

Updated WFP evaluation policy



Informal consultation

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World Food Programme

Rome, Italy

Introduction

1. This document presents WFP's updated evaluation policy, which supersedes all previous evaluation policies. It has been prepared following a decision by the Executive Board¹ on the WFP response to the recommendations resulting from the 2021 peer review of WFP's evaluation function conducted by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).
2. The policy reaffirms WFP's commitment to benefitting fully from evaluation in its performance management, accountability and learning² systems, complying with United Nations evaluation principles, norms and standards.³ It informs WFP employees and stakeholders of the purpose of the evaluation function; its conceptual and normative framework; and the roles, accountabilities and standards for evaluation across WFP, including coverage, use and human and financial resource requirements. Aligned with the principles and aims of the United Nations, the policy supports WFP's achievement of its mandate and strategic priorities.⁴
3. The policy will be accompanied by an updated evaluation charter.⁵ Together, these documents will constitute the governance framework for WFP's evaluation function within the wider oversight arrangements established by the Board. A new corporate evaluation strategy will set out a phased plan for implementing this policy, the costing of which will be provided in the regular three-year evaluation function work plan presented as an annex to the WFP management plan submitted to the Board every year.

Context and rationale for an updated evaluation policy

4. The world has undergone significant change since the approval of the current evaluation policy in 2015. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has thrown the global economy into turmoil and sparked a devastating increase in hunger among the world's most vulnerable. Recent years have also seen a rise in the number of people affected by conflicts and crises, including the climate crisis. Because of these trends, the need to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is more pressing than ever. In doing so, governments, civil society and United Nations agencies including WFP are increasingly looking for new ways of partnering to address the interrelated challenges through the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
5. Further reform proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General and adopted by Member States in 2017 is repositioning the United Nations development system, making it more strategic, accountable, collaborative and responsive to national development needs and priorities. WFP is involved in inter-agency coordination mechanisms at the global and regional levels, including through regional collaboration platforms. At the country level, United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks (UNSDCFs) will be the vehicle for planning, resourcing, delivering and evaluating the United Nations' contribution to national development results. These reforms and WFP's commitment to a more cohesive

¹ WFP/EB.A/2021/7-D/Add.1/Rev.1.

² Accountability is the obligation to account for – and report on – work carried out and results achieved, using planned objectives and targets as the benchmark against which to assess performance. Learning informs operational and strategic decision making through analysis of why certain results did or did not occur and the drawing of lessons to identify good practices, build on success and avoid past mistakes.

³ United Nations Evaluation Group. 2016. *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914>.

⁴ [To insert SP Board decision reference].

⁵ The charter will be updated to clarify governance and roles in the evaluation function and the terms, authority and accountability of the Director of Evaluation, as reflected in this policy.

and collaborative approach to humanitarian action signal that more joint working and greater United Nations coherence will influence and guide WFP's work, including its evaluation function.

6. The critical role of evaluation in development is acknowledged in the SDGs⁶ and the 2014 United Nations resolution on capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at the country level.⁷ The Decade of Action (2020–2030) to deliver the SDGs emphasizes decisions informed by evidence, including from evaluation, and the importance of learning, tracking progress and identifying what does and does not work in achieving the SDGs. The *Global Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020*,⁸ endorsed by governments, United Nations agencies, civil society and evaluation associations, promotes national evaluation capacity and advocates the use of evidence to inform the implementation of the SDGs. WFP has been instrumental in supporting these initiatives.
7. Within this context the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation have been updated, and they inform this policy. The OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation has also updated its evaluation criteria, which provide a normative framework for making evaluative judgements and are widely used in the evaluation of development assistance.
8. Within WFP, a number of policies and strategies adopted since 2016 have guided the evaluation function, including the WFP strategic plan for 2022–2026 (to be presented for approval by the Board at its 2021 second regular session), the 2020 WFP protection and accountability policy and the draft WFP gender policy for 2022–2026 (to be presented for approval by the Board at its 2022 first regular session). The 2016 policy on country strategic plans (CSPs) introduced the systematic evaluation of CSPs.
9. Through the implementation of the 2016 evaluation policy WFP established an evaluation function that encompasses centralized evaluations and demand-led decentralized evaluations. Regional evaluation strategies have been developed and strategies on evaluation capacity development, evaluation communication and knowledge management, and impact evaluation are now being implemented.
10. The OECD-DAC/UNEG peer review of the evaluation function in 2021⁹ concluded that at WFP a “highly strategic corporate evaluation function oversees the production of high quality centralised and decentralised evaluations”. The peer review noted that the Office of Evaluation (OEV) has adapted the evaluation function to keep it aligned with WFP's priorities and organizational changes. The peer review resulted in recommendations on ways to enhance the utility and added value of the evaluation function; ensure adequate and sustained financing and appropriate skills and capacity within the evaluation cadre; implement a more rigorous approach to ensuring organizational learning from evaluation; and continue strengthening evaluation partnerships in support of national evaluation capacity and joint and system-wide evaluations in pursuit of nationally owned SDGs.¹⁰
11. Given the changes in the external and internal environment and the guidance of the peer review, this is an opportune moment to update the evaluation policy to ensure that WFP benefits from a well-balanced, utility-focused evaluation function that is in harmony with the 2022–2026 strategic plan.

⁶ A/RES/70/1.

⁷ A/RES/69/237.

⁸ The *Global Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020* sets out a long-term global vision for evaluation. <https://www.evalpartners.org/global-evaluation-agenda>.

⁹ WFP/EB.A/2021/7-D*.

¹⁰ United Nations. Webpage on the SDGs. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

Definitions and concepts

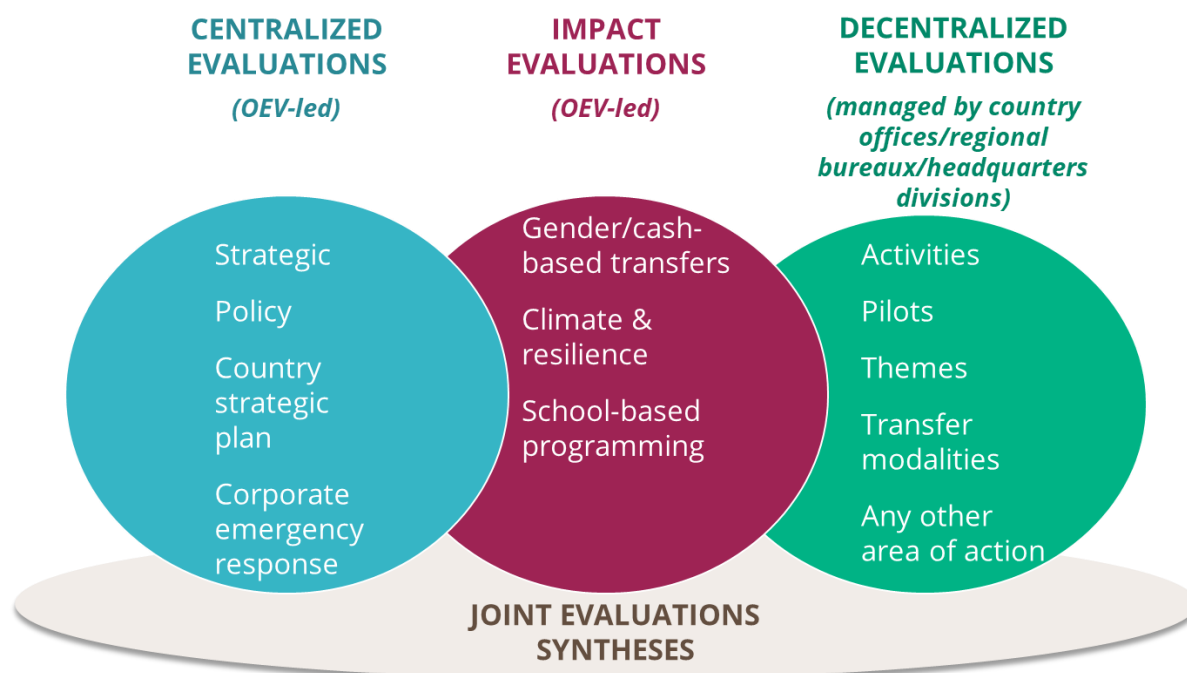
12. WFP adheres to the United Nations definition of evaluation:

An evaluation is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.¹¹ An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organisations and stakeholders.³

13. The evaluation policy sets the framework of norms and standards, accountabilities and coverage and capacities for effective management of evaluations. It facilitates evidence-based decision making and strengthens the culture of learning at WFP. The evaluation function is integrated throughout WFP and its implementation is shared across the organization. As such, evaluations are commissioned and managed by various parts of the organization. There are three categories of evaluation at WFP:
- i) Centralized evaluations are commissioned and managed by OEV and presented to the Executive Board for consideration. They focus on corporate strategy and policies, global programmes, strategic issues and themes and CSPs.
 - ii) Decentralized evaluations are commissioned and managed by country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters-based divisions other than OEV and are designed to meet the needs of the commissioning units. They are not presented to the Board. They can cover activities, pilots, themes, transfer modalities or any other area of action at the subnational, national or multi-country level.
 - iii) Impact evaluations are managed by OEV at the request of country offices. They measure changes in development outcomes of interest for a target population that can be attributed to a specific programme or policy through a credible counterfactual. They are usually undertaken during programme implementation.
14. Centralized, decentralized and impact evaluations can be conducted jointly with other United Nations partners, governments or donors. All types of evaluation can be synthesized in order to draw evidence from many evaluations.

¹¹ Revised in 2019, the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and coherence (see <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>). In humanitarian contexts, relevance and sustainability may be replaced by appropriateness, and coverage, connectedness and coherence are also considered (see ALNAP. 2006. *Evaluating Humanitarian Action Using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-DAC Criteria*).

Figure 1 Evaluation categories and types at WFP



15. No matter which offices commission and manage evaluations, all follow the norms set out in this policy and conform to WFP's evaluation quality assurance system,¹² which includes impartiality safeguards.
16. The WFP oversight framework sets out expectations regarding the promotion of accountability and transparency within the organization.¹³ Within the three lines model, OEV sits in the third line alongside the Office of the Inspector General, providing independent assurance and advice to the Executive Board and to senior management. Evaluation also contributes to the second line through the challenge provided and evidence generated by evaluations commissioned at the regional and country levels. Evaluation is also an integral, complementary yet distinct element of WFP's performance management system in that it uses findings from mechanisms such as appraisal, monitoring, reviews, audits and research (see box 1) as part of the evidence base when independently assessing WFP's performance and results in order to support accountability and learning. OEV regularly consults headquarters divisions, regional bureaux and country offices to facilitate complementarity with other learning and accountability mechanisms.

¹² WFP. 2020. *Evaluation quality assurance system: guidance for process and content*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/eqas-evaluation-quality-assurance-system-0>.

¹³ WFP/EB.A/2018/5-C*.

Box 1: Distinguishing features of related performance, accountability and learning mechanisms

Appraisal: A critical assessment of the potential value of an undertaking made before a decision to implement it.³ An appraisal is an assessment of the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of an intervention that is undertaken to facilitate decisions on whether the activity is likely to respond adequately to beneficiary needs and whether it represents an appropriate use of resources. An effective appraisal should assess the quality and soundness of the monitoring and evaluation framework proposed for the intervention.

Monitoring: The main purpose of process, output and outcome monitoring is to inform operational decision making, including that related to CSP activity design, implementation and revision. To that end, output and outcome monitoring facilitates the assessment of effectiveness and process monitoring supports the assessment of efficiency and implementation quality. The secondary purposes of monitoring include generating data for accountability to beneficiaries and partners, for evaluative purposes and for corporate reporting and evidence building at all levels.

*Review:*¹⁴ The periodic or ad hoc assessment of the performance of a programmatic intervention or specific aspect thereof, intended to inform operational decision making and support learning and accountability. A review tends to focus on operational issues and is typically managed internally to enable timely decision making and potential adjustments to an ongoing programme. Reviews do not have to conform to specified external reporting or publication requirements or to the international standards applicable to evaluation, but they must abide by the standards of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

*Audit:*¹⁵ Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations.

*Research:*³ A systematic enquiry to develop or contribute to knowledge.

17. Evidence is one of six enablers identified in the WFP strategic plan for 2022–2026 that will increase the organization's ability to achieve results. The evaluation function is one source of evidence for WFP and has a strong relationship with one of the other sources: the monitoring function. Monitoring provides managers and stakeholders with regular feedback on progress against planned activities as well as programme performance and results. Monitoring feeds into evaluation and is an opportunity for learning and continuous improvement. OEV will work with relevant divisions to enhance the synergies between monitoring and evaluation and strengthen capacity, particularly at the country level where the two functions are often carried out by the same employees.

Vision, goals and outcomes

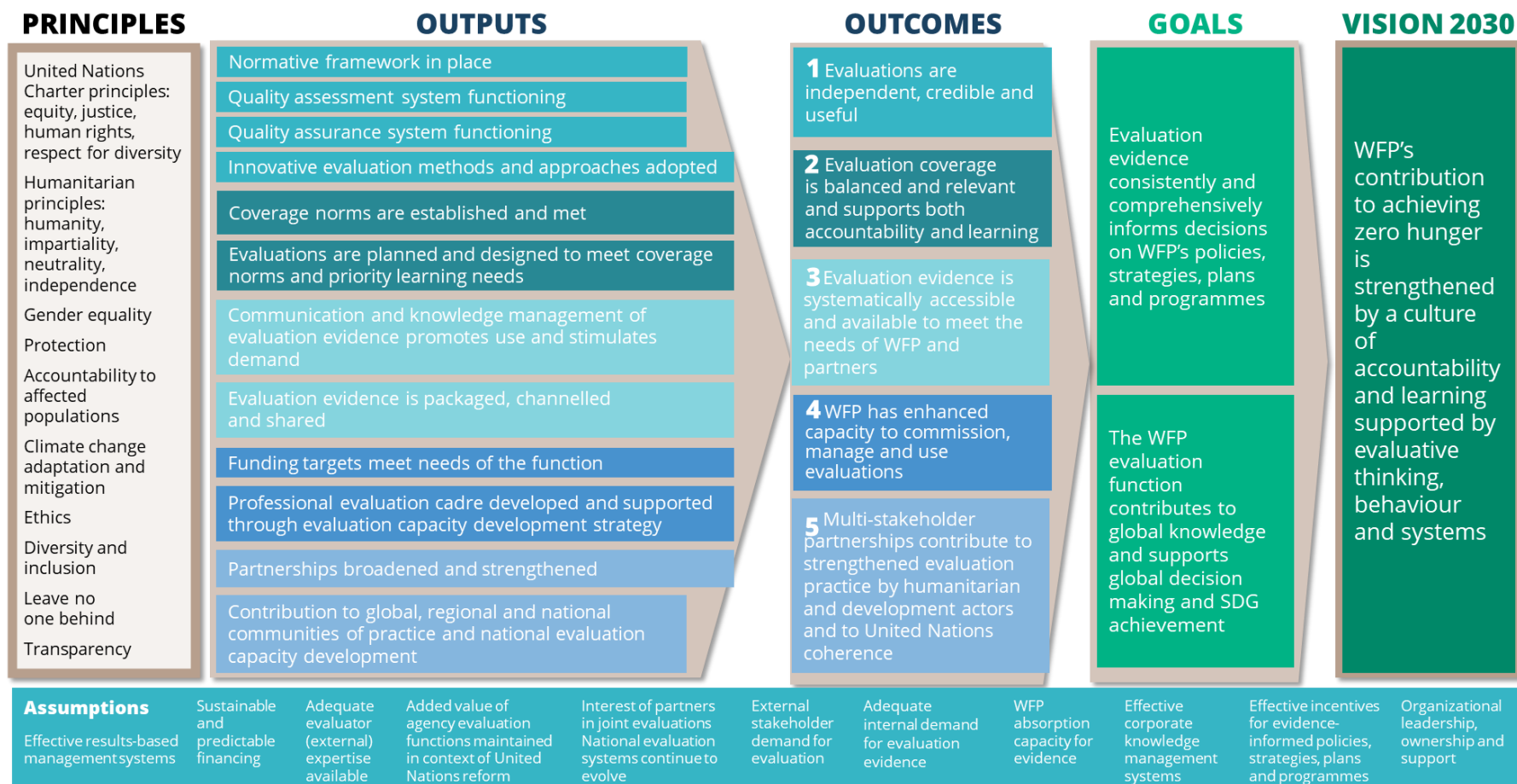
18. The evaluation function helps to make WFP fit for purpose by providing its decision makers and all stakeholders with independent assessments of results and effects of its work. These assessments facilitate accountability and learning that informs policy, planning and strategic and programmatic decisions.

¹⁴ WFP. 2016. *Making the choice: decentralized evaluation or review?*
<https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/reports/wfp277894.pdf>.

¹⁵ WFP/EB.2/2019/4-B/1.

19. Accordingly, the vision of the theory of change for this policy (see figure 2) is that by 2030 WFP's contribution to achieving zero hunger will be strengthened by a culture of accountability and learning supported by evaluative thinking, behaviour and systems. Contributing to this vision, the goals of the policy are to ensure that evaluation evidence consistently informs decisions on WFP's policies, strategies, plans and programmes and that the WFP evaluation function contributes to global knowledge and supports decision making and SDG achievement at the global, regional and national levels.
20. These goals will be achieved through the attainment of the following outcomes:
 - i) Evaluations are independent, credible and useful: evaluations are embedded in the policy and programme cycle, with all evaluations managed in accordance with United Nations norms and standards and the WFP evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS). This ensures that evaluations are timely, of good quality, publicly available and conducted with systematic internal and external stakeholder involvement, thereby delivering balanced and accurate findings that support recommendations for optimal use in evidence-based decision making.
 - ii) Evaluation coverage is balanced and relevant and supports both accountability and learning: this policy sets out coverage norms for evaluations, which should be planned and designed to meet those norms.
 - iii) Evaluation evidence is systematically accessible and available to meet the needs of WFP and its partners: evaluation evidence needs to be available at the right time in an appropriate form if it is to inform decision making.
 - iv) WFP has enhanced capacity to commission, manage and use evaluations: evaluation capacity is strengthened throughout WFP, with management arrangements that meet UNEG norms and standards.
 - v) Multi-stakeholder partnerships contribute to strengthened evaluation practice by humanitarian and development actors and to United Nations coherence: best practices are developed and modelled in partnerships with actors relevant to WFP's work. Partnerships with governments and civil society support countries in developing their national evaluation capacity.
21. Policy outcomes will be achieved through delivery of several outputs that require investment and organizational support. The policy rests on several assumptions and will be compromised if they are not realized. (Table 4 provides details of mitigation measures.)

Figure 2: Evaluation function theory of change



Guiding principles

Evaluation principles

22. WFP's evaluation function is based on the UNEG evaluation principles³ of independence, credibility and utility. Application of these principles ensures evaluation quality, enhancing accountability and learning throughout WFP by increasing confidence in the independence and credibility of evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons for the continual improvement of WFP's performance and results.

Figure 3 Evaluation principles



- **Independence** of evaluation is necessary for credibility. It influences the ways in which an evaluation is used and is underpinned by the impartiality of evaluators. Independence requires impartiality, so that evaluations are free from influences that may bias their selection, conduct, findings, conclusions, recommendations and reporting. WFP is committed to safeguarding the independence and impartiality of all its evaluations through the provisions specified in table 1 and the roles, accountabilities and institutional arrangements outlined below.
- **Credibility** is grounded in independence, impartiality and a rigorous methodology. Key elements of credibility include transparent evaluation processes, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance and assessment systems. Quality assurance assessment procedures are outlined below.
- **Utility:** in the commissioning and conduct of an evaluation there should be a clear intention to use the resulting analysis and conclusions or recommendations to inform decisions and actions. The utility of evaluation is seen through its use to make relevant and timely contributions to organizational learning, to inform decision-making processes and to promote accountability for results. Evaluations can also yield benefits outside the organization by generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders. WFP is committed to enhancing utility by planning and

conducting evaluations with the firm intent to use their results; by undertaking them in a timely way in order to inform decision-making processes; and by ensuring the accessibility of evaluation results by making reports public.

| TABLE 1: INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY | |
|---|--|
| UNEG norm 4: Independence | |
| The evaluation function is independent of other management functions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Evaluation heads an independent evaluation function within the WFP Secretariat. • Decision making¹⁶ on evaluations commissioned outside OEV is made by management rather than employees directly responsible for implementing evaluated interventions. • All evaluations are subject to independent post-hoc quality assessment. |
| The evaluation function sets the evaluation agenda. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Evaluation has full discretion over OEV-commissioned evaluation selection and approval and issuance of evaluation reports to the Board. • Mechanisms are in place to ensure that evaluations commissioned outside OEV are free from undue influence and that reporting is unbiased and transparent – e.g., external review of draft terms of reference, inception and evaluation reports. • All evaluations are publicly available. |
| The evaluation function is provided with adequate resources for conducting its work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budgetary framework for evaluation is approved by the Board in the context of the WFP management plan; the Director of Evaluation has full discretion and control over resources allocated to OEV. |
| The independence of the evaluation function underpins the free access to information on the subject of an evaluation that evaluators should have. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal instruments – the Evaluation Charter and the directive on information disclosure – ensure that employees provide evaluators with access to information. |
| Behavioural independence and impartiality in connection with evaluations must not have negative repercussions, including for career advancement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All evaluations are conducted by independent evaluators.¹⁷ • The Director of Evaluation provides assurance on compliance with evaluation norms and standards for OEV-commissioned evaluations. • Assurance statements issued by the Executive Director based on the statements of division directors, regional directors and country directors include commitments to ensuring the independent and impartial conduct of decentralized evaluations |

¹⁶ Decision making (informed by regional evaluation advisors for evaluations at the country and regional levels) includes the following aspects: evaluation selection, design, team selection, budgeting, terms of reference, inception and evaluation report approval. Adjustments will be made for small country offices such as by assigning a greater role for regional bureaux.

¹⁷ In the main, evaluators are external consultants; there may be instances when, with the approval of the Director of Evaluation, an OEV evaluation manager plays a more significant role in an evaluation, such as team leader.

| TABLE 1: INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY | |
|---|---|
| UNEG norm 5: Impartiality | |
| <p>Evaluators need to be impartial and must not have been (or expect to be in the near future) directly responsible for setting policy in respect of the subject of the evaluation or for its design or management.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential conflicts of interest are assessed before evaluation teams are hired • All evaluation managers and evaluators sign the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation. |
| <p>Impartiality exists at all stages of the evaluation process, including the planning of the evaluation, the formulation of its mandate and scope, the selection of the evaluation team, the provision of access to stakeholders, the conduct of the evaluation and the formulation of findings and recommendations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation quality assurance systems support transparent evaluation management. • With due regard for confidentiality, evaluation design, process and reporting systematically take into account the views of key stakeholders. • Analytical transparency is built into evaluation design, conduct and reporting. • Coverage norms are applied. • Mechanisms for assessing conflict of interest are used. • A help desk is available to assist country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions in the management of evaluations. • Regional evaluation units support country offices in the management of evaluations. • Roles and accountabilities for evaluation are integrated into WFP's staff performance management system and the internal control assurance statements issued by directors. |

Underpinning principles

23. WFP prioritizes core principles that are central to its mandate and the achievement of the SDGs. The evaluation function supports the organization in meeting these principles, specifically:
- the principles stated in the United Nations Charter¹⁸ including the principles of equity, justice, human rights and respect for diversity;
 - the humanitarian principles: ¹⁹ humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence;²⁰
 - gender equality: in line with the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and as reflected in the WFP gender policy,²¹ UNEG²² and WFP guidance is applied in all WFP evaluations;
 - protection:²³ WFP is committed to preventing and responding to protection risks associated with hunger in all contexts and to achieving successful protection outcomes for the people it assists;

¹⁸ United Nations. 1945. *United Nations Charter*, Chapter IX, art. 55 c). United Nations Conference on International Organization.

¹⁹ United Nations General Assembly resolutions 46/182 (1991) and 58/114 (2004).

²⁰ WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C and WFP/EB.2/2014/4-E.

²¹ [To insert EB document details for 2022 gender policy once available]

²² UNEG. *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation*. <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980>.

²³ WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2.

- accountability to affected populations: accountability to affected populations is central to WFP's work to meet food needs in a safe, accountable and dignified manner that respects the integrity of the people it serves through commitments it makes in five areas: leadership/governance; transparency; feedback and complaints; participation; and design, monitoring and evaluation;²⁴
- climate change adaptation and mitigation: WFP is committed to supporting disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation,²⁵ with the aim of enabling vulnerable people, communities and governments to address the impacts of the climate crisis on food security and nutrition and to adapt to climate change;²⁶
- ethics: in line with its own code of conduct,²⁷ WFP follows the UNEG norm on ethics, conducting evaluations with integrity and respect for the social and cultural environment; for human rights and gender equality; and for the "do no harm" principle that underpins humanitarian assistance. WFP also applies the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation;
- diversity and inclusion: WFP supports the principles of diversity and inclusion in its work to achieve the SDGs for all; its people policy includes diversity and inclusion principles. The WFP diversity and inclusion framework is also aligned with and supports United Nations system-wide frameworks for specific aspects of diversity;
- "leave no one behind": this is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. WFP is committed to eradicating poverty in all its forms, ending discrimination and exclusion and reducing the inequality and vulnerability that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole.
- transparency: transparency is an essential element of evaluation that establishes trust, builds confidence, enhances stakeholder ownership and increases public accountability. Evaluation products should be publicly accessible.³

24. These principles influence how WFP evaluates as well as what is evaluated. The incorporation of these principles into evaluation processes supports WFP in mainstreaming them into its programme design and implementation.

Elements of the evaluation function

25. The evaluation function comprises the normative framework and the evaluation responsibilities of actors throughout the organization that must be fulfilled in order to meet the objectives of the evaluation policy. Responsibility for evaluation is shared across WFP and overseen by OEV (see section below for details of roles, accountabilities and institutional arrangements). The main elements of the normative framework are described below.

²⁴ Inter-Agency Standing Committee. 2011. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-revised-aap-commitments-2017-including-guidance-note-and-resource-list>.

²⁵ [Insert reference to 2022–2026 strategic plan.]

²⁶ WFP/EB.1/2017/4-A/Rev.1.

²⁷ Executive Director Circular OED2014/016.

Planning and selection

26. This policy integrates evaluation more closely into WFP's policy and programme management cycle than did the previous policy, with planning reflecting the three categories of evaluation:
- *Evaluations commissioned by OEV (centralized evaluations):* the OEV annual work plan sets out priorities for evaluations and the development of the evaluation function and reflects available resources.²⁸ To ensure impartiality, the plan is drawn up independently by the Director of Evaluation in consultation with the Board (through the annual consultation on evaluation), WFP senior management and other major stakeholders; it is subsequently presented to the Board for approval as part of the WFP management plan.
 - *Evaluations commissioned by country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions (decentralized evaluations):* initial decisions regarding decentralized evaluations are made by the directors of country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions when CSPs or programmes are being designed and approved in order to facilitate resourcing and planning; this does not preclude the possibility that additional evaluations may be called for. At the regional level, regional evaluation plans consolidate all evaluations (those commissioned by OEV, country offices, the regional bureau or a headquarters office) planned for a region. This exercise can be used to consider the need for any regionally led multi-country evaluations to address gaps in evidence that are a priority for the region.
 - *Impact evaluations:* OEV and WFP programme teams identify corporate evidence priorities that can be addressed through impact evaluation windows (portfolios of impact evaluations in specific priority evidence areas), which will be updated over time as the organization's evidence priorities change.
27. The type, timing, approach and method of an evaluation should be appropriate to its intended use and to policy and programme requirements, while complying with coverage norms. Annex I indicates the types of evaluation that WFP currently conducts, but new and innovative methods and approaches will be adopted as needed, particularly when innovation may enhance the use of evaluation insights. An evaluation methods advisory panel made up of globally recognized evaluation experts will provide advice on innovative evaluation approaches and the methods that can best meet the accountability and learning needs of WFP.
28. Regular consultation between OEV and other divisions and offices support the efficient use of resources and complementarity between evaluations. OEV and the Office of Internal Audit will continue to coordinate when developing their respective workplans with a view to ensuring complementarities and synergies between evaluation and auditing. This coordination also covers consideration of the findings and recommendations derived from the respective exercises.

Coverage norms

29. The policy sets norms for ensuring appropriate evaluation coverage across WFP. There is a need to balance requirements for systematic and sufficient centralized evaluation coverage across the whole of WFP's work with a demand-led approach for decentralized and impact evaluations. Thus, the norms indicated in table 2 set **minimum** corporate expectations within which commissioning units have the flexibility to prioritize topics,

²⁸ While CSP evaluations are commissioned and managed by OEV, country offices are responsible for their planning and budgeting.

interventions and timing in line with their policy or programme cycles and stakeholder needs.

30. While there are no minimum coverage norms for joint evaluations, these are expected to increase in number in response to developments in system-wide evaluation and further United Nations development system reforms, including the introduction of UNSDCF evaluations.

[NOTE TO EXECUTIVE BOARD: The coverage norms for country offices (highlighted as scenarios in grey in the table below) are still under discussion. Decisions on which scenario will become the norm will be based on further clarification of the implications of each scenario.]

| TABLE 2: MINIMUM EVALUATION COVERAGE NORMS | |
|---|--|
| Commissioning unit | Type of evaluation |
| OEV | Strategic evaluations: These provide balanced coverage of WFP's core planning instruments, including elements of the WFP strategic plan and related strategies. |
| | Policy evaluations: Evaluation of policies between four and six years after the start of implementation ²⁹ and/or prior to policy changes. |
| | Evaluation of corporate Level 3 and protracted Level 2 crisis responses, including multi-country crises, will be conducted by WFP or through inter-agency humanitarian evaluations (in accordance with inter-agency humanitarian evaluation guidelines) or through CSP evaluations together with decentralized evaluations of certain aspects as appropriate. |
| | CSP evaluations: ³⁰ a) A CSP evaluation is required in the penultimate year of the CSP. b) For interim CSPs, an evaluation every five years for the ten largest country offices, and every 10–12 years for all other country offices implementing an interim CSP. |
| | Impact evaluations: The Director of Evaluation will determine how many windows and how many evaluations within each window can be managed at any one time, ³¹ considering organizational evidence priorities and capacity. |

²⁹ WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B. The policy formulation document is due to be revised in 2022, which may result in the need to adjust the policy evaluation coverage norm.

³⁰ WFP/EB.2/2016/4-C/1/Rev.1*. The current norm for evaluations for every CSP will be reviewed in 2023 once the first generation of CSP evaluations has been completed and there has been an evaluation of the CSP policy.

³¹ Currently there are four evidence windows, with up to six evaluations running in each window at any one time.

| TABLE 2: MINIMUM EVALUATION COVERAGE NORMS | |
|---|---|
| Commissioning unit | Type of evaluation |
| Country office ³² | <p>Scenarios:</p> <p>Status quo: at least one decentralized evaluation (e.g., activity or thematic evaluation or CSP strategic outcome evaluation) per country office per interim CSP or CSP cycle</p> <p>Scenario 1: Small and medium-sized offices: at least one decentralized evaluation (e.g., activity or thematic evaluation or CSP strategic outcome evaluation) per interim CSP or CSP cycle. Large and very large offices: at least one activity or thematic evaluation every three years.</p> |
| Regional bureaux | No specific norms but criteria to guide decision making on evaluation (see table 3) should be applied, particularly for multi-country evaluations. ³³ |
| Headquarters office /division | No specific norms but criteria to guide decision making on evaluation (see table 3) should be applied. |
| Syntheses: These summarize evidence from a number of completed evaluations. | |
| Joint and system-wide evaluations: WFP will seek out opportunities with other United Nations entities and at the country level in consultation with national partners, to undertake more joint and system-wide evaluations including UNSDCF evaluations and inter-agency humanitarian evaluations. | |

31. Decisions on what, when and how to evaluate should be consistent with these coverage norms but are influenced by many factors. Table 3 outlines criteria that may be used to guide decision making on whether and when to undertake a decentralized evaluation.

| TABLE 3: CRITERIA TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING RELATED TO EVALUATIONS COMMISSIONED BY COUNTRY OFFICES, REGIONAL BUREAUX OR HEADQUARTERS DIVISIONS |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic relevance to WFP • Evidence gaps (at the country, regional or global level) • Programme expenditure • Emergency response • Before replication or scale-up of pilots, innovations and prototypes • Innovative results (e.g., achieved across a region or through innovative multi-country programmes that are centrally funded or supported) • Formal commitments to stakeholders (e.g., to national partners to inform national programmes, or to funders as part of funding requirements) • Likelihood of influencing policy making or potential for leveraging partnerships • Feasibility of undertaking the evaluation |

32. In the interests of efficiency, where these evaluation coverage norms are met national governments, funders/donors and other stakeholders are encouraged to use WFP's evaluations when fulfilling their own evaluation requirements.

³² Country offices have been grouped into four categories based on WFP criteria established by the Operations Management Support Office, as well as the size of the office, number of employees and number of beneficiaries.

³³ Regional programmes and projects should include plans for generating evidence through evaluation where appropriate.

Quality management

33. *Quality assurance:* A high-quality evaluation requires a carefully planned and executed process that has been managed in line with WFP's EQAS and is based on UNEG norms, standards and guidance. The EQAS provides process maps, templates, checklists and technical notes for all evaluation types. The decentralized evaluation external quality support service reviews all terms of reference and inception and evaluation reports for all decentralized evaluations.
34. *Quality assessment:* The quality of all completed evaluations is independently assessed against EQAS standards, and the results are reported in the annual evaluation report. The results of these post-hoc quality assessments are also made publicly available alongside the evaluation reports, contributing to the transparency, credibility and utility of evaluations.
35. The evaluation methods advisory panel (see paragraph 27) will provide advice to OEV on how to improve evaluation approaches and methods for different types of evaluations, reflecting international best practices and innovations in evaluation methods. Evaluations will increasingly utilize WFP's innovative data collection tools, including geospatial monitoring, drones and online tools.

Use, communication and follow-up

36. Recognizing the contribution of evaluation to knowledge and the evidence base, WFP is committed to strengthening organizational learning from evaluation. The utility of evaluations is enhanced when they are planned and conducted with a clear intent for their use and timed to inform decision making; when they involve stakeholder engagement; and when evaluation evidence is available and accessible.
37. To enhance the contribution that evaluation makes to organizational learning, OEV will continue to introduce innovative and agile evaluation approaches and methods that improve the timeliness of evaluations and their responsiveness to knowledge needs and thus increase the use of evaluation for decision making. OEV will work with regional bureaux to foster innovation in evaluations commissioned at the regional and country levels and facilitate cross-fertilization between regions.
38. OEV will continue to liaise with WFP senior management and the Executive Board to encourage the systematic use of evaluation evidence to shape WFP practices. Systems for approving policies, strategies and programmes will require the systematic incorporation of evaluation evidence and plans for future evaluations, as is already the case for CSPs through the corporate programme review process. WFP management and OEV are committed to engaging regularly during the finalization of evaluations and their management responses.
39. All WFP evaluations and management responses will be publicly available. The Executive Board considers all OEV-commissioned evaluations and their management responses. Strengthened mechanisms for following up on management actions in response to evaluation recommendations will include an analytical report produced by WFP management on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations and presented for consideration to the Oversight and Policy Committee and the Executive Board. The WFP risk and recommendation tracking tool (R2) and its associated improvements in the tracking and reporting of the follow-up to recommendations will enhance the use of evaluations for learning and accountability purposes.

40. Evaluation evidence should meet the needs of WFP and its partners. The evaluation function will increase its capacity to respond proactively to knowledge needs at all levels of the organization. It will continue to increase its offer of tailored knowledge products and timely, targeted evidence, including by increasing its capacity to monitor key decision-making points and nurture dialogue with policy and programme decision makers, for example through targeted lessons that can inform new emergency responses.
41. In addition to becoming a learning partner within WFP that is actively engaged with other relevant divisions such as Innovation and Knowledge Management, Programme – Humanitarian and Development, and Research, Assessment and Monitoring, the evaluation function will enhance the global knowledge base by sharing evaluation evidence with think tanks, the academic community, the research community and communities of practice. OEV and the regional bureaux will also establish and strengthen partnerships and collaboration aimed at generating synergistic knowledge.
42. Communication efforts will complement work to tailor evaluation-generated knowledge to user needs, increasing the appeal of and access to knowledge products that are of interest to different audiences. The implementation of the evaluation knowledge management and communications strategy will maximize the use of knowledge generated by evaluations in policy, strategy and programme design.

System-wide evaluation and partnerships

43. Progress towards achieving the SDGs requires collective action, including partnerships among evaluation stakeholders that support global decision making. OEV will continue to work with partners to enhance evaluation practices and facilitate global humanitarian effectiveness and accountability. OEV and the regional bureaux will also continue to take part in communities of practice and evidence partnerships in order to build evaluation culture, advance global knowledge and support national SDG achievement.

Inter-agency collaboration

44. The 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review reaffirms the need for system-wide and inter-agency collaboration on evaluation.³⁴ Joint and inter-agency evaluations offer increased coverage, cost efficiency and understanding among agencies and partners at the corporate and national levels. WFP will increase its focus on United Nations coherence by continuing to advocate and participate in joint evaluations with other United Nations entities and government partners at the global, regional and national levels whenever relevant and feasible; contributing to the efforts proposed by the Secretary-General to enhance system-wide evaluation within the United Nations development system; participating fully in the implementation of UNSDCF evaluations at the country level and in continued improvements to UNSDCF evaluation methods and approaches developed through UNEG; and continuing to play a leading role in raising the profile, coverage and quality of humanitarian evaluation in partnership with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) inter-agency humanitarian evaluation mechanism, UNEG and others.

³⁴ A/RES/75/233. [A/RES/75/233 - E](#) - [A/RES/75/233 -Desktop \(undocs.org\)](#)

National evaluation capacity development

45. WFP will work with UNEG, the Global Evaluation Initiative and other partners to meet the commitments of the 2014 United Nations resolution on building national evaluation capacity³⁵ in line with the role of evaluation envisaged in the SDG framework³⁶ and the global evaluation agenda. OEV will support regional bureaux and country offices in engaging with national governments and partners to strengthen the demand for and use of evaluation, especially in WFP's areas of work; advocating country-led evaluations and the generation of evidence to inform national processes and reports on progress towards the achievement of the SDGs; and developing partnerships with national and regional evaluation institutions and experts in order to strengthen national evaluation systems and enhance both evaluation capacity and the pool of evaluation experts.

Roles, accountabilities and institutional arrangements

46. Given the shared responsibility for the evaluation function within WFP, achieving this policy requires a range of roles and accountabilities, as described below.

Executive Board

47. The Board exercises oversight of the evaluation function through the following roles:

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| Normative framework | i) Approving this evaluation policy; safeguarding its provisions; ii) approving the appointment by the Executive Director of the Director of Evaluation; iii) providing strategic guidance on the evaluation function through the annual consultation on evaluation and evaluation round tables; iv) fostering an evaluation culture as members of WFP's governing body and in the countries they represent. |
| Oversight | i) Considering annual evaluation reports, which include progress on the implementation of the evaluation policy and the effectiveness of the evaluation function and guiding management in policy implementation; ii) considering all reports on evaluations commissioned by OEV; iii) considering timely and substantive management responses to all evaluations presented; iv) considering reports on follow-up action, including reports prepared by OEV and WFP management. |
| Planning | Reviewing the evaluation function work plan and priorities as set out in the WFP management plan. |
| Resourcing | i) Approving the evaluation function budget as part of the WFP management plan; ii) reviewing trends in the human and financial resources dedicated to the evaluation function through the annual evaluation report. |
| Use | i) Considering the use of evaluation evidence when approving new policies, strategies, programmes, management plans and other relevant documents; ii) using evidence generated by evaluations in its decision making. iii) encouraging senior management to integrate lessons from evaluations into WFP practices. |

³⁵ General Assembly resolution 69/237 of 19 December 2014 (A/RES/69/237).

³⁶ United Nations. 2015. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

Executive Director

48. The Executive Director is accountable for the following.

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| Normative framework | i) Safeguarding the provisions of this policy, particularly regarding coverage norms, resourcing, accountabilities and impartiality provisions; ii) issuing the Evaluation Charter; iii) championing a corporate culture of accountability and learning and embedding evaluation principles in management and decision making; iv) appointing, subject to Executive Board approval, a Director of Evaluation who is a professionally competent evaluator with no conflict of interest, based on the terms of appointment outlined in annex II and summarized in paragraph 49 below. |
| Resourcing | As part of WFP management and project planning processes, allocating human and financial resources to ensure evaluation capacity and coverage across WFP in line with the provisions of the evaluation policy. |
| Management response | i) Ensuring that substantive management responses to evaluation recommendations are published when evaluation reports are considered by the Board, that follow-up actions are implemented and that progress on their implementation is reported annually; ii) Responding to the annual evaluation report and ensuring that actions are taken to support a high-performing WFP evaluation function. |
| Use | Promoting a corporate culture of accountability and learning, including by encouraging evaluative thinking, the sound management of corporate knowledge and the use of evaluations to ensure evidence-based decision making on policies, strategies and programmes. |
| International engagement | Supporting WFP's contributions to evaluation internationally and – particularly as an IASC principal – to humanitarian evaluation. |

Director of Evaluation

49. The Director of Evaluation, appointed by the Executive Director subject to Executive Board approval, is a professionally competent evaluator with no conflict of interest. The Director of Evaluation's term of office will be five years. With the prior consent of the Executive Board, the Executive Director may renew the appointment of an incumbent Director of Evaluation for a second term. The Director of Evaluation will not be permitted re-entry into the organization at the end of his or her final term. Dismissal of the Director of Evaluation due to poor performance, misconduct or malfeasance shall be effected in accordance with WFP policies and procedures, with prior consent by the Executive Board. Consistent with WFP rules and regulations and the United Nations standards of conduct for the International Civil Service, the Director may not be dismissed for public statements made in the conduct of his or her work.
50. The Director of Evaluation heads an independent evaluation function within the WFP Secretariat combining administrative reporting to the Executive Director and accountability to the Executive Board. He or she serves only in an advisory or observer role on committees or task forces established for management purposes. Through OEV, the Director of Evaluation provides global leadership, standard-setting and oversight for the WFP evaluation function and is accountable for the following.

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| Normative framework | i) Leading the formulation and implementation of the evaluation policy and the evaluation charter, ensuring adherence to UNEG norms and standards and application of the latest evaluation practice; ii) developing and leading implementation of the corporate evaluation strategy and other evaluation-related strategies; iii) supporting the Executive Director's promotion of a corporate culture of accountability and learning; iv) setting the normative framework for evaluations – norms, standards, safeguards for impartiality, guidance and expected coverage; v) acting as secretary to the Evaluation Function Steering Group. |
| Oversight | i) Providing assurance on compliance with evaluation norms and standards by all OEV-commissioned evaluations; ii) overseeing and reporting on the evaluation function; iii) facilitating dialogue with senior management on the performance and further development of the evaluation function. |
| Planning | i) Elaborating the evaluation function work plan in consultation with WFP senior management and other stakeholders for the Board's consideration as part of the WFP management plan; ii) ensuring that an enabling framework for the planning of evaluations commissioned outside OEV is in place; iii) ensuring that regular consultations with regional bureaux and country offices are undertaken in order to achieve complementarity among evaluations commissioned across the function and comprehensive and balanced coverage for decentralized evaluations. |
| Resourcing | i) Exercising full delegated authority over all human and financial resources allocated to OEV; ii) proposing a budget corresponding to the evaluation function work plan for the Board's consideration as part of the WFP management plan; iii) supporting the implementation of the budgetary framework for the evaluation function; iv) leading donor engagement and resource mobilization for evaluation; v) in coordination with the Human Resources Division and the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division, providing guidance on the most appropriate models for structuring the monitoring and evaluation function in various country office contexts. |
| Management of OEV-commissioned evaluations | i) Delivering high-quality evaluations characterized by continued innovation; ii) recruiting independent evaluation consultants; iii) ensuring employees' adherence to the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation; iv) submitting reports directly to the Board without prior clearance by WFP management. |
| Quality assurance | i) Updating and disseminating evaluation methods and other guidance materials through EQAS to ensure that WFP evaluation practices meet UNEG and other relevant international standards and draw from the latest evaluation practices; ii) ensuring that all OEV-commissioned evaluations adhere to EQAS and designing systems that support adherence to EQAS by all other evaluations; iii) systematically and comprehensively mainstreaming cross-cutting issues into WFP evaluation processes in order to support programme design and implementation. |
| Quality assessment | Ensuring that independent post-hoc quality assessments of all completed evaluations are published alongside evaluation reports. |
| Capacity development | i) Ensuring implementation of a comprehensive approach to internal capacity development for employees across the organization on steering, managing and using evaluations; ii) establishing mechanisms that support recognition and career development for a professional evaluation cadre. |

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| Management responses to OEV-commissioned evaluations | Advising management on coherence between OEV-commissioned evaluation recommendations and management responses. |
| Use | i) Promoting and championing the use of evaluation within WFP and among its partners; ii) facilitating learning from evaluation evidence across regions; iii) publishing reports of all evaluations on the WFP website; iv) ensuring timely and appropriate communication of evaluation results in order to support organizational learning; v) organizing the annual consultation on evaluation and evaluation round tables. |
| International engagement | i) Leading WFP engagement in UNEG, ALNAP and other professional evaluation networks; ii) leading WFP engagement in global partnerships that focus on national evaluation capacity development; iii) supporting joint and system-wide evaluations whenever appropriate, including UNSDCF evaluations and inter-agency humanitarian evaluations; iv) promoting WFP participation in global communities of practice. |
| Reporting | i) Approving reports of OEV-commissioned evaluations for direct presentation to the Board without prior clearance by the Executive Director or WFP management; ii) preparing and publishing the annual evaluation report, including reporting on progress in implementing the policy. |

Regional directors

51. Regional directors play an important role in management oversight of the evaluation function, particularly regarding evaluations commissioned by regional or country offices, and are accountable for the following:

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| Normative framework | i) Ensuring application of the provisions of the evaluation policy for evaluations commissioned by regional bureaux and country offices, including coverage norms and impartiality; ii) taking appropriate action to strengthen evaluation at the regional and country levels with the support of OEV; iii) leading the formulation and operationalization of regional evaluation strategies in line with this policy and the corporate evaluation strategy; iv) establishing and chairing the regional evaluation committees, which should be convened regularly. |
| Planning | i) Engaging in regular consultations with OEV and country offices to ensure complementarity among evaluations commissioned across the function; ii) ensuring that plans for evaluations are included in the design of regional strategies, interventions and other initiatives; iii) ensuring the preparation and annual update of regional evaluation plans. |
| Resourcing | i) Ensuring that resources are budgeted for and allocated to the management of independent evaluations, including those commissioned by country offices, and providing regional-level support and oversight; ii) ensuring that resources are budgeted for and allocated to the maintenance of the regional evaluation units. |
| Quality assurance | Overseeing the application of evaluation quality assurance procedures. |
| Capacity development | i) With OEV, providing technical advice to country offices managing evaluations; ii) contributing to the strengthening of evaluation capacity across the region; iii) facilitating evaluation capacity development initiatives in line with the WFP evaluation capacity development strategy. |

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| Management responses and follow-up actions | Ensuring that management responses to evaluations commissioned by regional and country offices are prepared and made publicly available and that relevant follow-up actions are undertaken. |
| Use | i) Ensuring that CSPs and new programmes, initiatives and strategies prepared in the region are based on evidence from evaluations; ii) ensuring that all reports on evaluations commissioned within the region are publicly available; iii) promoting the development of evidence products such as evidence summaries; iv) facilitating learning from evaluation evidence within the region and among countries. |
| Regional engagement | i) In partnership with other United Nations entities, supporting national evaluation capacity development at the country and regional levels; ii) supporting the commissioning and management of joint evaluations at the country and regional levels. |
| Reporting | i) Ensuring the quality and provision of data and information on the evaluation function across the regions; ii) ensuring the provision of inputs to OEV for corporate reporting on the evaluation function. |

Directors of headquarters divisions, regional bureaux and country offices

52. The directors of headquarters divisions, regional bureaux and country offices may commission evaluations. In addition, they are stakeholders in centralized evaluations. Accordingly, they are accountable for the following:

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| As commissioners of evaluations | |
| Normative framework | i) Complying with the provisions of the evaluation policy and its safeguards for impartiality; ii) meeting coverage norms. |
| Planning | i) Including plans for evaluation in the design of interventions – consistent with the coverage norms of the evaluation policy – and ensuring the evaluability of interventions by establishing appropriate baselines, indicators and targets for expected results; ii) planning multi-country evaluations in the region in order to fill evidence gaps or to meet other cross-regional requirements; iii) including evaluation in office work plans; iv) promoting joint evaluations whenever feasible and relevant. |
| Resourcing | Budgeting adequately for the management and conduct of evaluations and ensuring that resources are allocated. |
| Management of evaluations | i) Designing and managing evaluations in compliance with norms and standards set out in the WFP EQAS; ii) identifying, recruiting and managing evaluation consultants; iii) ensuring that consultants adhere to the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation; iv) using competitive and performance-based procedures for recruitment. |
| Quality assurance | Applying appropriate evaluation quality assurance procedures. |
| Quality assessment | Reviewing quality assessment reports on completed evaluations and taking action to improve the quality of future evaluations. |
| Capacity development | With the support of OEV, strengthening staff capacity for managing decentralized evaluations. |

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| Management responses and follow-up actions | i) Preparing management responses and ensuring that they are publicly available; ii) undertaking and reporting on follow-up actions. |
| Use | i) Using evidence from evaluations in preparing new policies, programmes, strategies and other interventions; ii) ensuring that evaluation reports are publicly available. |
| As stakeholders of centralized evaluations | |
| Support for the conduct of evaluations | i) Ensuring the evaluability of WFP's undertakings by establishing baseline information, performance indicators and targets for expected results; ii) facilitating the evaluation process and providing access to required information; iii) engaging in consultations on evaluation plans and providing feedback on evaluation products. |
| Resourcing | i) <i>Country directors only</i> : Ensuring that CSP evaluation costs and, where appropriate, impact evaluation costs are reflected in country portfolio budgets and that resources are allocated appropriately. |
| Management response and follow-up actions | Preparing management responses to assigned evaluation recommendations, implementing follow-up actions and reporting on them. |
| Use | Using evidence from evaluations to inform the preparation of new programmes, strategies and policies. |

Institutional arrangements

53. Given the shared nature of the evaluation function, mechanisms that ensure coherence across the function are important. Key mechanisms are as follows:

Oversight and Policy Committee: this advisory body is chaired by the Executive Director and comprises senior management and the directors of certain functions. Its key role is to adopt corporate policies and to deliberate on and oversee implementation of oversight recommendations (including evaluation recommendations) and corporate risk management activities.

Evaluation Function Steering Group (EFSG): this advisory body is chaired by the Deputy Executive Director and comprises regional directors and the directors of certain functions. The EFSG supports the Executive Director in championing the evaluation policy and safeguarding its provisions to ensure that evaluation is embedded in decision making and practice across WFP. The group provides strategic guidance regarding the application of the provisions of the evaluation policy; stewards and supports financial mechanisms for the evaluation function; and leads in stimulating demand for and the use of evaluation internally and by WFP partners. The Director of Evaluation serves as the EFSG secretary.

Regional evaluation committees (RECs): these committees are chaired by the regional directors and comprise country directors from the respective regions and certain senior advisors and staff at the regional bureaux. RECs mirror the role of the EFSG at the regional level, supporting the regional directors in championing the evaluation policy and safeguarding its provisions to ensure that evaluation is embedded in decision making and practice across the regions. RECs are responsible for developing and operationalizing regional evaluation strategies and for reviewing and endorsing regional evaluation plans, which are updated annually. RECs play a key role in enhancing coherence in evaluation activities between the priorities set out for OEV-commissioned evaluations and evaluations commissioned at the regional and country level. The regional evaluation officers act as secretaries to the RECs.

Resources

54. An effective evaluation function requires secure, predictable and adequate financial and human resources in order to attain and sustain evaluation coverage that is balanced and sufficient for accountability and learning needs. WFP recognizes that sustainable financing and resourcing for evaluation are priorities, and management is committed to ensuring adequate resources for implementing this policy and for the evaluation function as it evolves.

Human resources

55. To be effective the evaluation function requires adequate skilled human resources:

- i) *External specialists* will be hired to conduct all evaluations commissioned in WFP and certain evaluation-related tasks such as quality assessments of completed evaluations. OEV maintains a list of evaluators and service providers from around the world. WFP is committed to gender equity and geographical diversity in its recruitment of external specialists.
- ii) *WFP evaluation officers*: dedicated evaluation officers may be appointed by large country offices and by headquarters divisions; however, the majority of evaluation officers are appointed to serve in OEV and the regional bureaux.
 - OEV and regional evaluation units will continue to be staffed by a mix of externally recruited evaluation specialists with high levels of proven competence and experience, and current WFP employees with the required competence for evaluation appointed in line with WFP's staffing framework and reassignment policy and required to serve a minimum of four years when assigned to an evaluation position.
 - Each regional bureau will continue to maintain a regional evaluation unit headed by an experienced evaluation specialist³⁷ who reports directly to the regional director or deputy regional director, with technical reporting to OEV. These posts will be financed through regional bureau programme support and administrative (PSA) budgets in order to ensure predictability, independence from programmes and adequate staffing. Depending on the needs of the evaluation function at the regional level, the regional bureaux may recruit additional evaluation specialists.
 - OEV will work with the Human Resources Division to ensure that there is adequate sourcing of evaluation officers across the function with the appropriate combination of evaluation expertise and knowledge of WFP's operations and work environment and that the gender equity and parity, and geographical diversity requirements of the WFP people policy are met.
- iii) *Other WFP employees*:
 - WFP employees (including monitoring and evaluation and programme staff and managers) will receive the training and technical support they need to meet their evaluation responsibilities.
 - In order to reduce risk or bias, to the extent possible monitoring and evaluation officers in country offices should report directly to the management of the country office.

³⁷ Currently these positions are at the P-4 level but over the next four years are expected to be upgraded to P-5 given the expected evolution in the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation function at the regional level.

56. As part of its commitment to meeting the UNEG norms for evaluation, WFP is committed to enhancing professionalism. Furthermore, recognizing that evaluation is a specialist skill, WFP will build a cadre of evaluation staff within the organization who work on evaluation – full time or periodically – with the skills necessary to commission, manage and use evaluations and evaluation evidence and to support the development of a culture of learning from evaluation throughout the organization. OEV will work with the Human Resources Division to establish systems for professional development and recognition within the cadre to ensure that employees maintain the technical skills required to deliver high-quality evaluations and have opportunities to engage with professional evaluation networks.

Financial resources

57. The share of WFP's total contribution income assigned to evaluation has risen steadily as the function has evolved. Through this policy, the function is expected to continue to grow, and it is appropriate to set a target for financing that can accommodate this evolution over time and that recognizes the specificities of WFP operations compared with those of other United Nations entities. The expectations set out by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014,³⁸ adjusted to reflect WFP experience, are the starting point. As noted in the peer review, when setting a target for financing it is important to take into consideration the costs of a fully-fledged evaluation function, including an enhanced evaluation function at the decentralized level.

[NOTE TO EXECUTIVE BOARD: the upper ceiling for financing the evaluation function is still being calculated based on decisions to be made regarding scenarios and the potential growth of the function].

58. Recognizing the character of WFP's work and its funding specificities,³⁹ WFP is committed to ensuring that its evaluation function is sufficiently and sustainably funded. Acknowledging the potential evolution of the function in the coming years, starting from 2023 WFP will allocate at least 0.4 percent of its total contribution income⁴⁰ to its evaluation function. Expenditure on evaluation is expected to rise progressively with the continued growth of the function, particularly at the regional and country levels, reaching up to tbc % of total contribution income in 2026. Projections of evaluation expenditure beyond 2026 would be speculative, but it is anticipated that there will be annual fluctuation within this range depending on the level of evaluation activity, which will vary according to the status of country programme cycles.
59. The annual work plan for the evaluation function is approved by the Board as part of the WFP management plan. It includes the budget for OEV and provides an overview of the broader evaluation costs throughout WFP. The OEV budget covers costs for oversight of and reporting on the entire evaluation function, OEV-commissioned evaluations and management of the enabling framework for the evaluation function. All funds allocated to the implementation of the work plan are managed by the Director of Evaluation. This financial independence applies equally to funds from the PSA budget and other sources. Broader evaluation costs encompass managing and conducting decentralized evaluations as well as the cost of the regional evaluation units.

³⁸ United Nations Joint Inspection Unit. 2014. *Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System*. https://www.unjiu.org/sites/www.unjiu.org/files/jiu_document_files/products/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2014_6_English.pdf.

³⁹ For example, voluntary, in-kind or twinning contributions.

⁴⁰ This proportion is based on 2021 projections of total contribution in 2023 of USD 8.0 billion.

60. The evaluation function is financed through four separate funding sources, each of which funds different types of evaluation activities, specifically:
- PSA resources, which fund the OEV budget and regional evaluation unit costs;
 - country portfolio budgets, which fund CSP evaluations, decentralized evaluations commissioned by country offices, and data collection costs for impact evaluations;
 - a multi-donor trust fund, which receives and channels resources dedicated to specific impact evaluations; and
 - multilateral resources allocated to the Contingency Evaluation Fund, which supports country offices that face genuine resource constraints in respect of planned and budgeted decentralized evaluations and CSP evaluations and small country offices that face genuine resource constraints in respect of impact evaluation data collection costs.⁴¹
- In addition, a special account is managed by OEV as a repository for receiving direct contributions from other United Nations entities for the funding of joint evaluations and related activities.
61. OEV will continue to work with divisions to ensure systematic forward planning, budgeting and resource allocations for evaluations.
62. Corporate monitoring and reporting systems for budgets and expenditures will be adapted as appropriate in order to increase the visibility and transparency of budget allocations and expenditures for evaluation.

Risks

63. The theory of change in figure 2 identifies several assumptions required for an effective evaluation function to deliver its outputs and outcomes. Should these fail to materialize sufficiently, there is a risk that the function will be unable to achieve its intended goals, which will affect the achievement of WFP strategic objectives and management results related to processes, systems, accountability and funding. The risks for the evaluation function, their levels as defined in the WFP enterprise risk management policy and mitigating actions are identified in table 4.

⁴¹ The Contingency Evaluation Fund (CEF) was established under the previous evaluation policy to provide additional resources for decentralized evaluations where there was demand but resources were constrained. Under this policy, the scope of the CEF has been broadened to support country offices that face genuine resource constraints in respect of planned and budgeted decentralized evaluations and CSP evaluations and small country offices that face genuine resource constraints in respect of impact evaluation data collection costs. The CEF is governed by the EFSG according to agreed eligibility and assessment criteria.

| TABLE 4: RISK ANALYSIS | |
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| Risk | Mitigating measures |
| 1. Low external and/or unpredictable demand for evaluation from stakeholders (medium) | Integration of evaluation planning into the WFP programme cycle. Advocacy for increasing stakeholder use of and support for WFP evaluations. |
| 2. Low internal demand for evaluation (high) | Ensuring good-quality evaluations. Raising awareness of the utility of evaluations and coverage norms. Including evaluation evidence and planning for evaluation in the project review process. Reporting on the application of coverage norms. Integrating evaluation roles and accountabilities into WFP's staff performance management system. Fostering by senior management of a corporate culture of accountability and learning that embeds evaluation in decision making. |
| 3. Insufficient organizational leadership, ownership and support (medium) | Board review of key performance indicators for the evaluation function, decision making and clear communication of expectations and guidance on improving performance. |
| 4. Suboptimal use of evaluation (medium) | Management action to ensure the systematic consideration of evaluation findings in new policies, strategies and programme design. OEV comment on the use of evidence. OEV and other unit action to ensure the relevance, timeliness and quality of evaluations. Oversight and Policy Committee and Executive Board consideration of the implementation status of evaluation recommendations. |
| 5. Inadequate human resources – skills and employees (high) | OEV and other unit action to develop a capacity development framework for decentralized evaluation, including guidance, training and technical advice. Appointment of experienced regional evaluation officers. Evaluation capacity development to enhance the skills of employees relevant to steering, managing and using evaluations. |
| 6. Unpredictable and inadequate financial resources (medium) | Corporate commitment to meeting financial targets for evaluation as set out in the policy. OEV support for systematic forward planning and budgeting for evaluations. Continued adequate funding of the Contingency Evaluation Fund. |

| TABLE 4: RISK ANALYSIS | |
|--|--|
| 7. Limited quality and take-up of monitoring and other WFP data (medium) | <p>Management commitment to improving the corporate monitoring system and capacity.</p> <p>Partial compensation through primary data collection and triangulation of information by evaluation teams.</p> <p>Planning of evaluation at the start of project cycles in order to facilitate the identification of monitoring requirements.</p> <p>Engagement with the WFP Data Protection Office in order to ensure continued data access and use.</p> <p>OEV partnerships with data owners at headquarters.</p> |
| 8. Perceptions of limited role for agency evaluation functions | <p>Continued participation in UNEG.</p> <p>Participation in efforts to clarify complementarities between system-wide evaluation and agency-specific evaluations</p> |

Implementation, oversight, reporting and review

Policy roll-out, implementation and review

64. Once the policy is approved, its implementation will be supported by updated versions of the evaluation charter, the corporate evaluation strategy and regional evaluation strategies.
65. The evaluation function work plan is produced annually as a three-year rolling plan and is submitted to the Executive Board as an annex to the WFP management plan. The Executive Board approves the management plan and by extension, the evaluation function work plan.
66. This evaluation policy has a time horizon of 2030, the target date for the achievement of the SDGs. The OEV management planning timeframe will allow regular review of the costs associated with implementation of the policy. A review of policy implementation is proposed for 2025–2026 with a view to informing any revisions to this policy that are deemed necessary. The recognized mechanism for assessing evaluation policies in the United Nations is the DAC/UNEG external peer review process.

Oversight and reporting

67. The annual evaluation report is the primary instrument for reporting on the entire evaluation function and includes an assessment of the quality of all evaluations, progress on key performance indicators for the evaluation function and OEV's performance against its work plan.
68. As requested by the Board at its 2014 second regular session, in collaboration with management OEV has developed a management information system and a set of key performance indicators that support Board oversight of evaluation across WFP and provide information on progress made towards achieving the outcomes set out in the policy. Areas of reporting include evaluation coverage, the quality of evaluation reports, use of evaluations, evaluation partnerships and joint evaluations and financial and human resources.

ANNEX I

| EVALUATION TYPES CONDUCTED at WFP | |
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| Policy evaluations | Are embedded in WFP's policy framework and aim to assess the quality, implementation and results of policies. |
| Strategic evaluations | Assess global or corporate themes, programmes and initiatives selected for their relevance to WFP's strategic direction and management. |
| Country strategic plan evaluations | Evaluate the performance and results of a CSP as a whole and provide evaluative insights for evidence-based decision making related to the positioning of WFP in a country and strategic partnerships, programme design and implementation. |
| Impact evaluations | Measure changes in development outcomes of interest for a target population that can be attributed to a specific programme or policy through a credible counterfactual. |
| Evaluations of corporate emergency responses | Assess corporate emergency responses, with particular attention to humanitarian context and principles and the coverage, coherence and connectedness of the responses. |
| Activity evaluations | Evaluations of subcomponents of a CSP or interim CSP that support learning related to the implementation of specific activities by identifying what is working and what can be improved and provide evidence for accountability purposes by examining the results delivered by the activities for beneficiaries and partners compared with planned results. |
| Thematic evaluations | Assess the relevance, results and factors affecting the results of WFP interventions in cross-cutting thematic areas such as partnerships or gender. |
| <p>Syntheses: Evaluation syntheses provide succinct and actionable analysis drawn from completed evaluations of any specific type.</p> | |
| <p>Joint evaluations: Given the benefits of a common approach for collective accountability and learning, any evaluation may be conducted jointly with partners when appropriate. In the wider context of the United Nations and the SDGs, joint evaluations are increasingly relevant, and they are the norm in large-scale and protracted humanitarian contexts in the form of inter-agency humanitarian evaluations.</p> | |

ANNEX II

Terms of appointment of the WFP Director of Evaluation

Reporting line

1. The Director of Evaluation heads an independent function within the WFP Secretariat, combining administrative reporting to the Executive Director and accountability to the Executive Board.

Appointment terms

2. In line with the UNEG norms and standards, the Director of Evaluation is appointed by the Executive Director, in consultation with the Executive Board.
3. In addition to responsibility for management and oversight of the WFP Office of Evaluation, the Director of Evaluation, appointed at the D-2 level, provides global leadership and sets standards for, oversees and reports on the evaluation function across the whole of WFP, in conformity with the United Nations evaluation principles of independence, credibility and utility and the normative framework and accountabilities set out in the evaluation policy and the evaluation charter.
4. The term of office of the Director of Evaluation shall be five years, with the possibility of renewal for a second term. The Director of Evaluation will not be permitted re-entry into the organization at the end of his or her final term.
5. To avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest, the Director of Evaluation shall not be assigned any other management responsibilities and will serve only in an advisory or observer role in committees or task forces established for management purposes.

Selection process

6. With the paramount criteria being those of technical competence and behavioural independence and integrity, an internationally competitive and transparent selection procedure for the position of Director of Evaluation is established as follows:
 - i) The Human Resources Division will prepare an external vacancy announcement, based on terms of reference informed by the accountabilities set out in the evaluation policy.
 - ii) The vacancy announcement will be widely advertised and circulated through appropriate channels and websites, including those of United Nations Member States, the United Nations Evaluation Group and other relevant international bodies, networks and publications.
 - iii) Based on the selection criteria identified in the vacancy announcement, the Human Resources Division will screen applications and prepare a list of candidates who meet the minimum qualifications.
 - iv) A selection panel, appointed by the Executive Director with the composition described below and with the support of the Human Resources Division, will review the candidates in accordance with WFP recruitment policies and the post requirements. Based on their initial review, the selection panel will conduct interviews and recommend the two top-ranked candidates to the Executive Director in order of priority.
 - v) The Executive Director will present his or her final selection to the Executive Board for approval.

7. The Executive Director shall appoint a selection panel with the following composition:
- Deputy Executive Director
 - Chief of Staff
 - Assistant Executive Director (Programme and Policy Development Department or Resource Management Department)
 - Chair of the United Nations Evaluation Group (or a designated director of another United Nations evaluation office)
 - Two members of the WFP Executive Board, designated by the Bureau
 - Director of the Human Resources Division as secretary.

Renewal process

8. The Executive Director may renew the appointment of an incumbent Director of Evaluation for a second term, with the prior consent of the Executive Board.

Dismissal

9. Dismissal of the Director of Evaluation due to poor performance, misconduct or malfeasance shall be effected in accordance with WFP policies and procedures, with prior consent by the Executive Board. Consistent with WFP rules and regulations and the United Nations standards of conduct for the International Civil Service, the Director may not be dismissed for public statements made in the conduct of his or her work.

Acronyms

| | |
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| CSP | country strategic plan |
| EFSG | Evaluation Function Steering Group |
| EQAS | evaluation quality assurance system |
| IASC | Inter-Agency Standing Committee |
| OECD-DAC | Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OEV | Office of Evaluation |
| PSA | programme support and administrative (budget) |
| REC | regional evaluation committee |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| UNEG | United Nations Evaluation Group |
| UNSDCF | United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework |