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Annual security report

Executive summary

In 2019 WFP's operations further expanded amid increasing instability and deteriorating security. WFP's scaled-up response in many conflict-ridden areas posed a security challenge and put pressure on the resources allocated to security. This pressure was alleviated through innovative and novel approaches and increasing contributions to country planning but may require additional investment in 2020.

Despite WFP having the highest number of personnel since its inception and a relative increase in security incidents affecting them, the impact of security incidents on WFP operations was negligible. This speaks to the well-coordinated and efficient development of prevention and mitigation measures put in place by security personnel in country offices as well as the second line of defense function performed by country directors, regional security teams and the Security Division.[1] In this sense, the involvement of Security in corporate risk management processes contributed substantially to the development of a culture of risk-based decision making across WFP.

Civil unrest required WFP to temporarily halt operations in a number of countries in 2019. This included some common service operations such as the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service. WFP's security response to civil unrest in 2020 will need to shift from largely field-oriented responses to urban responses requiring more detailed analytical support and specific operational case management, for instance in Haiti.

Security continues to seek not only to keep personnel safe and secure, but equally to enable operations, including by reaching more beneficiaries. In 2019, training and policy initiatives were

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[1] As used in this report, the word "Security" standing alone refers to the entirety of security activities and personnel across the organization. The term "Security Division" refers to the headquarters-based division that provides guidance and support for field operations.

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undertaken to enable country offices to better negotiate humanitarian access. At the same time, Security facilitated negotiations on formal cooperation agreements with military forces and others in a position to facilitate safe and secure operations.[2]

WFP operations in 2019 were increasingly hampered by a lack of humanitarian access, including as a result of bureaucratic restrictions imposed by State and non-State actors on personnel and humanitarian supplies, intense hostility in civilian areas and attacks on humanitarian personnel and theft of assets. The Security Division works with other divisions through WFP's Technical Access Cell and the Directors Group on Access to put in place guidance and a solid support mechanism for country offices facing humanitarian access issues.

At headquarters, security cooperation with the other Rome-based agencies was enhanced. A new security control centre, which can also provide support for field operations, was inaugurated. Key personnel received additional training in sophisticated physical security techniques, which will now be made available to all WFP staff.

Security continued its leadership role in emergency telecommunications in 2019, contributing to cost rationalization and better security for field personnel. These results could not have been achieved without intense collaboration with non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

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[2] The words "safety" and "safe" relate to WFP's management of hazards, whereas "security" and "secure" relate to threats. Threats involve an element of human intent, e.g. armed attack or abduction. Hazards are normally non-teleological, e.g. fire, earthquake or road traffic accidents.

2019 security in numbers

Expenditure

WFP spent **USD 605** per employee per month on security.

WFP spent **1.5 percent** of its budget on security.

USD 1.9 million was disbursed to country offices from the Security Emergency Fund.

Staffing and training

417 employees worked in security in 2019.

18,180 WFP personnel completed the online BSAFE security training.

500 women received women's security awareness training.

3 additional security personnel were trained in hostage, kidnap and abduction case management.

25 security personnel attended negotiation workshops conducted by the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation.[3]

32 security personnel increased the level of their professional certification.

Performance tracking

WFP made more than 100 operational contacts with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), military forces and think tanks on acceptance, negotiation and crisis management.

At least one WFP facility was physically assessed **every day of the year.**

**28** operational or analysis support field missions were dispatched.

10,264 compliance recommendations were formulated, of which 84 percent were implemented.

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[3] The Centre of Competence facilitates the capture, analysis and sharing of humanitarian negotiation experiences and practices with a view to supporting a more systematic approach to frontline negotiation. It provides a space for multi-agency dialogue and intends to foster a community of practice among humanitarian negotiators. WFP is one of the Centre's five Strategic Partners.

WFP global incident analysis and trends

1.   Following the trend of previous years, in 2019 conflicts around the world increased amid a lack of durable political solutions. Amid non-state armed group activity, intercommunal conflict and displacement caused by climate variability, in 2019 WFP responded to the highest number of L2 and L3 emergencies ever. With food insecurity exacerbated by conflict, WFP continues to be called upon to conduct operations in environments that pose diverse and multifaceted threats, as highlighted by a record number of security incidents involving WFP personnel,[4] assets and operations, as well as partners and contractors providing services for WFP.[5]

Figure 1: Incidents involving WPF staff, contractors and partners
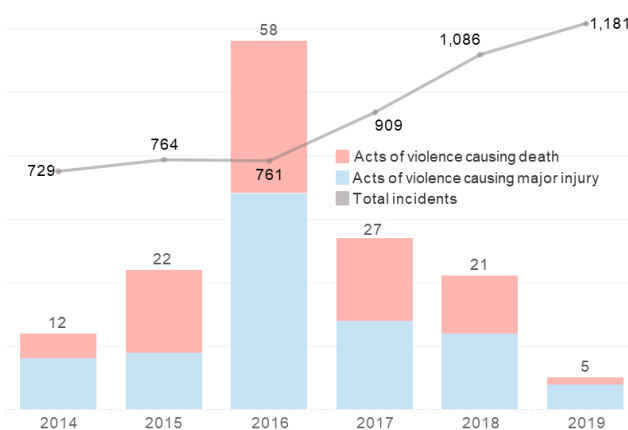
2.   WFP deplores the death of one of its staff members in an act of violence in Fiji. Four WFP personnel, partner and contractor employees sustained major injuries due to acts of violence in Ethiopia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Yemen. Notwithstanding a 7 percent increase in incidents compared to 2018, WFP achieved a notable reduction in the number of deaths and major injuries sustained by WFP personnel, contractors and partners from acts of violence. At the same time, WFP's exposure to security risk continued to increase as its operational footprint increased.

3.   To address the increasing security challenges that WFP faces, the number of security personnel dispatched to field operations from headquarters or regional bureaux increased by 24 percent compared to 2018, with efforts focused on analytical support for country offices and operational continuity.

4.   Civil unrest posed an increasing security concern in 2019. Overall, WFP recorded 141 security and safety incidents linked to civil unrest, accounting for 10 percent of all reported incidents. These incidents ranged from movement restrictions to theft, vandalism and acts of violence. In many countries where protests took place, the only impact was a need to implement alternate working modalities for WFP personnel, although in some cases airport or United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) operations were affected. With respect to operations, school feeding programmes were most frequently affected as schools were closed due to unrest. Haiti, Malawi, Lebanon, Ethiopia, the Sudan and Iraq saw heightened levels of civil unrest that affected WFP.

> **Civil unrest increasingly disrupted WFP programmes in 2019. Security had to review its response. Delivery in urban environments is increasingly affected.**

5.   Security strengthened prevention mechanisms in country offices where pre- and post-electoral unrest was considered likely. Security Emergency Fund resources were allocated to country offices in Afghanistan, Malawi, Mozambique and Sri Lanka to reinforce the

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[4] The term "WFP personnel" as used in this report includes staff members, consultants, interns, service contract holders, special service agreement holders, volunteers and, where relevant, eligible family members. It does not refer to people who are locally recruited and paid an hourly wage.

[5] Based on incidents reported in WFP's security information management and security analysis support system.

implementation of residential security measures and other security risk management measures related to the physical security of compounds, security communications systems and staff transportation. More investment still was made in security training for personnel: 1,416 additional employees were SSAFE[6] trained in 2019, bringing the total to 11,600. At the same time, the Security Division deployed surge personnel to countries with civil unrest concerns (e.g. Lebanon and the Sudan) and guided country offices in expediting the implementation of urgent ad hoc security risk management measures.

6. Rising criminality and the rapid deterioration of public security compounded existing challenges for WFP in most of the places where it operates. Crime remains the main security threat affecting WFP personnel, assets, operations and partner and contractor staff, accounting for 43 percent of reported incidents in 2019. It is noteworthy, however, that 2019 was the second year in which the proportion of crime incidents in the overall number of incidents decreased – it stood at 54 percent in 2017 and 46 percent in 2018.
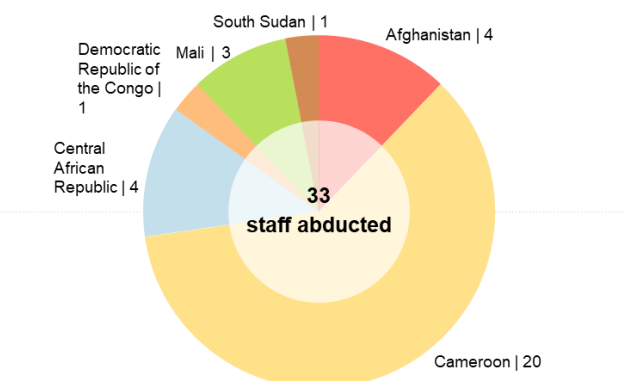
> **Fostering negotiation skills and peer-to-peer networks were fundamental components of security acceptance efforts. Risk prevention and mitigation can be achieved through community acceptance, thereby complementing more physically robust measures.**

7. The increasing number of incidents involving weapons across all threat categories raises grave concerns for the security of WFP personnel. For the second year in a row, 2019 saw an increase of 9 percent in such incidents. WFP's operations were by and large collaterally affected rather than directly targeted. In countries experiencing active armed conflict such as Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and the countries of the central Sahel, such incidents pose daily threats to WFP personnel, partners and contractors, ranging from small arms fire to unexploded ordnance or improvised explosive devices, to exposure to attacks using heavy weapons. Security risk prevention and mitigation measures were reviewed constantly to ensure their effectiveness against this type of incident, and innovative approaches complemented long-established ones.

8. One WFP initiative to increase the prevention of incidents involving weapons – and access-related security incidents in general – was to co-lead policy efforts to adequately reflect how WFP is accepted by communities, local and regional stakeholders and peers. These efforts aim to ensure that the level of community acceptance in a country or area[7] is calculated accurately, enabling operations to continue or new areas to be opened with increased attention to the security context based on focused analysis. One of the elements of Security's acceptance efforts was a targeted workplan on humanitarian negotiations, along with related training that will continue in 2020.

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[6] Safe and Secure Approaches to Field Environments

[7] "Area" refers to the United Nations Security Management System "Designated Area". This can encompass an entire country, but is more often a subdivision of a country, e.g. Lower Shabelle in Somalia or the city of Port-au-Prince in Haiti.
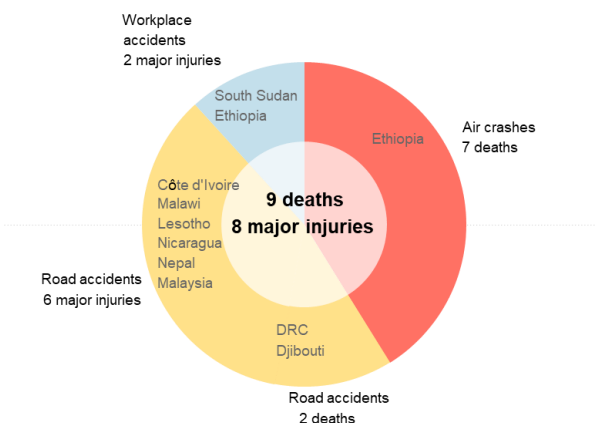
9. Abduction incidents can be linked to crime, terrorism or armed conflict. There were 33 abduction incidents recorded by WFP in 2019, all of which involved partner and contractor staff conducting activities on behalf of the organization. The duration of the detentions ranged from three hours to seven days; in one incident in Mali, however, a partner staff member was kept for over three months. WFP's increasing engagement with NGO security forums gave it a better understanding of abductions, hostage-takings and kidnapping; humanitarian organizations have witnessed abductions of aid workers rising sharply in particular contexts in the past decade. Security assisted and supported WFP country offices in sharpening the implementation of security risk management measures to address this threat against WFP personnel. In 2019 the country office in Cameroon received USD 128,000 from the Security Emergency Fund for armoured vehicles, to improve access and to enhance the quality of security training focused on abduction and hostage-taking case management. At headquarters, two active shooter and hostage-taking simulation exercises were conducted with local law enforcement to improve the preparedness of headquarters security officers.

Figure 2: WFP partner and contractor staff abducted – 2019

South Sudan | 1
Afghanistan | 4
Democratic Republic of the Congo | 1
Mali | 3
Central African Republic | 4
33 staff abducted
Cameroon | 20

10. WFP continued to face a high number of hazard-related incidents in 2019. These were mostly road traffic accidents and were often caused or exacerbated by weak infrastructure or environmental challenges. The incidents resulted in 17 deaths and major injuries of WFP personnel in 2019. Security therefore co-led and contributed to a United Nations road safety campaign. Incidents of this type included the deaths of seven WFP employees in the crash of Ethiopian Airlines flight 302, which served as a stark reminder that WFP personnel are frequently exposed to the risk of air safety incidents. In addition, fire safety protocols and equipment were improved at the country level, particularly through WFP fire safety technical assessments and training by a WFP fire safety expert.

Figure 3: WFP personnel killed or injured in accidents – 2019

Workplace accidents 2 major injuries
South Sudan Ethiopia
Air crashes 7 deaths
Ethiopia
Côte d'Ivoire Malawi Lesotho Nicaragua Nepal Malaysia
9 deaths 8 major injuries
Road accidents 6 major injuries
DRC Djibouti
Road accidents 2 deaths

Security response and support[8]

11.   A trend in Yemen highlighted in the 2018 annual security report continued in 2019: WFP's L3 operation in the country accounted for 60 percent of all security incidents in the countries covered by the Cairo Regional Bureau, while it accounted for only 20 percent of WFP personnel. In 2019, armed conflict between Ansar Allah and the internationally recognized Government, supported by the Saudi-led coalition, continued throughout the country, particularly in Sana'a and surrounding governorates. Cross-border hostilities with Saudi Arabia using drones and missiles led to significant destruction and a persistent threat of collateral damage to humanitarians working to serve those displaced by the conflict. A WFP-contracted driver was injured during an airstrike while providing WFP services in the Sa'ada Governorate. Another layer of complexity in the conflict emerged in mid-2019, when the Southern Transitional Council re-energized its push for secession and took control of several areas across the southern governorates. Despite the protracted and high levels of risk in Yemen, open sources[9] indicate that armed-conflict-related violence in Yemen represents 18 percent of the incidents in the region – lower than in the Syrian Arab Republic – suggesting that WFP incidents are disproportionately high. This is probably due to the high volume of movement restriction incidents, which represent 45 percent of incidents reported by WFP in Yemen. These incidents are a telling sign of the ever-decreasing humanitarian space and the huge difficulties faced by WFP in its efforts to gain access to populations in need. Mission security clearance requests went down from 53 in 2018 to 36 in 2019, a clear indication of reduced access and administrative harassment.

Figure 4: Incidents involving WFP personnel, partners or contractors – Yemen 2019

12.   The conflict in Yemen also continued to affect maritime access and further contributed to high levels of insecurity in the Southern Red Sea. Security therefore increased engagement with the European Union Naval Force – Operation Atalanta (EU NAVFOR), which responded to a number of requests from WFP to provide security for advanced accelerated staff rotations out of the port of Aden. A formal memorandum of understanding with EU NAVFOR, announced in 2018, was finalized in 2019 and will be implemented through 2020.

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[8] This is not an exhaustive list of countries where the Security Division has invested resources in addressing threats to WFP staff, partners and contractors; however, it highlights several case studies that demonstrate the range of circumstances faced and the types of support provided in respect of security. Countries may receive focused security attention for any of the following reasons: WFP-declared L2 or L3 emergencies, elevation on the WFP corporate alert system, high numbers or rates of WFP safety and security incidents, sudden changes of circumstances or significant security-related resource requirements.
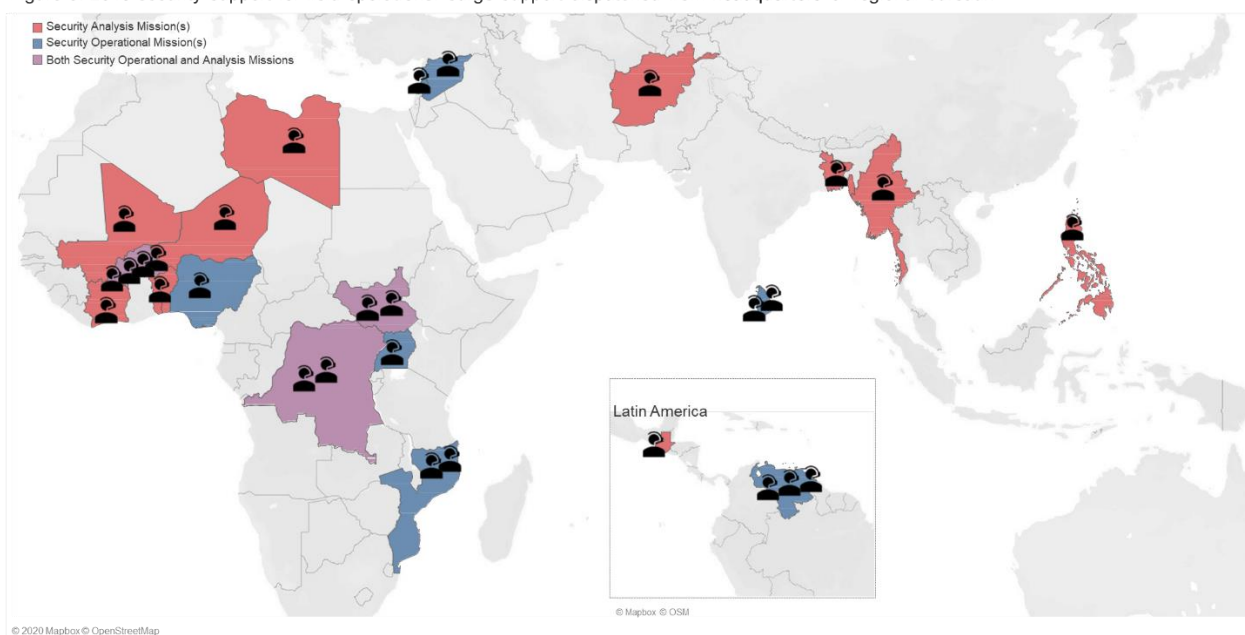
[9] Incident data retrieved from www.acleddata.com.

13. The Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger) witnessed a drastic deterioration of the security situation in 2019. Attacks by non-state armed groups grew more frequent and more sophisticated, spread to previously unaffected areas and displaced close to one million civilians across the three countries. The deterioration was most acute in Burkina Faso. Emboldened non-state armed groups increased their capabilities and collaboration, enabling them to overwhelm regional security forces despite some successes by French Barkhane forces and the G5 Sahel Joint Force. Inter-communal tensions led to episodes of violent reprisal attacks targeting entire villages, increasing a climate of fear and impunity and giving rise to self-defense groups and other militias, which are often ethnicity-based. Islamic State efforts to connect its Lake Chad Basin affiliate (Islamic State in West Africa Province) with its Sahel affiliate (Islamic State in the Greater Sahara) risk further upsetting the balance of power between non-state armed groups that traditionally operate in the Sahel, particularly with regard to the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM), which has been the most potent force in the Sahel until now. Humanitarian access is greatly challenged by physical insecurity (e.g. explosives planted on roads, military operations and road ambushes) as well as by Government actions such as military escorts or interdictions to engage with non-state armed groups. The Security Division made significant efforts to strengthen WFP's security structure in Burkina Faso and to ensure coordination with the security teams in Mali and the Niger through the Regional Bureau for West Africa. The sum of USD 137,065 was allocated to enhancing the urgent implementation of security risk management measures. Burkina Faso also benefited from deployments of regional analysts and surge security officers to support the WFP country office. The WFP security team now comprises nine security personnel (compared to just one security officer in 2018), some of whom participated in dedicated negotiation workshops facilitated by the WFP-sponsored Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation.

> **Territories controlled by non-state armed groups constitute one of WFP's main security challenges in the Sahel. Negotiating with these actors is often necessary. Balancing the actions and requirements of governments and other external actors, security considerations and legal restrictions with operational imperatives is an ongoing exercise.**

14. In Cameroon, violence between Government forces and separatists in the northwest and southwest continued in 2019. The Government granted special status to both regions in late 2019, but this move did not appease the separatists and violence continued with a marked spike ahead of the legislative and municipal elections planned for early 2020. This resulted in shrinking humanitarian space and great difficulties in ensuring safe humanitarian access. Humanitarian workers operating in the northwest and southwest faced intimidation in 2019, and WFP partners were victims of abductions and carjackings on several occasions. The first death of a United Nations humanitarian worker at the hands of armed separatists also took place in 2019. The Security Division disbursed USD 190,693 to support the implementation of security risk mitigation measures and facilitated the dispatch of armoured vehicles. An overhaul of the WFP security structure in place was undertaken in 2019, and additional recruitments will be needed in 2020 to set up a more robust team of security personnel to implement context-sensitive prevention and mitigation measures. The current team was further strengthened by training on negotiation in politically sensitive and high-risk operational environments.

> **The majority of abductions of WFP partner and contractor staff in 2019 happened in Cameroon; the United Nations deplored the first ever killing of a United Nations humanitarian worker in the country.**

15.   In Mozambique the security situation in the northern province of Cabo Delgado deteriorated significantly in the latter half of 2019, with open sources revealing a dramatic increase in reported security incidents.[10] There remains considerable uncertainty over the identity of those responsible for the attacks, first seen in the province in 2017. Regardless of their identities, the attackers' capacity appears to have increased despite attempts by authorities to contain the situation. In the wake of devastating climatological impacts in Mozambique, continued insecurity and humanitarian needs may drive the population to turn to violent armed groups for support in 2020. It will also lead to increasing insecurity, which could result in potentially drastic displacements. The Security Division supported the review of the United Nations security risk management framework for Cabo Delgado and, in conjunction with the Emergency Operations Division, assisted the country office in drafting technical and principled guidance for the use of armed escorts, which contributed to sustained humanitarian access for WFP. Security capacity was further strengthened through surge deployments, international security recruitments and allocations from the Security Emergency Fund to expedite the implementation of security telecommunication systems and the deployment of armoured vehicles.

> **Armed escorts can enhance WFP's humanitarian access in the short term, but using them can negatively affect its ability to sustain access over time and calls into question its principled approach. Oversight and support are essential to making the right choices.**

Figure 5: 2019 security support for field operations: surge support dispatched from **headquarters** or regional bureaux

[10] Incident data retrieved from www.acleddata.com.

**Creating a culture of risk-based decision making: identifying Security's second line of defense
in its pathfinder role in enterprise risk management**

Over the course of 2019, the Security Division has strived to provide a clear definition of its second line of defense by designing robust compliance monitoring processes and developing a risk-based decision making process aligned with the corporate enterprise risk management framework.

The division has fostered efforts to streamline implementation of this second line of defense framework through its teams in regional bureaux and at headquarters. The compliance monitoring framework was enhanced with the institutionalization of an integrated toolkit:

- Security-risk-management-related recommendation data generated by security assistance missions run in country offices;
- a revised methodology, including new and reviewed parameters for more accurately monitoring compliance status in the field; and
- a set of automated and customized data management e-tools tailored to requirements specific to the Security Division Framework of Accountability and aligned with the United Nations Security Management System policy framework.

This holistic approach is intended to address WFP country directors' and security managers' need for guidance in developing and implementing priority action plans and rationalized security budgeting. The development and use of innovative and secure compliance monitoring e-tools addressed the need for transparent communication on compliance matters. The Security Division invested greatly, increasing the number of security assistance missions to country offices from 24 in 2018 to 31 in 2019, and conducted internal research and development activities aimed at achieving compliance objectives. This resulted in a security compliance rate of 84 percent at the global level in 2019.

This enhanced compliance monitoring framework created a ripple effect, improving overall country office preparedness to respond to sudden changes in security and operational circumstances. An illustration of the comprehensive integration of this framework was the provision of WFP security compliance data analysis for incorporation into WFP internal and external control mechanisms such as WFP performance management, as well as internal and external audit processes.

The Security Division also invested in creating a corporate culture of risk-based decision making through its cutting-edge contribution to the delineation of WFP's risk appetite at the corporate, regional and country levels.

A tangible outcome of this was the integration of data analysis findings generated by the division into enterprise risk management processes. This led to the harmonization of risk register security parameters at both the corporate and regional levels and the development of a project on an automated e-tool aimed at prioritizing Security Division actions relating to operational support, field-level capacity building and resource mobilization.

Budget and staffing optimization through enhanced planning and tracking

16.   In 2019 the Security Division reinforced its internal control mechanisms to ensure that security considerations systematically contributed to the corporate programme review and approval process (PRP). To that end the Security Division rolled out a pilot process that led to the implementation of a tool for monitoring and tracking inputs into PRP documentation at the country office, regional bureau and headquarters levels.

17.   This process also achieved rationalized WFP security budgeting at the field level. Of 2019 contributions to strategic and programme reviews and planning processes, 79 percent were validated.

18.   With a total of USD 23,101,018 in 2019, the estimated total security-related costs at headquarters and regional bureaux accounted for 6 percent of the total programme support and administrative (PSA) budget. In the field, the estimated total security-related costs amounted to USD 49,109,956, representing just over 12 percent of the total direct support cost budget at the country office level, as shown in table 1.

TABLE 1: WFP SECURITY EXPENDITURES – 2019			
Description	**USD**	**Description**	**USD**
Headquarters and regional bureau personnel	8 480 049	Field personnel	31 228 800
		Residential security (country office)	1 103 253
United Nations Department for Safety and Security	10 073 262	Security equipment (country office)	1 662 540
Headquarters and regional bureaux – Other (Security Emergency Fund, training, security assistance missions)	4 547 707	Local cost-shared security budgets (country office)	7 474 866
		Security guards (country office)	7 640 496
Total programme support and administrative costs for security	23 101 018 **6%** of total	Total direct support costs for security	49 109 956 **12.5%** of total
PSA total	**385 100 000**	**Direct support cost total**	**392 336 250**

19.   As a direct consequence of rationalized security-related costs, the number of global security personnel remained stable in 2019 at 245, including 101 international professional security personnel and 144 national security personnel; 74 percent were based in the field and 26 percent at headquarters and regional bureaux, as shown in table 2. The number of international security professional personnel in 2019 increased by less than 1 percent compared to 2018.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF WFP SECURITY PERSONNEL – 2019				
Location		**Contract Type**		**Total**
Headquarters	43	International	101 (60 fixed-term | 4 short-term | 37 consultants)	Total security personnel **245**
Regional bureaux	22	National	144 (21 national officers + 123 general service)	
Field*	180			
Total security personnel and all support personnel performing security functions across WFP**				**417**

*   Security assistance mission consultants are part of this category.

** This includes all Security Division personnel in headquarters and regional bureaux, as well as all security personnel in country offices. It also encompasses support personnel such as business support assistants, United Nations volunteers and other types of contract holders.

Security leadership in emergency telecommunications

20.   The Security Division led the United Nations effort to achieve a policy framework establishing specified roles, responsibilities and procedures for the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the use of the Electronic Travel Advisory System (eTA) in security communications and in accounting for United Nations Security Management System personnel. The Security Division partnered with WFP's Information Technology and Innovation and Knowledge Management divisions to be the main driver for the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project, under a mandate from UNDSS to standardize and provide support on United Nations/NGO security communications systems in collaboration and consultation with a range of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, NGOs, the private and public sectors and the academic community.

21.   Facilitated by WFP, the TESS project supported field operations through 25 full assessment missions and 13 technical support missions in 2019 and provided remote support and follow-up in a total of 80 countries. These missions had a direct impact on optimizing telecommunications infrastructures, applications and procedures in support of United Nations and NGO staff security and safety. The TESS project also coordinated the standardization of the currently used key field communications components for vehicle tracking, VHF radio communications and mobile satellite systems. The new standards were tested, in collaboration with United Nations and NGO partners and the private sector, in laboratory and field settings, and will be ready for roll-out in the field in 2020. This will further optimize field security communications systems and make them more cost effective and fit for purpose.

22.   TESS also coordinated an open crowd-sourced consultation process for selecting new technologies that might further optimize field operations by using the latest technology available and being developed. These technologies will be further tested in 2020, in close collaboration with the private sector. With a biannual running cost of USD 2 million, TESS saved USD 2.8 million in investment in 2018 and 2019.

Global outlook and selected hotspots

23. The pattern of increased civil unrest seen in 2019 is expected to persist into 2020, and host government capacity to deal with it is unlikely to increase sufficiently. WFP premises may therefore become increasingly vulnerable to looting, the lives of personnel may become increasingly at peril near ongoing protests and WFP operations may be increasingly disrupted by the unavailability of security forces to protect convoys. In many cases of civil unrest escalation, host government authorities are likely to block telecommunications networks, affecting WFP's ability to use telephone and internet services for operational and emergency purposes. In countries where anti-United Nations or anti-foreign sentiments are on the rise WFP risks suffering indirect effects, for instance through association with United Nations peacekeeping or stabilization missions. WFP's leadership role in United Nations "common premises" thinking also requires that security risks related to office co-location be addressed.

24. In Yemen, 2020 may see further limited progress in implementing the Stockholm Agreement, while ongoing fighting will continue to threaten the fragile ceasefire around Hudaydah. Similarly, although a power sharing agreement was signed in Riyadh after several weeks of fighting in Aden and other cities at the end of the year, there are concerns regarding the prospects for its effective implementation. With foreign actors continuing to influence the conflict, fighting is expected to persist with particular severity in areas where airstrikes are conducted. In the south, a return to direct fighting between the Southern Transitional Council and the Internationally Recognized Government is less likely but may occur in isolated locations. These conditions are expected to limit WFP's movement in 2020 and to increase the risk of collateral impacts from the armed conflict.

25. In West Africa, the security situation in the Central Sahel and its impact on populations in need is expected to further deteriorate despite increased military pressure on the tri-border area. This pressure will dislodge non-state armed groups towards less secure areas and risks further feeding the jihadist narrative. This narrative clearly exploits governments' inability to meet the basic needs of their people. Islamic State activity in the region is expected to expand, leading to an increased number of extremist-style attacks using hit-and-run tactics as well as improvised explosive devices. Kidnapping is also very likely to increase, with foreigners (including humanitarian workers) being potential high value targets. It is likely that non-state armed groups will broaden their areas of operation, pushing to the east and south of Burkina Faso and into central Niger, while territories inside Nigeria will continue to be a vector point for ethno-jihadi groups.

26. A spillover of instability from the central Sahel to West Africa's coastal countries is very likely as the result of increased military pressure. As a consequence, deprived populations in already insecure environments in the north of Benin, Togo, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire may be radicalized, requiring WFP to prepare for the likely occurrence of armed conflict in these countries.

27.   In the Central African Republic the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation between the Government and fourteen armed groups is at risk. In 2019, fighting erupted between non-state armed groups for control of areas in the northeastern prefecture of Vakaga, resulting in the death of dozens and the displacement of over 25,000 people. Fighting of this nature is likely to continue in 2020, both between and within groups, particularly in areas of the north where there are disparate ethnic groups in close proximity or where areas controlled by the Popular Front for the Renaissance of Central Africa and the Central African Liberators for Justice intersect. Meanwhile, anti-United Nations sentiments are expected to remain high, with protests being most disruptive in Bangui and in areas where the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic operates. Given that the number of humanitarian workers who sustained injuries in the Central African Republic nearly doubled in 2019 (42 compared to 23 in 2018), WFP will probably implement additional prevention and mitigation measures to protect personnel and ensure the continuity of operations.

28.   Haiti is on the brink of a new humanitarian crisis. Protests in reaction to the economic situation and political scandals that started in 2018 escalated to a climax in October 2019, marking one of Haiti's longest periods of continuous unrest. Moreover, the country is gripped by a political impasse – there is no appointed prime minister, congress or functioning government – a situation that will probably exacerbate the negative impact of the economic crisis. Probably as a result, 2019 saw a significant increase in gang violence and crime. For WFP, Haiti saw one of the highest security incident rates of 2019, with nearly 60 percent of the reported incidents linked to crime due to a lack of law and order amid the wide circulation of weapons. The United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti concluded in 2019, leaving 15,400 overburdened Haitian policemen responsible for security but unable to police the country effectively. Moreover, tens of thousands of Haitians are still displaced from the 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck a decade ago, and food security is at dramatic levels. Humanitarian response paradigms normally built for rural camps are unworkable in urban environments and need to be adapted to the urban setting of Haiti's population in need. In this context, we foresee increased exposure of WFP to security threats such as violent crime in urban areas and kidnappings. WFP will need to take measures to ensure its humanitarian access in this new context of urban volatility and to expedite urgent security risk mitigation measures for accommodation, transportation and operational continuity.

29.   In its role as the guardian of WFP's safety and security, the Security Division will undergo a substantial transformation in 2020. Dedicated change management thinking and innovation will guide rationalization and increase the inclusion of all of WFP's workforce in security efforts. Cross-functional involvement will support country managers both remotely and on-site, while compliance will be further enhanced. Structural changes in the Security Division will initiate this transformation.