



Five years of Progress on Protection and Accountability to Affected People at WFP:

Key Findings and Progress (2020–2025)

Overview

Since adopting the Protection and Accountability Policy in November 2020, WFP has made significant progress in embedding protection and accountability to affected people (AAP) across its operations. The initial phase (2021–2022) focused on establishing the institutional architecture.

Subsequent efforts have centred on operationalizing guidance, strengthening capacity, and scaling up implementation globally and at country level. The policy has helped drive a shift toward people-centred programming, positioning protection and AAP as central to WFP's mandate to deliver safe, dignified, and inclusive assistance.

Key Achievements

1. Protection and AAP embedded as corporate priorities in WFP

- The 2026–2029 WFP Strategic Plan consolidates Protection and AAP as explicit cross-cutting priorities, and strengthened obligations (e.g. PSEA, child protection, community participation).
- Nowadays, Protection and AAP are broadly recognised as non-negotiable elements of WFP's work, central to ensuring zero hunger for all.
- Corporate accountability frameworks (e.g. CRF, FAR) now systematically integrate protection risks and AAP commitments, including through dedicated indicators.

2. Stronger integration in planning and programming

- Country Strategic Plans increasingly reflect protection risks as operational risks and integrate AAP into decision-making and programme design.
- The development and scaling of the Integrated Context Analysis and Risk Assessment (ICARA) has significantly improved risk analysis and programme adaptation, evolving into a recognized value-add analytical approach.
- Programmes are increasingly designed with a better understanding of intersecting risks affecting communities and individuals, leading to improved safety, inclusion, access, and conflict-sensitive responses.

3. Expanded systems for accountability to affected people

- Development and rapid scale-up of Community Engagement Action Plans (from 13% of COs in 2023 to 59% in 2025).
- Strengthening and standardization of Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFM): Coverage of functionality rose from 53% of COs in 2020 to 87% in 2025. The deployment of standard corporate digital platforms reached 27% by the end of 2025.
- Ongoing shift from compliance-focused AAP toward using feedback for programme adaptation and learning.

4. Significant investments in capacity strengthening and staffing

- Establishment and roll-out of the People-Centred Approaches (PCA) training as a core learning package covering gender, protection and inclusion.
- Expansion of specialized protection and AAP staffing, alongside broader staff awareness and enhanced competencies.

- Development of targeted tools (e.g. partner toolkits, risk matrices) to support safe and inclusive programme delivery.

5. Strengthened partnerships and interagency leadership

- WFP has played a key role in shaping interagency standards on centrality of protection and AAP since 2022 and IASC standards for [Collective](#) Feedback Mechanisms
- Increased collaboration with specialised protection actors and UN partners has enabled more integrated, multi-sectoral responses, including through joint programmes in selected contexts
- One third of WFP Country Offices participating in inter-agency community feedback systems, with an increasing number in leadership roles.

In Summary: What Has Changed

2020	2025
Protection and AAP often treated as add-ons	Recognised as core cross-cutting priorities
Disjointed and duplicative approaches to risk analysis	Integrated tools (ICARA) for holistic analysis
Prioritisation of the existence and functionality of feedback channels	Advance towards assurance-aligned CFM systems that inform programming decisions
Insufficient tools to guide country offices	Extensive normative framework and operational guidance.
Limited institutional accountability	Board oversight, clear indicators and frameworks (Corporate Results Framework with dedicated indicators for protection and AAP
Fragmented capacity building initiatives	Roll-out of the People-Centred Approaches (PCA) training as a core institutional learning package across operations.
Limited staff working on protection and AAP	Increasing number of employees dedicated to protection and AAP, and more broadly GPI

Enablers of Progress

- Strong **Executive Board support** and sustained donor engagement
- **Multi-annual supplemental extrabudgetary funding** providing continuity and enabling medium to long-term planning
- Provision of complimentary, specialized expertise via **secondees**
- Increased **system-wide momentum** on centrality of protection

Key Challenges and Risks

- **Internal funding constraints**, particularly following the 2025 crisis, limiting staffing and operational capacity
- High **staff turnover and reliance on short-term contracts**, affecting continuity
- **Uneven implementation at country level**, especially for information provision and community engagement
- Broader **system pressures**, leading to heightened protection risks amidst reduced availability of protection services

Conclusion and Way Forward

WFP has made substantial progress in embedding protection and accountability across its policies, systems and operations, demonstrating a clear shift toward people-centred programming. However, progress remains fragile. Sustaining and deepening these gains will require:

- **Predictable and flexible multi-year funding**
- **Continued investment in capacity and staffing**
- **Stronger use of community feedback for decision-making**
- **Further integration of protection and AAP across all programme areas**

Ensuring protection and accountability remain central is essential for WFP to deliver safe, dignified, and effective assistance to crisis-affected people.

Key Results in Numbers (source: December 2025 global survey on protection and AAP)

59% Country Offices with Community Engagement Action Plans (↑ from 13% in 2023)

28 Cumulative ICARA exercises conducted globally (rapid scale-up from 4 in 2023)

87% Country Offices with functional Community Feedback Mechanisms

74% Country Offices partnering with protection-specialised actors

91% Country Offices engaged in protection coordination mechanisms

180 Staff working full-time on protection and AAP globally