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Summary report on the evaluation of WFP's Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap (2022–2025)

Executive summary

The evaluation of WFP's *Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025* assessed the road map's contribution to guiding the strategic direction of WFP's supply chain; its efficiency; its results in terms of WFP's work in leading emergency response, strengthening national systems and providing services to partners; and how the ambitions underpinning the road map were supported by strategic enablers – people, partnerships, evidence, technology and funding. The evaluation was conducted to support accountability and learning and to inform WFP's decisions on the strategic direction of its supply chain in light of institutional and contextual changes.

The evaluation found that the road map set relevant aspirations for WFP's supply chain, enabling adaptation to emerging initiatives and diverse contexts, but limited dissemination of the road map constrained its uptake in the field. Given the magnitude of change in the humanitarian landscape, there is now a need for a strategic update of the road map.

The road map helped to drive institutional investments in tools, platforms and systems, and enact organizational changes aimed at enhancing internal efficiency and programmatic contributions. However, opportunities for further integration with other functions and systems within WFP remain, and staffing levels have not kept pace with the expanded demands on supply chain employees. Aspirations for sustainable funding have not been fully achieved, most recently due to funding cuts.

In line with WFP evaluation policy (2022) (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.

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WFP's supply chain was able to enhance its reach to the most vulnerable people with food and cash, according to needs and preferences. An array of mechanisms contributed to a near doubling in the number of beneficiaries reached between 2018 and 2022. Food safety and quality also improved, as demonstrated by a reduction in incidents related to food quality.

WFP contributed to strengthening national systems by supporting local supply chains through building technical supply chain expertise, providing technical assistance to governments, and implementing the local and regional food procurement policy. Despite achievements, however, limited guidance and resourcing, shifting expectations, gaps in reporting frameworks, and the lack of integration between WFP's programming and supply chain operations have hindered the organization's ability to demonstrate the contributions made by its supply chain to national systems strengthening.

During the period under evaluation, WFP reinforced its position as a preferred partner within the international humanitarian community. Growth in its provision of mandated common services and on-demand services, coupled with partners' consistently high levels of satisfaction with WFP, underscores the role of the supply chain in enabling and supporting global humanitarian operations. Current and future United Nations reform initiatives have the potential to further expand opportunities for the supply chain to provide joint services.

WFP's supply chain has achieved measurable improvements in cost-efficiency, timeliness and quality since 2019. Multiple factors have contributed to efficiency gains, including optimized procurement processes, the expansion of advance financing mechanisms, the management of inter-country corridors, and investments in technical solutions. Above all, however, strong national systems have had the greatest influence on cost reductions and transfer savings.

In line with WFP's cross-cutting priorities, issues related to gender, protection and environmental sustainability have increasingly been considered in supply chain operations. A focus on environmental sustainability has contributed to improving environmental outcomes. There have also been efforts to incorporate gender and protection-related considerations into supply chain operations, but gaps remain in ensuring consistent practice and demonstrating achievements.

The evaluation makes four recommendations: update the supply chain strategy; enhance the internal coherence of systems and processes throughout WFP; enhance external coherence with the operationalization of the UN80 initiative; and align and strengthen implementation mechanisms in support of the updated supply chain strategy and the UN80 initiative.

Draft decision*

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of WFP's Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap (2022–2025) (WFP/EB.1/2026/6-C/1) and management response (WFP/EB.1/2026/6-C/1/Add.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.

Introduction

Evaluation features

1. The WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV) commissioned an independent strategic evaluation of WFP's *Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025*. This is the first evaluation dedicated to WFP's supply chain operations.
2. The evaluation sought evidence regarding the positioning and performance of WFP's supply chain,¹ given its centrality to the achievement of WFP's mandate, and – particularly – the significant internal and external changes that have occurred since the road map was developed. The evaluation was global in scope and covered the period from 2019 to 2025, encompassing the period covered by the current road map, the previous supply chain strategy for 2017–2022, and the implementation of the 2019 local and regional food procurement policy.
3. The evaluation aimed to provide both learning for WFP and accountability to WFP's stakeholders, as the organization moves into a new strategic period. Specifically, it assessed:
 - the relevance of the road map in enabling WFP's supply chain to deliver on its mandate;
 - the efficiency of WFP's supply chain in terms of the timeliness and costs of its operations;
 - the results achieved in terms of the ambitions underpinning the road map; and
 - the factors enabling or constraining the supply chain's ability to achieve its strategic aims.
4. The evaluation applied a theory-based, mixed methodology that emphasized learning by taking stock of what is working well and what can be strengthened. It proposed recommendations to guide the development of the supply chain's next strategic instrument.
5. To understand the diversity of the settings in which WFP's supply chain operates, the evaluation conducted extensive in-person and remote data collection (figure 1), interviewing more than 250 key informants and drawing on supply chain data from the country, regional and corporate levels. The evaluation adhered to the ethical guidelines of the United Nations Evaluation Group, and principles related to gender and inclusion were considered in its design and conduct.

¹ In this report, "WFP's supply chain" refers to the procurement, logistics, aviation, shipping and service provision across country, regional and global operations.

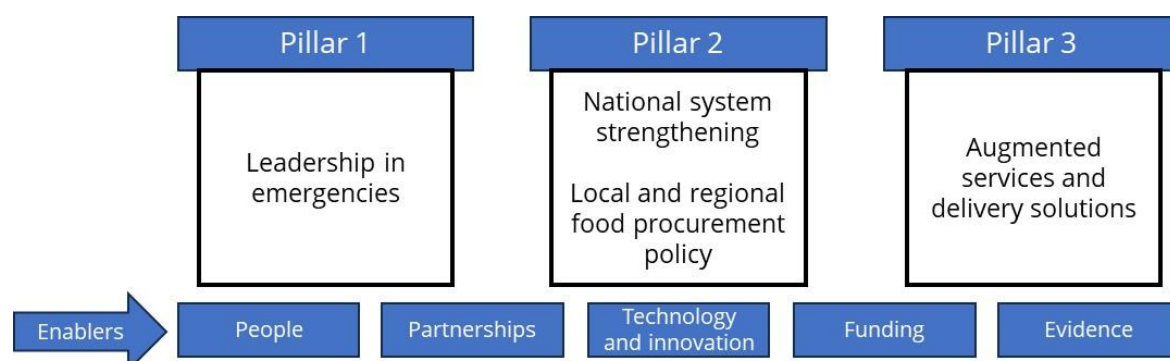
Internal context

8. WFP plays a critical role in the global infrastructure for humanitarian supply chains. It contributes to the collective humanitarian response through participation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, leadership of the global logistics cluster, and the provision of procurement, logistics and other services for delivering food, cash and goods during emergencies. When needed, it also contributes to initiatives that leverage global expertise and field experience, such as the Black Sea Grain initiative,⁴ and undertakes capacity-strengthening activities for governments and other partners.
9. WFP's resourcing for supply chain operations and assistance has been affected by external trends. Overall, resourcing steadily increased until the beginning of 2023, reaching USD 14.2 billion in 2022 before declining to USD 9.8 billion in 2024. To situate itself in this changing environment, the supply chain has needed to evolve.

The Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap for 2022–2025

10. The *Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025* was developed by WFP's supply chain function⁵ in accordance with the objectives articulated in WFP's strategic plan for 2022–2025. The road map has three strategic pillars: leadership in emergencies; support for the strengthening of national systems; and the provision of augmented services and delivery solutions. It identifies five enablers: people, partnerships, technology and innovation, funding, and evidence (figure 2). Under pillar 2, the road map identifies the local and regional food procurement policy as the main entry point for contributing to improved livelihoods, increased local production and strengthened local supply chains.

Figure 2: Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025 – strategic pillars and enablers



Source: OEV.

The evolution of WFP's supply chain

11. WFP's Supply Chain Division was established as a distinct functional area in 2015. To span the entire process of the end-to-end planning, sourcing and delivery of assistance, and to better position the supply chain function to support WFP's mandate, procurement (supply) and logistics (delivery) operations were merged into one function in 2017.
12. In 2025, WFP's supply chain function comprises procurement, logistics, aviation, shipping and service provision, which includes mandated services, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) – an air transport service that provides the global humanitarian community with access to hard-to-reach areas – and the logistics cluster, which provides support for information management in sudden-onset emergencies and conflicts and is led by WFP. As well as managing the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), a

⁴ Food Security Information Network and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2024. [2024 Global report on food crises](#).

⁵ The term "supply chain function" refers to the Supply Chain and Delivery Division as of 2025.

global network of logistics hubs for the procurement, storage and transport of emergency supplies for the international humanitarian community, the function is also responsible for providing on-demand services to partners (figure 3).

Figure 3: Key areas of WFP's supply chain

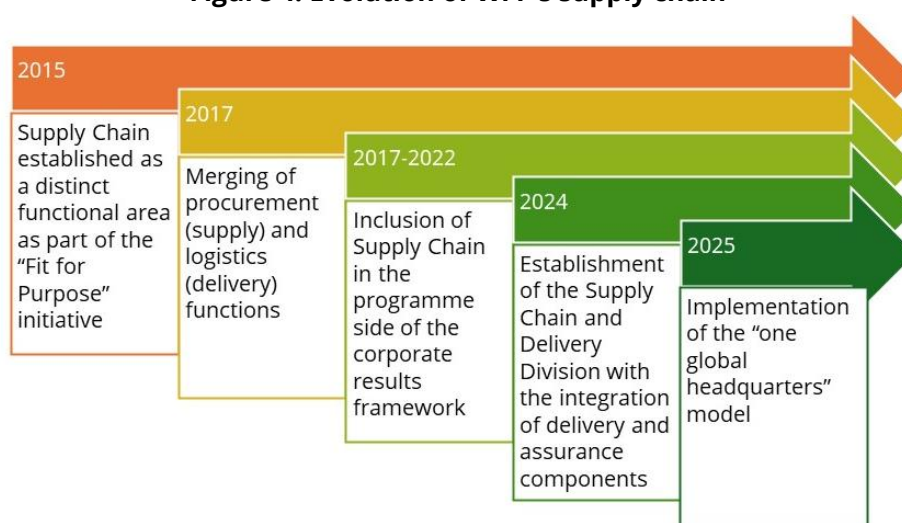


Source: OEV.

13. Building on earlier functional integration, in 2024, the Supply Chain Division integrated delivery and assurance components – including for cash-based operations, identity management, cooperating partner management, the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF)⁶ and on-demand services – into its operations thereby becoming the supply chain and delivery function. This change was introduced to strengthen an end-to-end supply chain model encompassing both “upstream” planning and “last-mile” delivery.⁷ Units dedicated to environmental sustainability, innovation, and research and development were also added to the function to address corporate priorities.
14. Subsequently, in an environment of reduced resourcing, in early 2025, WFP adopted and began to implement a “one global headquarters” model aimed at enhancing institutional coherence and clarifying lines of accountability in order to better support field operations. Accordingly, the structure and composition of WFP's supply chain continue to evolve, with further adjustments planned for 2026 (figure 4).

⁶ The GCMF is an advance financing mechanism that allows WFP to respond faster to emergencies. It is managed by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and the Supply Chain and Delivery Division, which is responsible for forecasting demand, planning supply, managing inventories and planning sales and operations.

⁷ The results of these efforts have not yet been assessed.

Figure 4: Evolution of WFP's supply chain

Source: OEV.

Key evaluation insights

How did the Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025 guide the work of WFP's supply chain?

The road map articulated clear, relevant aspirations for the evolution of WFP's supply chain from an operational role to one of global leadership and strategic partnership in the international humanitarian system. However, limited dissemination of the road map hindered institutional uptake, and demands on the supply chain have changed in light of the current growth in humanitarian crises, and funding gaps.

15. Developed during a period of relatively high funding and increased complexity and volatility, the road map aligned the objectives of WFP's supply chain with those set out in the organization's strategic plan for 2022–2025, building on the supply chain strategy for 2017–2022. The road map positioned WFP's supply chain function as an agile, proactive and strategic enabler in helping WFP to deliver on its mandate, emphasizing timely and efficient response, and elevating the function's strategic contribution beyond its well-established operational function. While maintaining the function's central role in service delivery, the road map emphasized the contributions of supply chain operations to national systems strengthening and the provision of services for the wider international humanitarian community. During the period covered by the road map, the demand for WFP's emergency response regained prominence in an environment of increasingly frequent emergencies.
16. The strategic direction articulated in the road map was sufficiently broad to allow the supply chain to adapt to emerging initiatives and to WFP's diverse operating environments. However, the lack of a clear implementation and dissemination plan limited uptake of the road map at the country office level. In addition, the absence of practical tools for implementing the road map limited the translation of its ambitions into action at the field level.

How have WFP's systems, structures and resources evolved to support the aims of the road map?

Platforms and reporting

The road map helped to drive institutional investments and organizational changes aimed at enhancing internal efficiency and programmatic contributions. However, opportunities for further consolidation and integration among functions and systems remain.

17. The evaluation found that WFP's institutional arrangements were aligned with the road map's aspirations for increased internal efficiency and enhanced linkages to programmatic contributions. To support the implementation of the road map, WFP invested in an array of digital platforms and tools to improve the availability, quality and visibility of data in order to support evidence-based decision-making for its supply chain. The evaluation found that these investments in technology have simplified workloads and supported more strategic operations, producing efficiencies in beneficiary registration, delivery of assistance, and the workloads of employees.
18. However, while there are no specific gaps, the menu of solutions is fragmented and does not yet support an end-to-end process for supply chain operations. Although substantial guidance exists, limited direction has been provided at the corporate or country office levels on how to balance cost, timing, quality, risk and added-value considerations. Country offices often face multiple, potentially competing priorities, such as cost-efficiency, the speed of delivery, risk management, the reduction of WFP's carbon footprint, and contributions to programmatic outcomes. This lack of harmonization across tools has led to challenges in system integration and interoperability and has created bottlenecks. Country offices reported that corporate technology solutions did not always meet their operational needs owing to the aggregation of information, complex approval processes, delays, and risk mitigation measures. This has resulted in country offices sometimes producing tools for their own needs – such as country-specific operational Excel sheets that do not comply with corporate guidelines – creating challenges by requiring the manual reconciliation of records after a response.
19. The use of evidence in decision-making is also constrained by differences in the information needs of headquarters and country offices; fragmented internal systems; and limitations in corporate key performance indicators (KPIs). However, during the period covered by the road map, the supply chain's contributions to the design of country strategic plans (CSPs) became increasingly explicit. For example, CSPs refer to contributions to national supply chain optimization, technical assistance for improving food distribution networks and logistics, the contribution of supply chain expertise to government-led initiatives, and supply chain improvements that support vulnerable communities. Notwithstanding the increased attention to supply chains in the design of CSPs, however, reporting mechanisms did not fully capture the role, contribution or impact of supply chain operations in terms of country office performance.

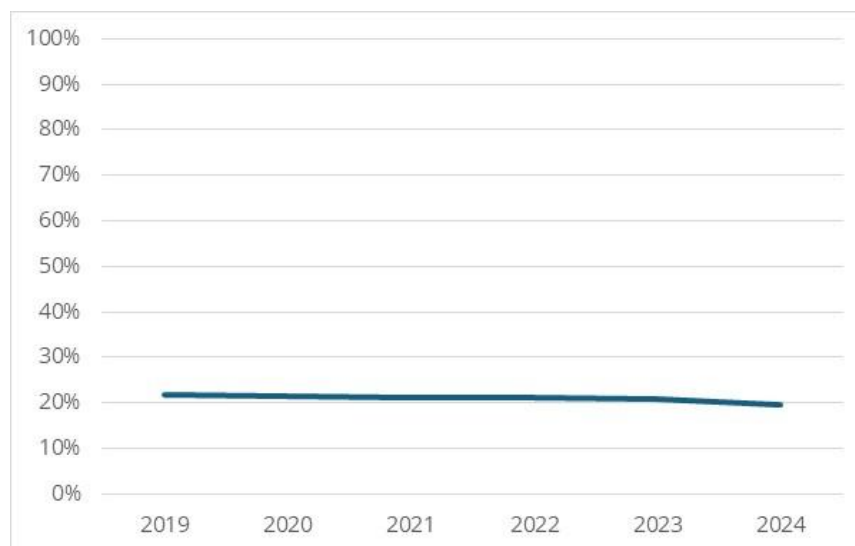
People

The road map's broad scope and the increasing expectations placed on supply chain staff demand a diversified and expanded workforce for the supply chain function. However, staffing levels have not evolved or expanded commensurately.

20. Supply chain staff play a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth functioning of WFP's supply chain operations. Problem solving, constant communication and coordination were found to have been essential in overcoming fragmented systems, maintaining institutional memory in the face of weak knowledge management systems, and adapting systems to diverse settings.

21. The ambitions underpinning the road map raised the expectations placed on supply chain staff, requiring new competencies in digital platforms, programmatic integration for national systems strengthening, and the marketing of joint and on-demand services. The composition of the supply chain workforce has evolved to reflect the changing and expanded profiles required. Since 2019, the number of supply chain-related positions – which entail programmatic and operational skills – increased by 67 percent, from 265 to 443 staff positions in 2024, while the demand for traditional logistics positions has remained relatively stable, increasing by only 4 percent from 2,972 staff positions in 2019 to 3,100 in 2024. However, recent shifts in humanitarian settings have renewed the need for strong technical expertise in logistics and procurement, as well as programmatic skills.
22. Despite growing demand, supply chain staffing as a share of WFP's total workforce has remained stable, at about 20 percent, despite organizational growth, while the supply chain manages 73 percent of WFP's humanitarian resources (figure 5).⁸

Figure 5: Supply chain staff as a share of WFP's total workforce



Source: Human Resources Division data.

23. National employees account for 80 percent of the supply chain workforce, underscoring the importance of training and capacity development at the country level. Long-term national employees were often key to building effective partnerships, while staff deployed during a sudden-onset or scale-up response often lacked the necessary pre-existing relationships with national governments, the private sector or cooperating partners for efficient supply chain implementation.

Funding

Efforts to ensure sustainable resourcing have been supported by an investment in on-demand services, and increased use of advance financing. However, the ambitions for increasing flexible funding have not been fully achieved because of recent funding cuts.

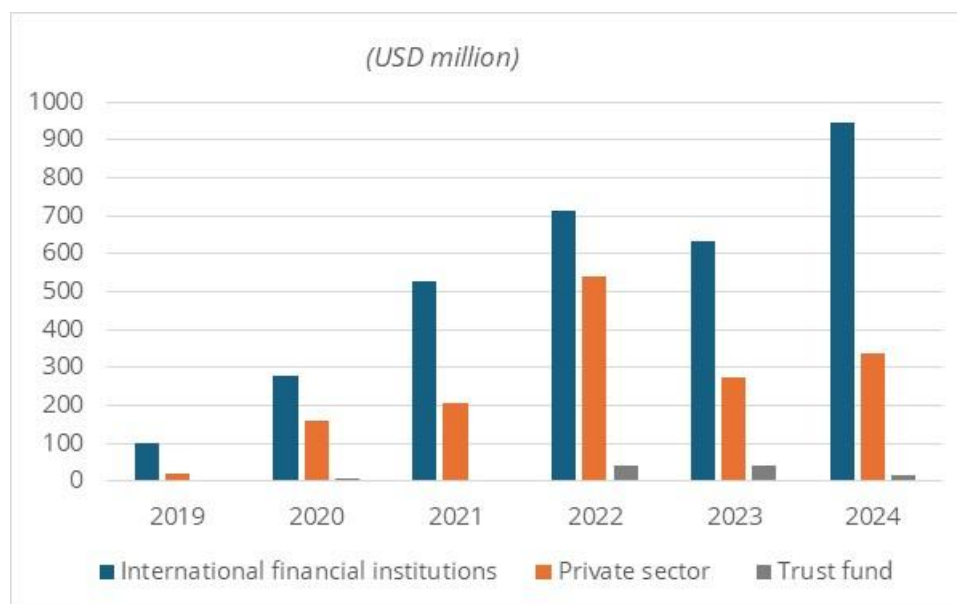
24. Responding to the need for increased, and more flexible, funding, WFP invested in infrastructure and mechanisms to support expanded on-demand and augmented services and advance financing mechanisms. This has led to increases in the value of on-demand services since 2019 and the potential for increased service provision. Although the two primary mechanisms for providing advance financing predate the road map, the resourcing

⁸ WFP annual performance reports for 2019–2024.

of those mechanisms increased from 2018 to 2024, albeit at varying rates between years (figure 6).

25. There has been an increase in the use of funding from international financial institutions and the private sector to support service provision. Resourcing from trust funds remains relatively low compared with other sources, but doubled from 2020 to 2024,⁹ reflecting the maturation and diversification of relationships with private sector and non-traditional partners.

Figure 6: Resourcing from international financial institutions, the private sector and trust funds in support of service provision



Source: Annual performance reports for 2019–2024 and management plans for 2019–2025.

26. Since 2022, the financial resources available to WFP and its supply chain have declined, reducing flexibility and causing funding gaps and delays in initiatives. While allocations from the programme support and administrative budget for the Supply Chain Division have fluctuated, they increased from USD 18.3 million in 2019 to USD 26.0 million in 2024. Flexible funding as a share of total funding also rose steadily until 2023, when it reached 13 percent, before falling to 11 percent in 2024.
27. Despite ambitions for sustainable funding, most WFP funding remains short-term – 71 percent of grants are for less than two years – limiting country offices' ability to build strategic stocks, make advance purchases or secure long-term contracts. The limited amounts and flexibility of funding¹⁰ led the supply chain and delivery function to rely on seed funding to support internal initiatives. The annual performance report for 2024 noted that this jeopardized the longevity of critical initiatives and created disjointed efforts depending on the thematic or geographic areas for which the funding was received.¹¹

⁹ Trust fund resourcing generally comes from national governments and is dedicated to a specific service provision opportunity, such as the delivery of vaccines or health supplies in targeted countries.

¹⁰ The evaluation team did not have access to data on the internal funding received for implementing initiatives.

¹¹ Annex VI-B, "Annual performance report for 2024" (WFP/EB.A/2025/4-A/Rev.1).

What did WFP's supply chain achieve in terms of the ambitions of the road map?

Pillar 1: Leadership in emergencies and protracted crises

WFP's continued leadership in emergency response has been supported by its supply chain infrastructure and rapid response mechanisms, which have enhanced its ability to reach the most vulnerable people with food and cash.

28. The road map set out ambitions for enhancing the ability of the supply chain to reach the most vulnerable people through the most appropriate delivery modality while maintaining the quality of the assistance delivered. WFP reached 87 million people in emergency situations in 2018, rising to nearly 160 million by 2022, but declining to 90 million in 2024. Even in an environment of increasingly complex emergencies and funding cuts, the organization was able to respond to sudden-onset crises within an average of one day in 2024.¹²
29. The expanded outreach to affected people was supported by programme adaptations and innovative delivery methods. These included scalable hybrid cash-based transfers and modified food distribution approaches, such as the batch-loading of prepaid electronic ration cards, home deliveries and mobile code-based systems. These adaptations reflect WFP's capacity to respond flexibly to evolving needs in diverse settings. However, given the funding constraints, WFP had to balance the number of beneficiaries it assisted against the volume and frequency of the transfers it delivered. This trade-off occasionally led to variable food security outcomes.¹³
30. WFP's supply chain has increasingly supported the development and use of flexible delivery modalities tailored to local needs and preferences.¹⁴ Country offices often conduct studies to determine the most appropriate modality – such as in-kind food, vouchers or cash – and the supply chain is adapted accordingly. Examples of this include the establishment of partnerships with bakeries to deliver hot meals, and collaboration with supermarkets on converting vouchers into food deliveries during the 2019 coronavirus virus (COVID-19) pandemic. The function has also switched between modalities in response to changing circumstances, such as moving from school meal operations to the distribution of take-home rations. These shifts are guided by assessments of markets, financing and technology and facilitated by preparedness measures such as agreements with suppliers and the pre-positioning of stocks. Recent organizational changes have also improved internal coordination, especially between the supply chain and programme divisions, but gaps remain in end-to-end planning, partner management and communication.
31. WFP has worked to reach the most vulnerable people by leveraging technology and digital solutions; adapting logistics and delivery methods to overcome access constraints; strengthening partnerships and local capacity; and engaging in negotiations for improved access to vulnerable people isolated by conflict.
32. Food safety and quality improved during the period covered by the road map, with increasingly rigorous food safety and quality mechanisms ensuring the quality of the food delivered. Between 2020 and 2025, WFP recorded 925 food safety and quality incidents, of which more than 80 percent were identified before the food reached beneficiaries. The

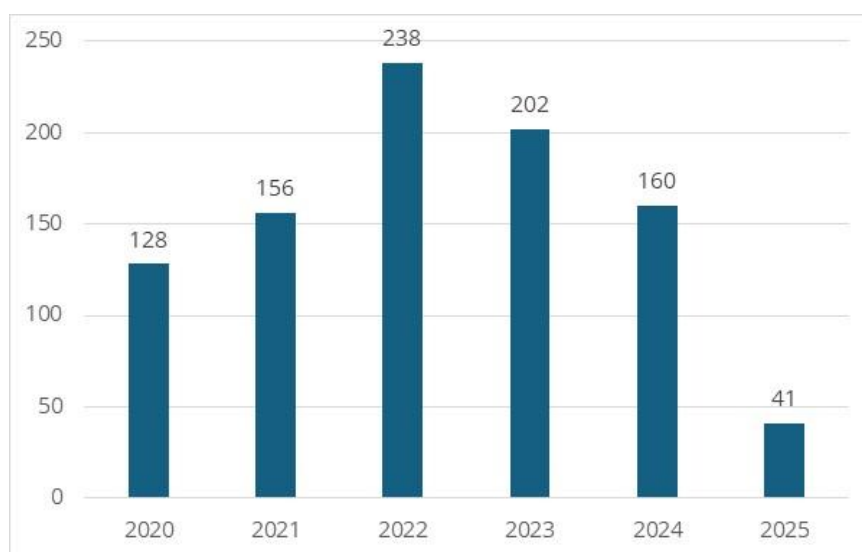
¹² ["Annual performance report for 2024"](#) (WFP/EB.A/2025/4-A/Rev.1).

¹³ WFP's 2025 global outlook reported that an estimated 44.4 million people were at "emergency" levels of food insecurity. However, WFP had to reduce rations and scale down programmes in key operations while significantly reducing the number of beneficiaries assisted.

¹⁴ ["Localization policy"](#) (WFP/EB.A/2025/5-A).

number of food safety and quality incidents has declined from a peak of 238 in 2022 to a low of fewer than 80 in 2025 (pro-rated for the full year) (figure 7).

Figure 7: Annual food safety and quality incidents



Source: DOTS, food safety and quality incidents dataset.

Pillar 2: Support for the strengthening of national systems

The road map positioned WFP's supply chain to strengthen national systems by supporting local supply chains and building technical supply chain expertise. Through its local and regional food procurement policy of 2019, WFP reinforced programmatic objectives such as supporting smallholder farmers and strengthening food value chains. However, limited guidance, reduced resourcing, shifting expectations and gaps in reporting frameworks have hindered WFP's ability to demonstrate the contributions that its supply chain operations make to national systems strengthening.

33. The road map aimed to support national systems and the implementation of the local and regional food procurement policy to support resilient national supply chains that deliver safe, nutritious foods, enhance markets, and boost local actors' capacity to withstand shocks.
34. Although the supply chain supports national systems through a myriad of approaches, many of these contributions are not captured in country-level or corporate reporting, limiting their visibility and the extent to which their impact can be measured.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the evaluation identified several areas of progress, and some challenges.
35. Supply chain and delivery efforts strengthened national systems through training, policy advice, new technologies and infrastructure support with the aim of improving national supply chains.¹⁶ Specific achievements identified by the evaluation include strengthened government procurement processes; improved management of strategic grain reserves, with an emphasis on food quality and safety; local markets expanded through local procurement; and the development of food fortification by the private sector. The supply chain and delivery function has also helped to bolster governments' logistics and supply chain capacity by supporting warehouses, staging areas and mobile storage units.¹⁷ The

¹⁵ Nepal country visit, exit briefing.

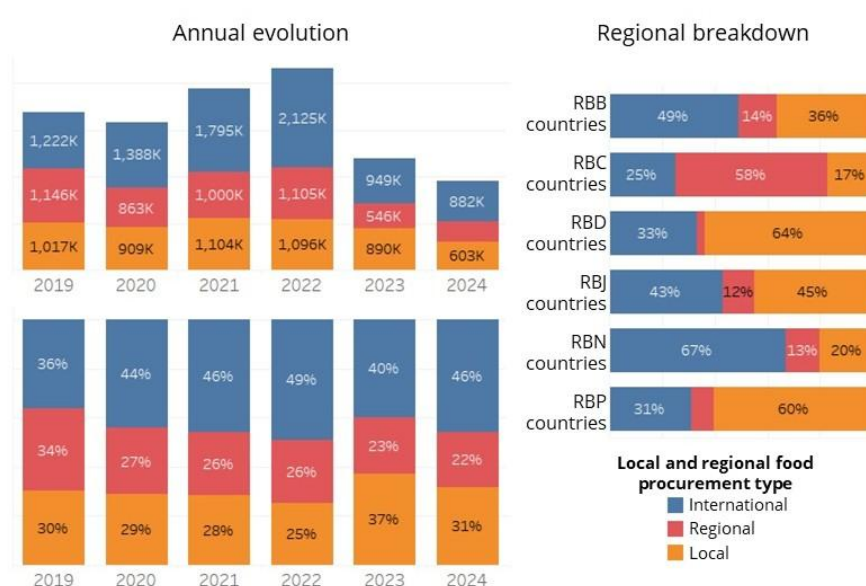
¹⁶ Draft UNHRD annual report for 2025,

¹⁷ ["Summary report on the evaluation of WFP's emergency preparedness policy"](#) (WFP/EB.1/2025/7-A/2).

logistics cluster, led by WFP, has also contributed to information preparedness¹⁸ and digital tools.

36. The local and regional food procurement policy strengthened the conceptual framework, value proposition, institutional mechanisms and incentives for local and regional purchases, improving access to, and the price, availability and quality of, food and related services. Included in the second pillar of the road map, to contribute to national systems strengthening, the policy aimed to boost WFP's local, regional and pro-smallholder procurement by balancing cost-efficiency considerations with programme objectives.
37. The policy introduced a mechanism that allows purchase prices of up to 20 percent above the import parity price to be considered for food purchased through local procurement, including from smallholder farmers. As part of its implementation, the policy was piloted in 11 countries, during which value chain analysis and new contract models that support scale-up were developed.¹⁹
38. Since the policy was implemented, WFP's local and regional food procurement has remained stable, accounting for between 50 and 65 percent of the organization's total procurement (figure 8). In terms of absolute value, however, WFP more than doubled its expenditure on local procurement, from USD 787 million in 2020 to USD 1.6 billion in 2022, constituting a 103 percent increase in the value injected into local economies.²⁰

Figure 8: Distribution of food volume by type of procurement, 2019–2024



Abbreviations: RBB = Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific; RBC = Regional Bureau for the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe; RBD = Regional Bureau for Western Africa; RBJ = Regional Bureau for Southern Africa; RBN = Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa; RBP = Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Source: Data on Supply Chain Procurement Service Procurement Spend Analysis (regional breakdown average 2019–2024) in WFP Analytics.

39. Through the policy, WFP has contributed to strengthening local economies by building long-term relationships with national suppliers and transporters, benefiting small businesses and improving food safety standards. The ambition for WFP to use its purchasing power to

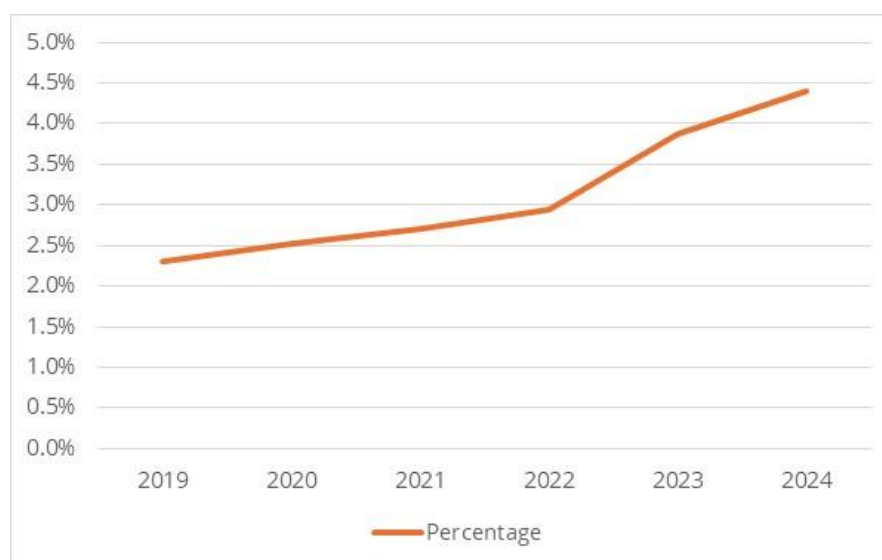
¹⁸ *Information preparedness* refers to the systems, data and analysis capabilities that enable timely, effective and evidence-based emergency responses.

¹⁹ WFP. 2024. *Evaluation of Local and Regional Food Procurement Pilot Programmes in Eastern Africa (2021–2023)*.

²⁰ WFP. 2023. *Update on the implementation of the local and regional food procurement policy*.

influence the development of local and regional markets and facilitate links between smallholder farmers and local suppliers was achieved to some extent. For example, in Eastern Africa and Central America, a focus on local procurement was found to improve food systems and generated hundreds of jobs each year. In addition, the integration of local procurement into the GCMF was found to reduce delivery lead times for smallholder farmers and improve the overall responsiveness of WFP's supply chain.²¹

**Figure 9: Procurement from smallholder farmers, 2019–2024
(percentage of total procurement)**



Source: WFP annual performance reports for 2020–2024.

40. Procurement from smallholder farmers has gradually increased since 2019, supported by programmatic support for farmers and the inclusion of clauses in supplier contracts stipulating that a certain percentage of commodities be purchased from smallholder farmers (figure 9). However, the evaluation team did not find a systematic link between WFP programmes that support farmers' livelihoods and procurement opportunities.
41. Despite achievements, implementation of the local and regional food procurement policy faced operational and structural challenges, including resourcing and organizational gaps. Operationally, WFP's administrative and procurement processes were not always well aligned with the practical needs of smallholder farmers, who often lacked the capital needed to absorb costs, or the technical capacity to manage WFP's processes. Structurally, the evaluation found that policy implementation was affected by an unclear division of responsibilities and inconsistent coordination between the supply chain and programme units in country offices. Beyond the initial pilot phase, implementation of the policy was constrained by a lack of dedicated human and financial resources, which limited WFP's ability to fully operationalize the policy.

²¹ WFP. 2024. *Evaluation of Local and Regional Food Procurement Pilot Programmes in Eastern Africa (2021–2023)*.

Pillar 3: Partner of choice

WFP has reinforced its position as a preferred partner for the provision of logistics and supply chain services within the international humanitarian community. Current and future United Nations reform initiatives have the potential to further expand the opportunities for WFP's supply chain to provide joint services.

42. The road map articulated the aspiration that WFP become the “partner of choice” for the international humanitarian community through its provision of mandated services – UNHAS and the logistics cluster,²² the development of mechanisms that support joint services, and the expansion of on-demand service provision to agencies and governments.

Services for the humanitarian community

43. WFP's services have earned the trust and respect of partners globally. This has helped to position WFP as a critical and fundamental systems enabler as well as a service provider.²³
44. In 2024, WFP met 100 percent of partners' requests for mandated services and provided cluster-related services in 56 countries. Operational efficiency improved, with the cost per UNHAS passenger falling by 2.5 percent between 2023 and 2024.²⁴ The quality of services was maintained, as demonstrated by a consistently high satisfaction rate in surveys, including over 95 percent satisfaction for UNHAS. The provision of all mandated services peaked during the COVID-19 pandemic response in 2020 and 2021, when UNHAS provided passenger transportation and evacuations related to the pandemic response.
45. UNHRD has responded to record numbers of requests from partners in emergency settings. Requests for support peaked in 2020 during the COVID-19 response. In 2024, UNHRD managed 559 consignments for 34 partners in 95 countries, providing, for example, aid in Yemen, emergency supplies in the Gaza Strip, nutrition stocks in Afghanistan, and water, hygiene and health kits for partners in the Sudan and Ukraine.
46. Requests for logistics cluster services, led by WFP, have continued to rise. In 2019, the cluster supported operations in 20 countries, which increased to 45 countries in 2024, with a shift in focus from product delivery to requests for coordination and information management.

Joint services

47. Under the road map, WFP committed to supporting supply chain services that include shared logistics platforms, joint needs assessments, collaborative cash delivery mechanisms, pooled procurement arrangements, and shared infrastructure. The Humanitarian Logistics Service was established within WFP to ensure the consolidation, integration and coordination of service provision activities.
48. In this context, WFP has promoted joint service platforms with partners to help enhance coordination, improve efficiency and maximize effectiveness during emergencies and protracted crises. The emphasis on joint service provision has become central to WFP's contribution to the UN80 initiative led by the Secretary-General and to nascent efforts to consolidate an integrated platform for the United Nations system and provide the conceptual framework for a joint supply chain service.²⁵

²² UNHRD is listed as a mandated service in the *Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025*.

²³ WFP. 2022. *Evaluation of the WFP Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

²⁴ WFP. 2025. *UNHAS Annual Review 2024: Facilitating global humanitarian response for 20 years*.

²⁵ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2025. *Towards a Value Proposition for a Joint Supply Chain*.

On-demand services

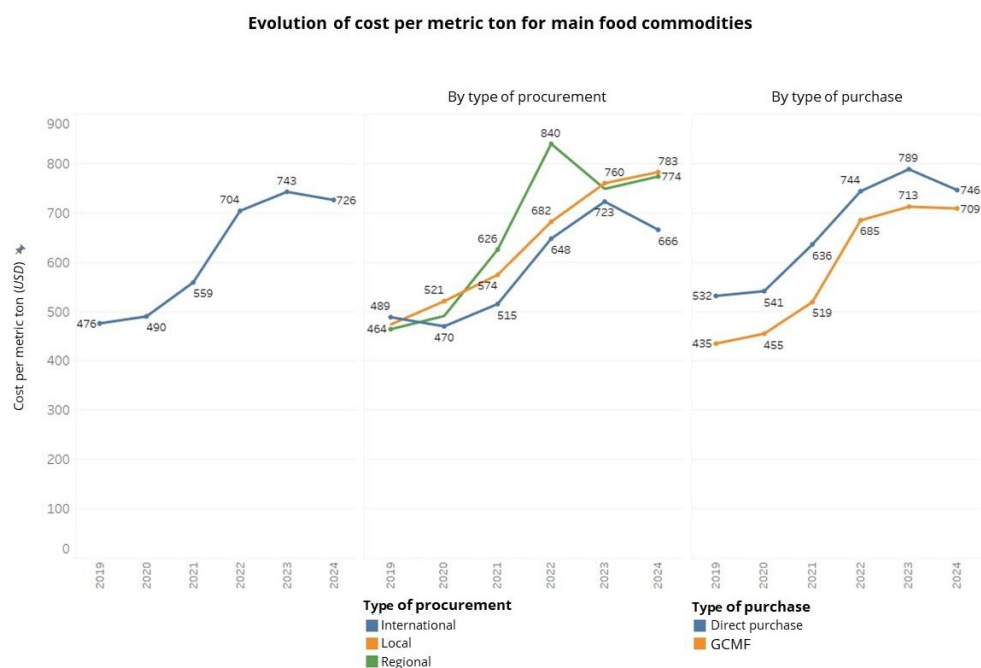
49. WFP significantly expanded its on-demand service operations to support partners with food-based, cash-based and logistics solutions. To strengthen delivery, WFP introduced an on-demand service function, a common marketplace platform for managing requests, a service catalogue, and a centralized dataset. Demand is concentrated in a few countries, which together account for more than 60 percent of the total value of WFP's service provision, and include Lebanon, the State of Palestine, Guatemala and Ethiopia.
50. While driven primarily by crisis, WFP's provision of on-demand services has also supported governments in development settings, demonstrating the organization's flexibility and strategic importance in enhancing operational efficiency and coordination among partners. Despite the demand from partners, the scalability of on-demand services is hindered by fluctuations in service needs, staffing gaps, unclear cost-recovery models, and limited performance monitoring.

How has WFP's supply chain demonstrated efficiency?

Since 2019, WFP's supply chain processes have demonstrated measurable efficiency gains. However, efficiency trends and challenges depended on operational and national circumstances.

51. WFP's supply chain operations have achieved measurable improvements in cost-efficiency, timeliness and quality since 2019. Multiple factors have contributed to supply chain efficiency gains. The expansion of advance financing mechanisms – such as the GCMF, the Immediate Response Account and internal project lending – and the management of inter-country corridors and UNHRD have enabled more proactive planning, faster procurement, and the pre-positioning of stock.
52. **Optimized procurement:** Despite rising global food prices and sharp cost increases in 2022, WFP has improved the cost-efficiency of its procurement activities – in terms of the cost per metric ton – through optimized sourcing. Sourcing through the GCMF was found to consistently deliver lower unit costs than direct purchasing, with average savings of USD 66 per mt from 2019 to 2024. Over time, the comparative costs of regional procurement have shifted from being consistently higher than those of traditional procurement to converging with those of local and international channels (figure 10), suggesting more strategic decision-making in country offices. In addition, country offices that procured food through the GCMF received their supplies faster than when using other procurement channels, with reduced average lead times of 49 days through the GCMF compared with ~143 days through other channels.²⁶

²⁶ “Report on the utilization of WFP's strategic financing mechanisms (1 January–31 December 2024)” (WFP/EB.A/2025/6-C/1/Rev.1).

Figure 10: Food costs per metric ton by type of procurement and purchase

Source: Supply Chain Procurement Service procurement spend analysis, December 2024.

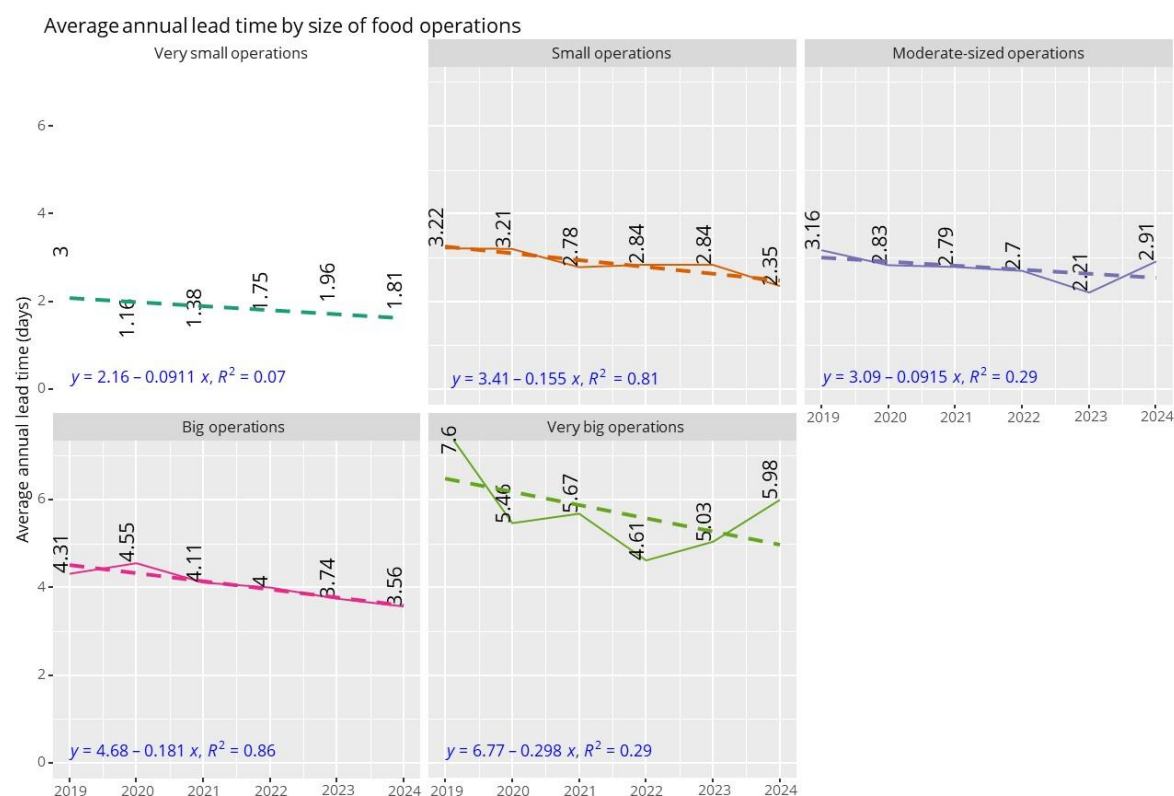
53. **Cost-efficiency at scale:** While food transfer costs rose by an average of USD 20 per mt from 2019 to 2024, the overall cost-efficiency of food transfers for small, moderate and large operations, measured in terms of food transfer costs per mt, has improved over time. This is especially the case for large operations where WFP benefits from economies of scale and long-term presence and where WFP has invested in strengthening national capacity (figure 11).

Figure 11: Annual food transfer costs by size of response

Source: Supply Chain Procurement Service procurement spend analysis.

54. Supply chain costs are higher in emergency responses and in fragile settings, mainly because of the increased expenses of transporting food and goods internationally and within affected countries, and the higher operational costs incurred by WFP's cooperating partners. In these situations, supply chain costs tend to rise where access is more difficult and operational challenges are greater. The evaluation found that, even under these conditions, maintaining a country presence facilitated efficiency gains through factors such as better sourcing practices, and improved relationships with transporters and vendors. Supply chain costs were also found to be high in WFP's very small operations, likely due to fixed costs related to supply chain management.
55. **Costs associated with transferring in-kind donations:** The costs of transporting and distributing in-kind food donations increased over the period. In-kind donations often require complex supply chain management due to short notice and tight distribution timelines, such as those related to food expiration dates. Country offices often prioritized the distribution of stock with earlier expiration dates, leaving others unused, which was found to sometimes lead to storage bottlenecks and increased transportation costs. The evaluation team found that in the absence of a corporate mechanism to support the long-term visibility of in-kind donations, such donations sometimes caused additional expenses, such as for the contracting of extra warehouses and the adjustment of distribution schedules.
56. **Decline of cash transfer costs over time:** The evaluation found that the longer a country operation has used cash as a transfer modality, the more cost-efficient cash transfers become, with the exception of very large operations. The ratio of transfer costs to the total costs of cash transfers decreased by 1.7 percent from 2019 to 2024 for small, medium and large operations. Efficiency gains are especially evident in the reduced costs from financial service providers, likely due to stronger relationships built with providers over time.
57. **Food losses:** For the majority of country offices, there have been steady improvements in the mitigation of post-delivery losses. Between 80 and 93 percent of all annual global losses are attributed to WFP's largest operations – such as those in Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Sudan – which saw spikes in food losses in 2019 and 2024.²⁷ The report on global losses cites civil unrest and theft as factors leading to loss, along with disruption in the supply chain, including problems in the place of origin, inadequate transport and overlong storage.
58. **Increased responsiveness:** Lead time, measured in the number of days required to deliver food from the warehouse to the cooperating partner, has improved across operations, decreasing from an average of 3.63 to 2.68 days. Lead time remains longest in large-scale and crisis responses due to distance and the scale of needs (figure 12).

²⁷ WFP annual reports on global losses for 2019–2024. The “top ten” countries with the largest losses vary from year to year; the only countries consistently in the top ten over the period evaluated were Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Sudan. The factors contributing to food losses are well-documented in internal audit reports.

Figure 12: Average lead time from warehouse to cooperating partner, by operation size*

* The size of an operation is categorized in terms of the expenditure per year: < USD 3 million – very small; USD 3–10 million = small; USD 10–50 million = moderate-sized USD 50–150 million = large; >USD 150 million = very large.

Source: Supply chain KPIs lead time for delivery to cooperating partners.

59. **National systems drive efficiency:** The strength of national markets and systems was found to have a greater influence on cost reductions and transfer savings than any other factor. WFP's operations were found to be the most cost-efficient in settings where WFP focused on national systems strengthening; these are mainly small operations with operational expenditure of up to USD 15 million per year. The data show that the stronger the national systems, the lower the lead times, regardless of the type or size of the response, suggesting that systems strengthening can have a significant influence on the efficiency and responsiveness of supply chains.
60. **Agility amid operational volatility:** Despite recognized efforts and achievements in improving the cost and time efficiency of WFP's supply chain and delivery function, the volatility in many of WFP's operating environments is a persistent challenge. The rapid scale-up of WFP's food and cash operations, often with high start-up costs, demonstrates the organization's agility, but also contributes to system fragmentation, as responses are tailored to emerging, context-specific demands. In such conditions, WFP must constantly strike an appropriate balance between responsiveness, cost and investment in national capacity, while prioritizing delivery to the "last mile".

How have cross-cutting priorities been incorporated into the road map?

Environmental sustainability and waste management

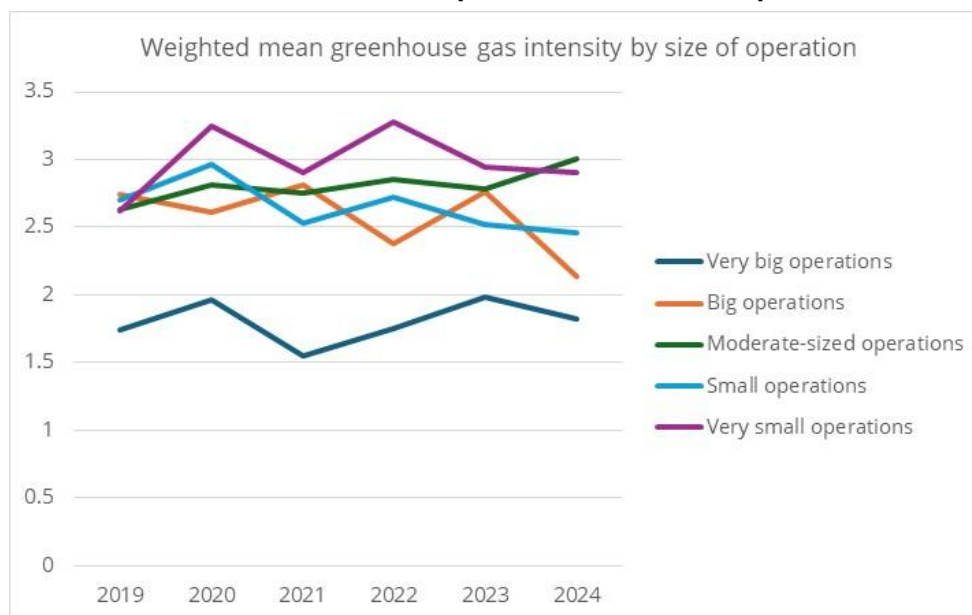
Although only recently embedded, the integration of environmental sustainability considerations into WFP's supply chain is improving environmental outcomes. However, country offices' uptake of tools designed to promote environmental sustainability varies.

61. Under the road map, the drivers of, and imperatives for, environmental sustainability have come into focus, and the supply chain function has made progress in articulating those drivers, along with metrics, tools and strategy for promoting environmental sustainability and waste management. The 2024 evaluation of WFP's environmental policy found that the supply chain had initiated "considerable work" to develop an understanding of the environmental footprint of supply chain operations.²⁸ It developed a supply chain environmental strategy and rolled out the ECODASH platform to enhance its capacity to measure and reduce the carbon footprint of its procurement, logistics and food distribution operations.
62. In addition to achievements in measuring and tracking environmental sustainability at the corporate level, the evaluation found efforts to address environmental considerations in supply chain operations across countries visited. These efforts included limiting food waste, recycling packaging, shortening supply chain routes, and improving the quality of transporter emissions. The logistics cluster launched the waste management and reverse logistics for environmental consciousness tool, which supports reverse logistics²⁹ and recycling; the safe disposal of expired commodities; and training for partners.
63. As part of its environmental sustainability efforts, WFP is exploring and tracking opportunities to reduce carbon dioxide emissions throughout its operations and is seeking food procurement and transport options with lower carbon emissions. WFP's largest operations, which have the largest environmental footprint, have been found to have lower greenhouse gas intensities per metric ton of food procured than smaller operations, suggesting economies of scale (figure 13).

²⁸ WFP. 2024. [Evaluation of WFP's Environmental Policy](#).

²⁹ In reverse logistics, left-over product and packaging are sent back from the product's end-users to other stages in the supply chain where they can be reused and recycled.

**Figure 13: Greenhouse gas intensity by operation size
(carbon dioxide emissions per metric ton of food procured)**



Source: WFP Dataset: Consolidated Emissions by Country. Elaborated by the Supply Chain and Delivery Division and the evaluation team.

Gender equality and women's empowerment, and protection

WFP's supply chain has incorporated gender, equity and protection considerations into its operations, in accordance with broader corporate strategies and policies. Gaps remain in ensuring consistent application.

64. In line with WFP's corporate cross-cutting priorities, the road map includes efforts to promote women's participation among suppliers and a gender balance in staffing.³⁰ Key challenges for addressing gender and protection concerns³¹ in supply chain operations were the lack of consistent reporting, and the uneven capacity of supply chain actors to address gender and protection issues.³²
65. To address gender and protection issues in supply chain operations, specific efforts have included:
 - *allocating dedicated human resources* through the appointment of a senior advisor on cross-cutting issues
 - *adding clauses to vendors' contracts* that prioritize women-led firms in procurement and aim to reduce protection risks to beneficiaries; and providing recourse in case of violation;

³⁰ "Report of the External Auditor on air transport services" (WFP/EB.A/2020/6-G/1).

³¹ In the risk catalogue, under category 2.1 on "Beneficiary health, safety and security", beneficiaries' lack of protection is defined as "Beneficiaries are exposed to safety and security hazards, or any other kind of fraud, abuse or exploitation while receiving assistance".

³² "Synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP's cooperating partners from centralized and decentralized evaluations" (WFP/EB.2/2024/6-B).

- *providing capacity-strengthening opportunities for cooperating partners and vendors* that help them to identify, prevent and respond to risks in the areas of protection, gender equality and women's empowerment, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse ;
 - *enhancing access to rations* by adapting ration sizes so that they can be carried by women, and building logistics infrastructure so as to reach vulnerable population groups; and
 - *developing guidelines* on responsive procurement and protection.
66. Although gender and protection issues are key considerations, they are not yet embedded into all supply chain processes. For example, the criteria included in WFP's procurement processes for checking that the firms used have sufficient capital to sustain themselves between supplying WFP and receiving payment inadvertently favoured companies led by men, which account for the majority of such firms. Although there are examples of negotiations and discussions on access in which WFP's supply chain teams aim to ensure that logistics decisions are informed by protection concerns, this practice is not conducted systematically.

How has WFP's supply chain worked with partners towards the aims of the road map?

WFP diversified the type, nature and composition of its partnerships, which contributed to an increase in the efficiency of its supply chain and strengthening national systems. However, current monitoring frameworks do not adequately track or reflect the value added by such collaboration.

67. Supply chain operations relied on partnerships with host governments, other United Nations entities, non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGOs and CSOs), and private sector actors in more than 80 countries. Table 1 highlights the key areas of achievement identified by the evaluation team, according to the type of partner.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH WFP'S SUPPLY CHAIN, BY TYPE OF PARTNER, 2019–2024		
Partner type	2024	
	From WFP	From partners
Private sector actors		Logistics support, pro-bono services, blockchain solutions, last-mile delivery optimization
Governments	Access to WFP platforms, technical expertise, food procurement, on-demand services	Coordination for disaster resilience
NGOs and CSOs	Capacity building, common services	Cooperating partners for implementation
United Nations entities	Logistics support, on-demand services, logistics cluster leadership	Inter-agency coordination

Private sector partnerships

68. Building effective private sector partnerships for funding or programme implementation, or – most frequently – as contractors required WFP to strike a balance between technical expertise in managing transactional relationships, and the interpersonal skills needed to develop and maintain long-term relationships.

69. WFP relies on suppliers, vendors, transporters and warehouse or storage providers to support the supply chain from end to end and has 1,900 contracts with service providers and vendors globally.³³ Large-scale private sector companies were WFP's main partners as they tend to offer consistent supplies and achieve the greatest cost-efficiency due to economies of scale. Within these partnerships, WFP was usually a small or medium-sized client compared with others. The evaluation found considerable private sector interest in collaborating with WFP, given its mandate – even with system bottlenecks that are often inherent to WFP's procurement processes, including the need for suppliers and vendors to have sufficient capital to absorb risks while they wait for WFP's slow payment processes. In addition, WFP continues to prioritize contracts with national vendors, increasing the role of national businesses in supply chains.³⁴

National governments – host governments

70. WFP's supply chain works in partnership with governments as clients and co-implementers. Country offices increasingly broker government access to WFP's common services such as UNHAS and UNHRD, and provide targeted technical assistance on social protection, logistics preparedness and procurement. WFP's supply chain and delivery function has scaled up its on-demand services for governments, including food and fuel procurement and last-mile delivery; supported government-led emergency logistics; and contributed expertise to national social protection reforms and deployments through talent pools, long-term agreements for technical assistance, and the development of inter-agency guidance.

Non-governmental and civil society organizations

71. For WFP's supply chain, NGOs and CSOs are the organization's primary cooperating partners in the distribution and monitoring of in-kind and cash transfers. In the "last mile" of distribution, local – and international – NGO cooperating partners carry out the majority of direct distributions to beneficiaries. Work with and through local partners comprises 53.8 percent of all of WFP's NGO-related expenditures, at USD 273.7 million, and involves at least 760 partner organizations.³⁵ The management of WFP's work with cooperating partners involved in distribution has only recently become the responsibility of the supply chain function, and insufficient time has passed to assess implications of this move. However, WFP's cluster leadership and common services create the enabling conditions for NGOs' operations by facilitating coordination, access, transport, storage and information and communications technology, while its on-demand services and training bolster NGOs' last-mile performance and accountability.

Other United Nations entities

72. In WFP's supply chain operations, other United Nations entities are both cooperating partners, in distributing transfers and providing services, and clients, in using WFP's common services and platforms. WFP's leadership of the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters, and its co-leadership of the global food security cluster with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and its management of UNHAS, UNHRD and inter-agency platforms such as the United Nations Booking Hub, and United Nations mobility services underpin the collective response and deliver documented efficiency gains and access.
73. WFP's supply chain has continued to expand its role in joint service provision throughout the United Nations system. The UN80 reform initiative and, in particular, the repositioning

³³ WFP Procurement dataset on headquarters vendor contracts.

³⁴ In line with the objectives of WFP's localization policy of 2025.

³⁵ In 2024, WFP's expenditures on its NGO partners totalled USD 508.6 million, of which international partners accounted for USD 235.0 million, or 46.2 percent.

of the United Nations development system under General Assembly resolution 72/279, creates opportunities for WFP to align its operational support with system-wide reforms for strengthening efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in humanitarian and development settings.

Recommendations

74. The following table presents the recommendations stemming from the evaluation.

No.	Recommendations and sub recommendations	Rationale	Type	Responsibility – lead office	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
1	Update the supply chain road map and convert it into a supply chain and delivery strategy						
	Develop a supply chain strategy to articulate the vision for the supply chain and delivery function, aligns with the corporate strategic plan, and considers WFP's evolving commitments' to UN80. The strategy should articulate the following components: • WFP's comparative advantages and priorities for the supply chain and delivery function; • integration of cross-cutting priorities in line with WFP's new strategic plan and corporate policies; • elevation of environmental sustainability, showcasing leadership and operational synergies in that sector; • articulation of the pathways for coordination between WFP's programmes and the supply chain and delivery function at the global, national and local levels; and • clarification of appropriate governance mechanisms and risk appetites.	The changing operational, institutional and financial context requires an update to the strategic vision for WFP's supply chain. An updated strategy should articulate how the supply chain will prioritize its efforts, considering WFP's comparative advantages and its work with partners. The <i>Supply Chain Strategic Roadmap 2022–2025</i> lacked a communication and dissemination plan and the associated KPIs against which to report, which should be part of an updated strategy.	Strategic	Supply Chain and Delivery Division (SCD)	Programme Operations Department (PO), Programme Division (PRG), Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer Department (DED-COO), Chief Financial Officer Division (CFO), Management Services Division (MSD)	High	February 2027

No.	Recommendations and sub recommendations	Rationale	Type	Responsibility - lead office	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
2	Enhance the coherence and interoperability of planning platforms and processes across WFP within the supply chain and delivery function and with relevant areas of the Programme Division						
2.1	Establish joint planning and coordination mechanisms for SCD and the Programme Division to identify and explore opportunities for enhanced coordination and linkages, including with a focus on local and regional procurement as per the local and regional food procurement policy.	WFP's supply chain has been positioned within the organization's institutional structure for greater programmatic contributions, and it has benefited from the establishment of "one supply chain" and the development of a wide array of digital tools and platforms to enhance cost-efficiency and decision-making. However, the institutional arrangements have not yet been fully integrated into programmes, and the array of business processes within the one supply chain and accompanying tools is fragmented.	Operational	SCD	PO, PRG	Medium	December 2026
2.2	Develop and implement a road map for ensuring the interoperability of key SCD and Programme Division platforms, such as LESS and COMET, to harmonize data flows, reduce reconciliation burdens, and strengthen end-to-end visibility.			Technology Division (TEC)	SCD, PO	Medium	December 2026
3	Enhance external coherence for the operationalization of a United Nations-wide integrated supply chain vision						
3.1	Explore and clarify the organizational implications for WFP of a United Nations-wide integrated supply chain and delivery platform, as a key component of the new supply chain strategy.	In the context of the UN80 reform initiatives, WFP's leadership in emergencies and expanded joint service provision in logistics for the international humanitarian community will become an increasing priority for the organization and the United Nations system.	Strategic	SCD	DED-COO, Legal Office, CFO, TEC, Partnerships and Innovation Department	High	February 2027

No.	Recommendations and sub recommendations	Rationale	Type	Responsibility – lead office	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
		To be able to maintain and strengthen its leadership role in humanitarian logistics and joint service provision, WFP will need to ensure that its legal, governance and other systems are set up to allow the organization to take on a role in the provision of joint services within the broader United Nations system. This will require WFP to ensure that its supply chain capacity is not only a comparative advantage internally, but also an integrated enabler of collective outcomes throughout the United Nations system and the international humanitarian community.					
4	Strengthen the operationalization of implementation mechanisms in alignment with the revised supply chain and delivery strategy, the WFP strategic plan and UN80						
4.1	Conduct a comprehensive assessment of staffing levels across the supply chain to identify adjustments in the relative share of supply chain staff as a percentage of WFP's total workforce, commensurate with the expected skillsets needed, and in light of budget reductions and WFP's organizational realignment.	In addition to external coherence, in the context of the UN80 reform initiative, WFP's leadership in emergencies and expanded joint provision of logistics services for the international humanitarian community will become growing priorities. WFP and its supply chain and delivery function should review the implementation mechanisms that support supply chains and corporate strategies, including the infrastructure, staffing capacity and reporting mechanisms of SCD, within the context and given the shifting priorities of WFP and the United Nations system.		Staffing Coordination and Capacity Service	SCD, Human Resources Division	High	February 2027

No.	Recommendations and sub recommendations	Rationale	Type	Responsibility – lead office	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
4.2	Develop a standardized performance monitoring framework, building on the available strategic KPI register and corporate results framework indicators, to help increase the visibility of WFP's achievements in the supply chain and delivery function.	Current KPIs and reporting mechanisms do not capture the contribution or impact of WFP's supply chain and delivery function at the country level, or in terms of corporate performance, which limits the visibility of the supply chain in terms of its strategic positioning within the broader international humanitarian community.		SCD	Programme Monitoring and Reporting Service, CFO	Medium	February 2027

Acronyms

COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSO	civil society organization
CSP	country strategic plan
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
KPI	key performance indicator
NGO	non-governmental organization
OEV	Office of Evaluation
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot