sensitive approach in its work. This entails using an understanding of the contexts in which WFP operates, and how these interact with its interventions, to minimize the risk of creating or exacerbating conflict, being caught up in conflict or political dynamics, or having negative impacts on people or the environment. This approach also seeks to maximize positive impacts on conflict.
115. A conflict-sensitive approach enables WFP to better anticipate, prepare for and respond to growing levels of conflict-induced food insecurity. It also supports rapid course-correction when needed in order to minimize any harm caused by its programmes or operations while also enabling the identification of targeted food security interventions that can advance peace and social cohesion, particularly at the local level. As outlined in its 2023 strategy on mainstreaming conflict sensitivity, WFP will continue to incorporate context analysis, conflict sensitivity and risk management in its programmes and operations, at all levels and in all settings.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ "[Local and regional food procurement policy](#)" (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-C).

⁷⁰ WFP. 2023. [WFP Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming Strategy](#).

Promoting localization

116. WFP will ensure that local and national actors increasingly lead efforts to address food insecurity and promote healthy diets, providing support, with others, as needed. This effort represents a paradigm shift for WFP that is aligned with international commitments and national priorities. For WFP, this will entail progressing from transactional to collaborative partnerships with local and national non-governmental organizations; strengthening engagement with community-based and representative organizations⁷¹ as technical partners in food security and nutrition; increasing the roles of local entrepreneurs and small enterprises in supply chains and markets; and strengthening the influence of local and national actors in shaping policies, operations and coordination platforms. WFP will continue to prioritize local and regional food procurement, fostering smallholder farmers' access to markets.⁷²
117. To achieve these objectives, WFP will strengthen and share capacities with local and national actors, not as intermediaries but as the ultimate leaders and owners of local response efforts. WFP will systematically engage in participatory and collaborative approaches with affected people, seeking direct inputs in the design and delivery of interventions and sharing decision-making power. The organization will also facilitate direct and flexible funding to local actors, while fostering mutual accountability and risk sharing. WFP will continue to apply its ethical values and robust risk management system when engaging with all partners, including local partners, to mitigate risks, including in relation to protection, accountability, fraud, corruption, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, and abuse of power.
118. WFP will advance the localization agenda while upholding the humanitarian principles and global assurance standards – noting that the latter stand to benefit from greater localization, as that approach helps to ensure that assistance reaches those targeted. WFP commits to generating evidence on the efficiency and quality gains that result from stronger partnerships with local and national actors. In doing so, WFP will weigh the risks of expanding these partnerships against the consequences of delaying or avoiding engagement or overburdening local and national actors with responsibilities they may not be ready or resourced to absorb.

Mainstreaming assurance

119. WFP is unwavering in its commitment to upholding the highest standards of transparency, accountability and integrity in managing its resources. Assurance measures provide the foundation for effective, principled and transparent operations. They ensure that resources are used responsibly, that assistance reaches those who need it most, and that every action taken by WFP reflects its commitment to accountability, neutrality and integrity with the full participation of the people and communities served.

⁷¹ Representative organizations include, for example, organizations of persons with disabilities and women-led organizations.

⁷² WFP. 2019. [Local and regional food procurement policy](#).

120. The Global Assurance Framework sets four clear standards across all operations that global headquarters is committed to supporting country offices in meeting. First, WFP consults with the people it assists, respecting their privacy and ensuring that their voices help shape the support they receive. Second, WFP knows who is being assisted and checks who did and did not receive aid, using secure digital registration and post-distribution reconciliation. Third, WFP guarantees the safety and traceability of its assistance. Fourth, WFP preserves its operational independence, ensuring that decisions are guided by the humanitarian principles rather than political or economic interests. Where standards cannot be met, country offices will highlight and escalate risks, internally and with governments and partners, following established procedures.
121. WFP's assurance processes ensure efficient and effective use of resources. These processes include maintaining segregation of roles and duties, using evidence-based targeting, and avoiding group distributions wherever possible and safe to do so. Programme and process monitoring are implemented to flag high-risk issues and ensure effective procedures. Cooperating partners and vendors are selected through a transparent and diligent process.

Enablers

122. This strategic plan includes a set of six enablers – factors that are essential to its success. The enablers constitute priority areas of investment for the organization and are tracked through the corporate results framework.

People

123. WFP's people are at the heart of everything the organization does.⁷³ Strengthening WFP's workforce and workplace culture is fundamental to delivering on the organization's mission and navigating an increasingly complex and challenging world. At the core of this is duty of care⁷⁴ – a shared, organization-wide responsibility that fosters accountability, efficiency and commitment to WFP's workforce. The new duty of care framework aims to raise risk awareness; promote shared responsibility for safety and health; include employees in decision-making that impacts their safety and security; show respect for the dignity of WFP employees; safeguard a work environment free of discrimination, harassment, abuse of authority and all forms of sexual misconduct; provide care for those affected by work-related hazards; and ensure accountability at all levels. Together, these principles create a healthy, safe, secure, respectful and collaborative working environment throughout WFP for all employees. WFP also commits to improving accessibility in the workplace and becoming an employer of choice for persons with disabilities.
124. To better serve people in need, WFP has undergone a major transformation to become a leaner, more agile and country-focused organization. Structures have been streamlined, accountabilities clarified, and support functions consolidated. By aligning workforce skills with evolving organizational needs, WFP can unlock a critical strategic advantage and foster efficiency and effectiveness at all levels. To realize this, WFP will continue to apply strategic workforce planning and structural alignments at the global, functional and country levels, guided by current and future operational needs. WFP will remain focused on retaining high-performing and skilled staff to preserve critical expertise.

⁷³ WFP. 2021. [WFP People Policy](#)

⁷⁴ WFP. 2024. [Duty of care accountability and governance framework](#)

125. Building on this foundation, WFP will continue investing in a future-ready workforce that is agile, high-performing, diverse, resilient and grounded in its core values.⁷⁵

Partnerships

126. Partnerships are core enablers of WFP's ability to deliver at scale, innovate and support efforts to end hunger. WFP prioritizes transformative and impactful collaboration that acts as a strategic lever to end hunger. By connecting its local convening power to global opportunities, WFP will help maintain attention on efforts to end hunger. WFP will adopt a more enabling role, fostering strategic partnerships that build on synergies, complementarities and programme integration to address system-wide challenges. This means shifting to a more catalytic role, supporting locally led systems, prioritizing national ownership, and developing joint initiatives with other United Nations entities.
127. WFP will continue to be guided by national governments, accelerating progress towards their objectives. WFP will support them in strengthening emergency response, resilience and social protection, leveraging their own funds. WFP's comparative advantages in fragile and conflict-affected settings, combined with the policies and financing power of international financial institutions, offers a compelling model. In the areas of resilience and development, partnering with international financial institutions enables WFP to support countries in scaling up programmes and enhancing their sustainability by anchoring them in national investments and global development finance.
128. WFP will continue to support South-South and triangular cooperation and centres of excellence, harnessing expertise, innovation and partnerships to strengthen national capacity to respond effectively to hunger and malnutrition. By facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges, capacity development and co-investment among developing countries, WFP will leverage South-South and triangular cooperation to strengthen national systems and foster a sense of ownership and solidarity across the Global South.
129. WFP works with partners to map and identify effective response mechanisms, using data and results-based management to inform programme design and enhance accountability. In partnership with sister United Nations agencies, including the other Rome-based agencies, and with more than 1,000 NGOs and civil society organizations, WFP contributes to collaborative responses, in line with its comparative advantages. In other areas, WFP will use its recognized convening power to facilitate other actors' programmes where there is a need, and where they can bring value. Systematic evaluations of cooperating partners will continue to ensure alignment with United Nations principles and the organization's strategic vision.
130. WFP will work with member state partners to identify, innovate, implement and scale up solutions to end hunger. Through exchanges of resources, knowledge and capacity, WFP will continue to serve as a partner and broker for tailored solutions, leveraging its footprint. Working together with the private sector, WFP will continue building partnerships based on shared values that provide technical assistance and knowledge transfer as well as financial contributions for solving global problems.

Funding

131. As a voluntarily funded organization, WFP relies entirely on contributions from public, private and individual partners to carry out its work. WFP actively engages with resource partners to secure direct funding for its operations and indirect support for broader hunger outcomes. WFP aims to maximize flexible and predictable funding to enable agile and rapid

⁷⁵ WFP's core values are collaboration, integrity, commitment, inclusion and humanity.

response, effective planning and long-term resilience. Such financing is key to advancing localization, as it allows WFP to shift decision-making and responsibility to local actors. WFP will continue to advocate through strategic dialogue with public and private donors and use evidence to demonstrate efficiency gains achieved from flexible funding.

132. WFP seeks to protect and deepen its partnerships with traditional donor countries. This core support provides the foundation that enables WFP's operations and positions it to assume a leadership role in efforts to end hunger. WFP continuously strives to grow and diversify its funding base. Programme countries are increasingly investing in WFP's programmes and relying on its support to advance national development through food systems strengthening and social protection programmes. Platforms for South-South and triangular cooperation are being used to tap into regional capacities and advocate for local needs.
133. WFP is exploring innovative financing solutions – such as debt swaps, blended finance, disaster risk financing and public-private partnerships – in collaboration with international financial institutions and other partners, in order to help countries to unlock fiscal space with a focus on ending hunger. WFP is also shaping and implementing financial solutions tailored to evolving circumstances, including by accessing climate and development finance for adaptation and resilience building programmes and projects, as well as other thematic funds where relevant.
134. Private sector partnerships are a key pillar of WFP's resource mobilization strategy. The organization engages with corporations, foundations, philanthropists and individuals to garner support for its mandate in the form of funding, expertise, innovation and visibility. Direct collaboration between the private sector and the country, regional and global offices is key to identifying field-level opportunities and developing impactful, tailored partnerships. WFP will also leverage its strengths in logistics and emergency telecommunications to tap into emerging private funding to strengthen emergency preparedness and resilience at scale.

Evidence

135. WFP remains committed to using robust, timely evidence to guide decisions, mobilize resources and ensure accountability. Food security and nutrition analysis will inform programme design, grounded in impartial needs assessments. WFP will strengthen field monitoring systems to better enable agile programmatic adjustments in response to changes in operating environments. In line with the Humanitarian Reset, WFP will actively pursue joint assessments in key countries, enhance interoperability and expand data sharing in order to reduce fragmentation in the humanitarian data ecosystem and improve collective response.
136. Where feasible, key data will be disaggregated by age, sex, disability and residence status in order to support targeting, outreach, programme design and monitoring. This approach will strengthen transparency and accountability to affected people. WFP will prioritize responsible data management to support the systematic use of advanced analytics and data provision as a global public good. Building on its extensive experience in real-time mobile data collection, WFP will explore the potential of emerging technologies to ensure the timely availability of sufficiently granular information and to support cost-efficient data collection – crucial at a time of funding shortfalls.

137. WFP's evaluation function is firmly committed to generating timely, accessible and rigorous evidence that ensures accountability and supports organizational learning. Policy, strategic, corporate emergency and country strategic plan evaluations as well as decentralized and impact evaluations of WFP programmes will continue to inform policy and programme decisions and contribute to the global evidence base on food security and nutrition.
138. WFP will conduct thematic research to advance the understanding of programme costs, benefits and long-term impact, including the cost of inaction. This will support efforts to optimize returns on investment and identify ways to reduce the need for humanitarian food assistance. WFP will collaborate with research partners and ensure alignment with broader initiatives in this area.

Innovation

139. WFP has a long-standing commitment to leveraging technology and innovative solutions to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness. WFP aims to harness innovation across all levels of the organization, with a focus on empowering in-country employees, rolling out impactful solutions and fostering strong partnerships. WFP drives innovation in products, processes, technology, business models, financing mechanisms and partnerships with the aim of developing the most effective solutions for addressing hunger and food insecurity. As a trusted system-wide partner, WFP provides a platform of innovation services aimed at enhancing the impact and effectiveness of humanitarian and development work. At the same time, WFP will continue to integrate appropriate mitigation measures to address the risks posed by digitalization and innovation.
140. Over the next five years, WFP will invest in enterprise architecture, digital transformation, data governance and system integration with a view to ensuring seamless data flow and analysis, enabling internal efficiencies and supporting data-driven decision-making. WFP will scale up proven digital solutions in areas such as school meals, social protection and resilience, while enhancing beneficiary data platforms to ensure transparency, fairness and two-way communication with communities. WFP is also reinforcing cybersecurity, expanding reliable connectivity and promoting digital literacy – all essential for safeguarding systems, ensuring operational continuity and building a more agile organization. As part of this transformation, WFP will also advance the responsible adoption of AI, consistent with United Nations internal policies, to improve operational efficiency, support faster and fairer humanitarian responses, and unlock new capabilities across programmes.

Advocacy

141. WFP will strengthen its advocacy capabilities as a strategic enabler of efforts to alleviate hunger and malnutrition. Leveraging its global presence and deep expertise, WFP can influence decision-making and policy-setting at the global, regional and local levels in order to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable people. The Executive Board also plays a critical role in WFP's advocacy efforts, amplifying key messages and engaging with governments and partners to advance shared priorities.
142. The most compelling example of the power of WFP's advocacy is the School Meals Coalition, which has been instrumental in driving the school meals agenda forward in countries and positioning the topic in the development agenda globally. WFP's advocacy has been effective in creating a new global policy priority, which has already resulted in an additional 80 million children receiving school meals in the last four years, mainly in low-income countries.

143. WFP will focus on continuous coalition building to enhance its ability to coordinate global efforts and shape policy to improve food security worldwide. A large focus of WFP's advocacy efforts will be on host governments, working with national and local actors to support priority-setting and resource allocation for efforts to reduce hunger. As part of this, WFP will expand its engagement in humanitarian diplomacy to help shape the broader political and operational environment for humanitarian action, addressing access constraints and upholding international humanitarian law. To support this agenda, WFP will invest in building the skills needed for managing upstream policy engagement, navigating complex governance environments, and facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues and partnerships.
144. WFP will engage in evidence-based advocacy, strengthening its investments in research and analytics to enhance its credibility in the policy sphere, ensuring that interventions are grounded in robust data and best practices. Capacity building within WFP and among governments and partners will ensure that advocacy is well-coordinated, innovative and responsive to emerging challenges.

Box 3: Call to action

Millions of lives hang in the balance as humanitarian assistance, the world's safety net of last resort, frays. WFP solemnly calls on governments, donors, the private sector and citizens around the world to turn this strategy into action.

The cost of humanitarian inaction is staggering. Evidence shows that food insecurity is a major driver of refugee outflows.⁷⁶ Most displaced people first seek safety in neighbouring countries, but lack of support forces many to continue to destinations further afield.⁷⁷ In 2024, WFP's traditional donor countries spent USD 27.8 billion to provide initial support for refugees at their borders, around USD 9,200 per person. That is 74 times more than the USD 122 per person that the same donors spent on humanitarian aid around the world.⁷⁸

Food insecurity fuels instability by deepening desperation and social grievances, making communities more vulnerable to unrest and violence. When people cannot meet their basic needs, the opportunity cost of violence drops, and food becomes a powerful recruitment tool for armed groups.⁷⁹ Humanitarian inaction not only intensifies these risks but also undermines peacebuilding and recovery efforts, creating fertile ground for future displacement and conflict.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ WFP. 2017. *At the Root of Exodus: Food security, conflict and international migration*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Own calculation based on data from OECD. 2024. *Preliminary official development assistance levels in 2024. Humanitarian Action* (accessed on 23 June 2025). *UNHCR Refugee Data Finder* (Accessed on 23 June 2025).

⁷⁹ WFP USA. 2023. *Dangerously Hungry*.

⁸⁰ Salehyan. 2018. *The Strategic Case for Refugee Resettlement*; Loescher and Milner. 2005. *Protracted Refugee Situations: Domestic and International Security Implications* (not available online); Lischer. 2017. *The Global Refugee Crisis: Regional Destabilization & Humanitarian Protection Regional Destabilization & Humanitarian Protection*; Purkey. 2019. "Transformative Justice and Legal Conscientization: Refugee Participation and Peace Processes, Repatriation, and Reconciliation" in Bradley, Milner and Peruniak (eds). *Refugees' Roles in Resolving Displacement and Building Peace: Beyond Beneficiaries* (not available online); Hammar. 2014. *Displacement economies in Africa: paradoxes of crisis and creativity*; Milner. 2019. "Refugees, Peacebuilding, and Paternalism: Lessons from Mozambique" in Bradley, Milner and Peruniak, (eds). *Refugees' Roles in Resolving Displacement and Building Peace: Beyond Beneficiaries* (not available online).

Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSIN	Food Security Information Network
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	international financial institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization