

Evaluation of State of Palestine WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Summary Terms of Reference



Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs) encompass the entirety of WFP activities during a specific period. Their purpose is twofold: 1) to provide evaluation evidence and learning on WFP's performance for country-level strategic decisions, specifically for developing the next Country Strategic Plan and 2) to provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders.

Subject and focus of the evaluation

The WFP Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for the State of Palestine was approved by the Executive Board in November 2017 for five years (2018-2022). The CSP originally pursued two strategic outcomes (SOs) as follows: SO1: Non-Refugees, poor and severely food insecure Palestinians have improved dietary diversity by 2022; SO2: Enhanced capacities of national institutions and systems to identify, target and assist food insecure vulnerable populations in the State of Palestine by 2022. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP added a third strategic outcome (SO3) - Palestinians benefit from the services provided to partners through WFP's delivery platform.

Through this CSP, WFP was to gradually shift from providing in-kind assistance to cash-based transfers using e-vouchers and cash, and to capacity-enhancement, including in the area of data sharing. The actual number of beneficiaries reached every year under SO1 has been ranging from 343,000 to 432,000 during the period 2018-2020; it increased in 2020 following WFP's scaled-up assistance to meet government requests for urgent support following the COVID-19 emergency.

The overall CSP budget as approved by the Executive Board amounted to USD 241.42 million, which increased to USD 318.5 million following six budget revisions.

Objectives and stakeholders of the evaluation

WFP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and presents an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Country Office and its stakeholders to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan.

The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in February 2023.

Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

QUESTION 1: To what extent is WFP's strategic position, role and specific contribution based on country priorities and people's needs as well as WFP's strengths?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the CSP is relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals, including achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals. It will further assess the extent to which the CSP addresses the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind; whether WFP's strategic positioning has remained relevant throughout the implementation of the CSP in light of changing context, national capacities and needs; and to what extent the CSP is coherent and aligned with the wider UN cooperation framework and includes appropriate strategic partnerships based on the comparative advantage of WFP in the country.

QUESTION 2: What is the extent and quality of WFP's specific contribution to CSP strategic outcomes in the State of Palestine?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP delivered the expected outputs and contributed to the expected strategic outcomes of the CSP, including the achievement of cross-cutting aims (humanitarian principles, protection, accountability to affected populations, gender equality and other equity considerations). It will also assess the extent to which the achievements of the CSP are likely to be sustainable; and whether the CSP facilitated more strategic linkages between humanitarian, development and, where appropriate, peace work.

QUESTION 3: To what extent has WFP's used its resources efficiently in contributing to CSP outputs and strategic outcomes? The evaluation will assess whether outputs were delivered within the intended timeframe; the appropriateness of coverage and targeting of interventions; cost-efficient delivery of assistance; and whether alternative, more cost-effective measures were considered.

QUESTION 4: What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the CSP?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP analyzed and used existing evidence on hunger challenges, food security and nutrition issues in the country to develop the CSP. It will also assess the extent to which the CSP led to: the mobilization of adequate, predictable and flexible resources; to the development of appropriate partnerships and collaboration with other actors; greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts; and how these factors affect results. Finally, the evaluation will seek to identify any other organizational and contextual factors influencing WFP performance and the strategic shift expected by the CSP.

Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The unit of analysis is the Country Strategic Plan. The evaluation will cover all of WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) for the period 2018 to 2021. The evaluation will also include the period 2015-2017 to understand how the current CSP builds on or departs from the previous country portfolio evaluation. This will help understand whether the current CSP builds on or departs from the previous activities, and thus help better explain and assess the strategic shifts, if any, manifested in the design of the current CSP.

The evaluation will also cover adherence to humanitarian principles, gender and protection issues and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC), namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and coherence as well as connectedness and coverage.

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach using a variety of primary and secondary sources, including desk review, key informant interviews, surveys, and focus groups discussions. Systematic triangulation across different sources and methods will be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

In light of the developments related to the COVID19 pandemic, the inception mission will be conducted remotely. Depending on how the global and country context evolve, data collection may be conducted either fully or partially through in-country field work. The final Stakeholder Workshop may be held either in Jerusalem or virtually.

The evaluation conforms to WFP and 2020 UNEG ethical guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity,

respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

Roles and responsibilities

EVALUATION TEAM: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent consultants with a mix of relevant expertise related to the Palestine CSPE (food security, cash-based transfers, emergency response, gender and capacity strengthening).

OEV EVALUATION MANAGER: The evaluation will be managed by Hansdeep Khaira, Evaluation Officer, in the WFP Office of Evaluation. He will be the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process and compliance with OEV quality standards for process and content. Second level quality assurance will be provided by Julie Thoulouzan, Senior Evaluation Officer.

An **Internal Reference Group** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant business areas at different WFP levels will be consulted throughout the evaluation process to review and provide feedback on evaluation products.

The Director of Evaluation will approve the final versions of all evaluation products.

STAKEHOLDERS: WFP stakeholders at country, regional and HQ level are expected to engage throughout the evaluation process to ensure a high degree of utility and transparency. External stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, government, donors, NGO partners and other UN agencies will be consulted during the evaluation process.

Communication

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office, the Regional Bureau and Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase. A more in-depth debrief will be organized in January 2022 to inform the new CSP design process. A country stakeholder workshop will be held in May 2022 to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

Evaluation findings will be actively disseminated and the final evaluation report will be publicly available on WFP's website.

Timing and key milestones

Inception Phase: September-December 2021

Data collection: January - February 2022

Remote Debriefing: February 2022

Reports: March - June 2022

Stakeholder Workshop: May 2022

Executive Board: February 2023