Country capacity strengthening policy update

WFP

Informal consultation

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Introduction

This section outlines the purpose and scope of the country capacity strengthening policy update.

1. This policy update aims to clarify and update concepts, terminology and corporate understanding related to country capacity strengthening (CCS) and sets out the purpose of WFP's engagement in CCS.[1]

2. WFP defines CCS as activities structured around engagement with national and sub-national stakeholder institutions and organizations that contribute to the functioning of systems and support populations with their food security and nutrition-related needs.

3. WFP's engagement in capacity strengthening was first described in the 2004 policy on building country and regional capacities;[2] the 2009 update on implementation placed greater emphasis on outcomes and the variety of approaches available.[3] This policy update builds on both documents.

4. Capacity strengthening discourse and practice inside and outside WFP have evolved since 2009. The commitments of the 2030 Agenda and other milestones highlight the importance of capacity strengthening for the achievement of the United Nations agenda and the need for a new organizational approach.

5. Amidst these global developments, WFP created a corporate CCS framework in 2017. The framework focuses on supporting national systems and services, recognizing that the achievement of national development objectives depends on the transformative capacities of individuals, organizations and societies. The framework articulates a more holistic and systematic approach to CCS that engages across the whole of society. This policy update incorporates these elements into a WFP policy for the first time and describes them in more detail.

6. A 2021 synthesis of evaluations on CCS[4] highlighted that CCS is critical to WFP's contribution to the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its strategic objectives. It also highlighted elements of evaluated CCS interventions that contributed to WFP's success and more sustainable results, such as WFP's work in strengthening national ownership, building strong and trusted relationships and effective partnerships (through prolonged engagement) and promoting good coordination. The synthesis recommended that WFP reaffirms its commitment to CCS and further institutionalizes tools, develops internal skills, improves monitoring and reporting of CCS results and enhances integration of gender, protection and accountability to affected populations.

7. The scope of the policy update responds to the synthesis evaluation and other audit and evaluation recommendations related to conceptual issues.[5] It has also been informed by a review of internal documents and global developments and a series of consultations with

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[1] *Country capacity strengthening* is a WFP-specific term introduced in 2015 to differentiate these activities from *internal capacity strengthening*, now known as *internal capability development* (ICD), which refers to learning and training programmes for WFP staff. For consistency, the policy update continues to use the term *country capacity strengthening* to refer to WFP's work in capacity strengthening.

[2] WFP/EB.3/2004/4-B.

[3] WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B.

[4] WFP/EB.A/2021/7-C.

[5] WFP Office of the Inspector General. 2016. *Internal Audit of WFP's Country Capacity Strengthening*. WFP/EB.1/2017/6-A/Rev.1; and WFP/EB.A/2021/7-C.

different WFP programme units. The update addresses requests made during consultations for clarity on definitions, objectives, approaches and actors involved.

8. The policy update reaffirms WFP's commitment to CCS and its role in supporting the achievement of the objectives of the strategic plan (2022–2025) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It addresses two core questions: why does WFP need to deliver CCS and what does WFP aim to do in CCS?

9. Once the policy update has been approved, and in line with operational recommendations from audits and evaluations,[6] WFP will develop materials related to the implementation of the update including workforce planning and budgetary considerations, updated guidance and tools for embedding CCS in second-generation country strategic plans (CSPs), and a robust monitoring framework that builds on the corporate results framework.

The global context

This section contextualizes WFP's approach within the latest trends in global capacity strengthening theory and practice.

10. The past decade has seen significant changes in the global discourse on capacity strengthening, reflecting the changing perceptions and approaches of the development and humanitarian community. A more holistic and contextualized approach to capacity strengthening has developed that makes national ownership, sustainability, inclusive and diverse participation and the formulation of local solutions central to any development process.

11. The terminology has also evolved, shifting from *capacity building* to *capacity development*[7] (and more recently to *capacity* strengthening within WFP[8]). This mirrors a broader change in the sector, moving away from a view that capacities need to be built or constructed from scratch towards greater recognition of existing capacities, context and stakeholder priorities.

12. Clear global commitments have placed capacity strengthening at the heart of humanitarian and development action. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Core Humanitarian Standards and commitments from the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain in relation to humanitarian action all promise to strengthen the capacity of local actors. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) also highlights the crucial role of capacity strengthening.[9] The United Nations system has embraced localization, transparency and sustainable financing as new priorities in capacity strengthening. As highlighted in 2017 guidance issued by the United Nations Development Group, capacity strengthening is recognized as both "a means and a primary objective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".[10]

13. In programmatic terms, capacity strengthening has shifted from the layering of separate, one-way transfers of knowledge and expertise to an increasingly systems-based, integrated approach. This change has been informed by sector-specific literature on complexity theory, which proposes different ways of understanding the dynamic

[6] Ibid.

[7] European Parliamentary Research Service. 2017. Briefing note: *Understanding capacity-building/capacity development.*

[8] Capacity strengthening was mainstreamed in the strategic plan for 2014–2017, as explained on page 3 of WFP Office of the Inspector General. 2016. *Internal Audit of WFP's Country Capacity Strengthening.*

[9] United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). 2015. *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.*

[10] United Nations Development Group. 2017. *Capacity Development: UNDAF Companion Guidance.*

relationships between system components and actors.[11] The global discourse recognizes that complementary and interdependent factors determine public service outcomes;[12] navigating these systemic complexities has become central to the design and delivery of capacity strengthening initiatives.

14. Global practice has evolved to approach capacity strengthening as an endogenous process of change in which external agencies support nationally owned change initiatives. Approaches that have gained traction recently include problem-driven iterative adaptation,[13] doing development differently, adaptive management[14] and development entrepreneurship. Capacity strengthening seeks flexible, adaptive solutions that are built on a strong understanding of context,[15] the identification and support of local actors closest to the context,[16] and iterative programming that facilitates complex change.

15. Contextual sensitivity is particularly important in fragile and conflict-affected states, where capacity strengthening can play a critical role in recovery and development. Successful CCS interventions in these scenarios must often navigate the complex and mutually reinforcing relationship between conflict and weak institutions, amongst other contextual challenges.[17] A review of global literature highlights that capacity strengthening in fragile states must effectively engage partners, prioritize "do no harm" principles, work within a realistic understanding of the context, incorporate conflict sensitivity across the programme cycle and adapt as needed.[18]

> In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (DRC), WFP continued to work in 2021 in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in what were once conflict zones to provide integrated support to vulnerable communities. This included revitalizing and restructuring of farmer organizations to strengthen their capacities in marketing, production, processing, and post-harvest management. WFP also supported the Government in DRC by providing evidence-based analyses of its food and nutrition security, and emergency preparedness capacities, with a view to strengthening them and its social protection system.[19]

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[11] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2017. *Systems Approaches to Public Sector Challenges*.

[12] Mansoor, Z. and Williams, M.J. 2018. "Systems Approaches to Public Service Delivery: Lessons from Health, Education, and Infrastructure".

[13] Andrews, M., Pritchett, L., Woolcock, M. 2017. *Building State Capability: Evidence, Analysis, Action*.

[14] Cox, M., and Norrington-Davies, G. 2019. *Technical assistance: New thinking on an old problem*.

[15] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2006. Presentation: Capacity Development: Working towards good practice.

[16] Pritchett L., Woolcock, M. and Andrews, M. 2012. *Looking Like a State: Techniques of Persistent Failure in State Capability for Implementation*.

[17] Other practical challenges to capacity strengthening in these contexts include the difficulty of collecting reliable evidence and the likely absence of long-term government engagement to support the interventions.

[18] United Nations Development Programme and World Bank. 2011. *International support for capacity development in post-conflict states: Reflections from two case studies in West Africa*. United Nations Development Programme. 2015. *Supporting Capacity Development in Conflict and fragile Contexts*. Asian Development Bank. 2021. *Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations and Small Island Developing States Approach*.

[19] Democratic Republic of the Congo Annual Country Report. 2021.

WFP's engagement in country capacity strengthening

This section explains WFP's rationale for engaging in CCS, its vision and related approaches within the broader enabling agenda. It also highlights WFP's comparative advantages when engaging in CCS and links the policy update with other WFP policies and strategies.

The strategic importance of CCS to WFP

16. With over 800 million people food insecure and an additional 270 million facing acute food insecurity, WFP must better leverage its knowledge and expertise to reach more people in need and create long-term change.

17. By strengthening national capacities to address food insecurity and its immediate as well as underlying causes, WFP can reach more beneficiaries and create longer-term, more sustainable impact. National governments are primarily responsible for ensuring food security in their countries; by enabling their efficient and effective work in this area, WFP can better leverage its knowledge and resources and increase its contribution to achieving the global goals of ending hunger, establishing food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture by 2030.

18. Capacity strengthening has long been part of WFP's approach to ending hunger in support of the Millennium Development Goals and the SDGs.[20] The new strategic plan focuses the work of CCS under strategic outcome 4: "National programmes and systems are strengthened". The outcome links to SDG 17 ("Partnerships for the Goals"), which contributes to the ability of countries to achieve SDG 2 ("Zero Hunger") along with the other SDGs.

19. In particular, the strategic plan highlights WFP's role in strengthening national systems related to emergency preparedness and response, food and social protection.[21] CCS is specifically applicable to this system strengthening agenda and constitutes a fundamental component of WFP's contribution to sustainably addressing the underlying drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition.

WFP's vision for country capacity strengthening

20. WFP's current vision for capacity strengthening dates back to the 2009 WFP policy update:

    "WFP's capacity-development vision encompasses steady improvement in the design and implementation of nationally owned sustainable hunger solutions based on conducive food policies and institutions, effective national food assistance organizations and competent individual practitioners."[22]

21. The 2022 policy update retains key elements from this vision, such as the emphasis on increasing national ownership and systemic approaches, while refining the vision to reflect the latest global and corporate discourse and commitments.

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[20] WFP/EB/3/2003/1/Rev.1 4a, WFP/EB.A/2008/5-A/1/Rev.1 (extended to 2013), WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/1 and WFP/EB.2/2016/4-A/1/Rev.2.

[21] WFP/EB.2/2021/4-A/1/Rev.2.

[22] WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B.

22. The updated vision for CCS is as follows:

> "Aligned with national/local priorities, WFP contributes to strengthened national capacities, resulting in effective and impactful in-country systems that sustainably support the food security, nutrition and associated essential needs of their populations."

WFP approaches within the broader enabling agenda

23. WFP CCS interventions are typically characterized by technical support designed to strengthen capacities over the long term, enabling national and local actors to achieve sustainable development results.

24. WFP interventions can also involve capacity substitution, which is technical assistance that temporarily fills a gap in local capacity such as when WFP experts produce deliverables on behalf of national or local actors. This time-bound support can be invaluable in enhancing the ability of the national system to deliver in the short term, provided the following: the support is primarily designed to deliver specific predefined results; in-house expertise is missing yet needed urgently or specialized expertise is required on a temporary basis; the immediate deliverables clearly fit into the broader system with opportunities to connect them to long-term CCS work.

25. WFP programmes often combine CCS and capacity substitution given their complementary nature whereby interventions such as capacity substitution, and even direct implementation, engage a common range of national counterparts and system components.

26. The WFP package of interventions is based on the demands, needs, abilities and priorities of different parts of the system.

In 2018, WFP **Mauritania** created an Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) unit in order to further engage the Government and ensure a progressive handover of ASP functions. This involved a mix of approaches, and at the start in 2018 was more tilted towards capacity substitution, as WFP involved the Government in revision of food monitoring questionnaires but systematized data collection themselves and produced the monthly bulletins. Simultaneously, initial steps were taken to develop the tools required to operate the scheme and to initiate the multi-year process leading to the revision of the existing legal framework and the institutionalization of the scheme. The year closed with undertaking a capacity needs mapping exercise.[23]

By 2021, the balance had shifted more to capacity strengthening, as WFP focused not on the provision of information but on the Government's ability to gather, manage, and utilize it. Datasheets were developed to describe each tool's added value in the early warning system as well as the conditions for their gradual handover to the Government. For the first time, a consolidated Early Warning System methodological note was developed to describe the annual cycle of information production, analysis and validation. All work that feeds into the development of the Early Warning System. However, some substitution still remained, as the research, assessment and monitoring unit still provided direct technical assistance on various tools used by the Government to track the food security and nutrition situation.[24]

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[23] Mauritania Annual Country Report. 2018.

[24] Mauritania Annual Country Report. 2021.

WFP's comparative advantages in CCS

27. **Working across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus:** WFP's ability to work across the nexus through its dual mandate of "saving lives" and "changing lives" presents opportunities to provide CCS beyond the stable contexts with which these interventions are often associated. A report by the Rome-based United Nations agencies in 2016 highlighted how WFP's "ability to operate in volatile situations" enabled the organization to "provide [...] practical capacity strengthening of a range of local first responders, governments and food system actors [...] and [contribute] to policy development."[25]

28. **Operational expertise:** WFP's expertise in analysis (e.g., research, assessment and monitoring), agile programming (e.g., social protection, school-based programming, cash-based programming) and the scaling of operations (e.g., emergency preparedness and response) can be used to develop, refine, adjust and scale national programmes and system components that can appropriately and/or quickly adapt to changing contexts.

29. **Administrative footprint:** Thanks to its unparalleled field presence with 280 field offices, WFP can engage not only with central government but also at other sub-national administrative levels and localities. The 2008 evaluation of the 2004 capacity building policy highlighted that WFP's field presence supports effective capacity strengthening by helping the organization form constructive, long-term relationships with partners on the ground.[26]

30. **Multi-stakeholder engagement:** The breadth of WFP's activities presents opportunities to adopt a systemic approach to CCS that extends beyond the public sector. WFP engages extensively in CCS with private sector stakeholders, community-based organizations, academia and civil society organizations. These relationships help WFP to deliver on its commitment to localization and, when combined, enable a "whole-of-society" approach to CCS (see section A whole-of-society approach).

31. **Convening of stakeholders**: WFP is increasingly adopting the role of a broker for hunger and food security solutions, bringing actors together around common problems in order to catalyse collective, intersectoral responses. The operations evaluation synthesis (2016–2017) highlighted the importance of this work in supporting knowledge transfer and positioning WFP as a convening power.[27] With the aim of strengthening national capacities, WFP often creates high-level and technical groups and committees that represent various sectors and actors to mobilize interest and resources for longer-term engagements, such as when piloting and scaling up national fortification programmes.

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[25] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development and WFP. 2016. Collaboration among the United Nations Rome-based Agencies: Delivering on the 2030 Agenda, p. 3, paragraph 10.

[26] WFP Office of Evaluation. 2008. *Evaluation of WFP's Capacity Development Policy and Operations*.

[27] WFP Office of Evaluation. 2017. *Operations Evaluations Synthesis 2016–2017*.

In **Kenya**, building on the strong partnership with the Government at national and county levels, WFP continued to lay foundations for sustainable and inclusive government-led assistance programming by supporting the formulation of policies and legislative frameworks across different sectors in 2021. For example, WFP brought stakeholders together to start formulating new national policies for school feeding and relief assistance. Several counties also approved new bills and policies addressing the needs of the most vulnerable. The Wajir county established a disaster risk management fund.[28]

In **Angola**, WFP engaged in a broad array of interventions at national and provincial levels to strengthen the capacities of institutions to implement programmes that improve food security and nutrition. WFP sought to generate consensus at the institutional level among various actors on the importance of food fortification, driving the establishment of a Fortification Partners Group at the end of 2021. At the national level, WFP supported the elaboration of two key national food security and nutrition documents, namely the National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy 2030 and the National School Feeding and Health Policy. Both documents are in the process of approval by the Government.[29]

In **Chad**, WFP and government partners established an Integrated Resilience Technologies and Training Centre in Bagarine to bring together multiple stakeholders, such as farmers, development partners, and researchers, to test and disseminate context-specific agricultural technologies and practices. WFP equipped the training centre with greenhouses, essential training materials, and solar-powered irrigation pumps. A preliminary survey showed that over 10 percent of farmers in the local area used technologies tested at the centre. WFP also continued its partnership with the University of N'Djamena to connect its work and the wider food security infrastructure with rigorous research.[30]

Internal alignment with WFP policies, strategies and frameworks

32. The policy update aligns with and builds on relevant WFP policies and strategies approved by the Executive Board since 2009 and outlined in the 2022 compendium of policies.[31] In doing so, it advances corporate thinking, presenting a forward-looking perspective on how CCS connects to the strategic plan and with broader, long-term WFP work.

33. Complementing the 2021 social protection strategy, the policy update underscores the importance of interrelated and systemic programming in support of collective efforts to achieve long-term government goals.[32] It also builds on the 2020 priorities of the school feeding strategy,[33] seeking to strengthen systems and provide technical support that facilitates the transition of WFP programmes to national ownership. It aligns with the 2017 nutrition policy,[34] which underlines the importance of effective, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and with the 2015 policy on South–South and triangular cooperation (SSTC), which promotes national ownership and leadership wherever possible.[35]

34. WFP's corporate documents on emergency preparedness, disaster risk reduction, climate change and resilience, cash-based transfers, supply chain and information technology all inform WFP's approach to addressing people's needs while strengthening country capacities

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[28] WFP Kenya Annual Country Report. 2021.

[29] WFP Angola Annual Country Report. 2021.

[30] WFP Chad Annual Country Report. 2021.

[31] WFP/EB.1/2022/4-D.

[32] Set out in the 2021 strategy for support to social protection.

[33] Adopted by WFP in the 2020 School Feeding Strategy.

[34] WFP/EB.1/2017/4-C.

[35] WFP/EB.A/2015/5-D.

to manage future shocks and risks, build resilience and facilitate the successful transfer of innovative initiatives.[36]

35.   The policy update also aligns with the 2021 protection and accountability policy and the 2022 gender policy, which describe the strengthening of national capacities and local-level engagement as factors that enable WFP to deliver on its commitments to affected populations and gender equity.[37]

36.   Complementary to these corporate efforts, the policy update highlights more possibilities for integrated programming through CCS and capacity substitution interventions and encourages consideration of CCS in various operational contexts, including fragile and less developed settings.

37.   The policy update will in turn inform other WFP policies under development for which CCS is relevant, such as new, upcoming SSTC and CBT policies.

Partnerships and complementarity with other stakeholders

38.   The strategic plan highlights partnerships as a critical enabler for ending hunger and realizing all the SDGs, citing WFP's support to national governments, other United Nations entities, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society and the private sector.[38]

39.   The preparation of second-generation CSPs presents country offices with a unique opportunity to develop multi-year CCS strategies in alignment with national priorities and United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. It also enables WFP to review country portfolios and recognize CCS expertise and resources offered by other actors in different contexts and sectors. This inclusive approach can create mutually reinforcing CCS activities in which different actors consider how to best layer and position their work to achieve complementarity.

40.   WFP continues to lend its expertise and to leverage competencies of other agencies to enable collective achievement.[39] WFP leads collaborative efforts in areas of its strengths, such as when supporting the field reach or logistics expertise of other actors, while taking a secondary role in areas where others have more relevant technical competencies. Through this complementary action, WFP can engage with wider sector and system-strengthening agendas.

41.   In its collaborative endeavours, WFP strives for a clear, effective and efficient task distribution to avoid duplication, adding value to work already undertaken by other actors and filling gaps. Where appropriate, WFP acts as a facilitator such as by brokering SSTC.

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[36] WFP/EB.2/2017/4-B/Rev.1, WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A, WFP/EB.1/2017/4-A/Rev.1, WFP/EB.A/2015/5-C and WFP. 2016. *Corporate Information Technology Strategy*.

[37] WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2 and WFP/EB.1/2022/4-B/Rev.1.

[38] WFP/EB.2/2021/4-A/1/Rev.2, p. 36.

[39] WFP. MOPAN 2017–18 Assessments, p. 46.

In **Jordan**, WFP extended the existing agreement with the Department of Statistics to enhance national capacities to collect and analyse data for vulnerability indicators, including providing training on a small area estimation application for the national household income and expenditure survey. In addition, WFP provided the necessary tools and equipment to improve data storage and support analysis systems. To enhance the disaster risk reduction sector, WFP launched a joint initiative with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to review and update the institutional and legal framework of the disaster risk reduction sector in Jordan.

In **the Niger,** WFP plays a leading role in convening partners around multi-shock adaptive social protection while leveraging key partnerships. For example, WFP, the World Bank and UNICEF worked with the government in the Niger to scale up the government's Social Safety Nets Unit (the Cellule Filets Sociaux) through the World Bank-funded national Adaptive Social Protection programme, working to address the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable households.

A United Nations Strategic Framework for Nutrition was drafted in **Tajikistan** as a result of a consolidated effort of WFP, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and FAO. The framework helps the Government of Tajikistan to sustain and adapt existing nutrition services. It sets the foundation for a joint work plan to coordinate and harmonize nutrition-related activities and strengthen collaboration through complementing the comparative advantages of different actors.

The Government in **Côte d'Ivoire,** together with WFP, hosted a high-level consultation on food fortification in Africa, engaging with the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition and collaborating with the African Union and the West African Health Organization.[40]

WFP's strategic framework for country capacity strengthening

This section explains the basis of WFP's strategic approach to CCS.

Principles of engagement

42.   Building on the principles set out in the 2017 CCS framework, which were recognized in the 2021 decentralized evaluation report as necessary for successful CCS interventions, the following core principles govern WFP's engagement in CCS.[41]

43.   **Partnerships.** Partnerships across the whole of society that maximize the expertise of different actors are critical to effective CCS. No single organization or government can address complex food security and nutrition challenges alone.

44.   **Ownership.** CCS must be rooted in local ownership to create effective change. Stakeholder demand and consensus are critical for facilitating constructive approaches that achieve capacity goals and sustainable results.

45.   **Recognition.** Recognizing existing capacity assets is essential to effective CCS. If interventions do not build on existing capacities, the integrity of development achievements can be compromised and progress can remain rootless and illusionary.

46.   **Time.** CCS requires continuity in engagements and the build-up of mutual trust among partners. Patience and long-term commitment must be balanced with an agile, time-sensitive approach to capitalize on opportunities when they arise.

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[40] Cote d'Ivoire Annual Country Report. 2021.

[41] These principles are subject to the corporate principles outlined in the WFP strategic plan (2022–2025) and to the humanitarian principles governing WFP's engagements. In particular, WFP's CCS engagement in fragile and conflict contexts carefully balances CCS objectives with humanitarian principles. Engagement with state and non-state actors can help to navigate these challenges and develop context-appropriate CCS agendas.

47. **Adaptability.** CCS must be flexible and adaptive in order to provide rapid and reliable responses in the face of a complex and increasingly uncertain future.

48. **Learning.** Effective CCS that is context-specific and responds to needs requires systemic, collective and incremental learning from both failure and success.

A whole-of-society approach

49. In line with the Grand Bargain and as part of its localization agenda, WFP has adopted a whole-of-society approach that recognizes the diverse and crucial roles of government and non-government actors. The approach includes government, civil society, private sector and community representation.[42] Their engagement in designing, delivering and benefiting from food security and nutrition programmes and systems is critical to achieving sustainable change and national development objectives.

50. The whole-of-society approach uses multi-stakeholder engagements with representatives from across society in order to address problems and deliver solutions from different perspectives. It discourages a siloed approach to partnerships and supports the all-encompassing engagement of different actors.

WFP's partnership with the **Burundi Red Cross** (BRC) continued to strengthen the BRC's progress towards becoming an independent institution that develops and implements anticipatory actions ahead of disasters. The partnership entailed support to the BRC and communities developing anticipatory action plans, and to technical partners developing alert triggers and thresholds that have been compiled in draft Standard Operating Procedures for early action. Following these enhancements, the Burundi Red Cross-led anticipatory action system was triggered in 2021, resulting in over 12,000 people at-risk of further flooding of the rising Lake Tanganyika receiving anticipatory cash and enabling them to take preventive measures such as consolidating their houses, securing their goods, or moving.

Pathways for capacity change

51. WFP takes a systemic view of local and national capacities for CCS, identifying complementarities and interdependencies across five different pathways in order to foster transformative capacity change that enhances programmes and systems. The pathways are policy and legislation; institutional effectiveness and accountability; strategic planning and financing; programme design and delivery; and engagement of non-government actors.

52. The pathways have been informed by the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)[43] school feeding tool; WFP has partnered with the World Bank and the Partnership for Child Development to implement the SABER tool under the leadership of governments.

53. Since 2017, WFP has tested the pathways and confirmed their suitability for a range of sectors relevant to the achievement of zero hunger including emergency preparedness and response, supply chain, social protection, nutrition and resilience.

54. The pathways provide a robust framework for assessing existing capacities and in-country priority areas for improvement, planning coherent CCS support and monitoring the performance of local actors and development outcomes at the system level.

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[42] Civil society encompasses the following non-government groups, whether formally or informally incorporated: national and local NGOs; national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies; community-based organizations; faith-based groups; national academia and specialist organizations; and local media (traditional and social).

[43] WFP, World Bank Group and the Partnership for Child Development. 2014. *SABER School Feeding: Towards Nationally Owned School Feeding Programmes*.

55. The pathways are not intended to be prescriptive; they are points of departure for CCS programming that can be tailored in collaboration with local stakeholders to their specific needs.

Box: Case Study

[Placeholder: content will be included in final submission]

Domains for intervention

56. Within each of the five pathways, capacity change can occur at the level of the individual, organization or enabling environment. In WFP's CCS framework, these are known as the three domains. They represent nested levels in society through which WFP engages to deliver its CCS interventions:

➤ The **enabling environment** refers to the "rules of the game" for how a society operates including its laws, policies, accepted behaviours and interactions between and among organizations and individuals across the whole-of-society.

➤ The **organizational domain** encompasses the internal policies, structures, systems, strategies, procedures and resources that allow an organization to operate and deliver on its mandate and provide – in conjunction with the broader enabling environment – the conditions that empower individuals to work together to achieve goals.

➤ The **individual domain** refers to the skills, knowledge and attitudes which, together with the enabling environment and organizational capacity, determine the behaviour and performance of people.[44]

57. The three domains are interdependent and mutually reinforcing – the strength of each one depends on and determines the strength of the others. For example, knowledge can be fostered at the individual level through on-the-job coaching, stimulated at the organizational level through a knowledge management system and supported in the enabling environment through legislation on access to information.

58. While the five pathways for capacity change provide the framework for determining which areas of the system require strengthening, the three domains help pinpoint the nature of capacity gaps and potential interventions, identifying problems and solutions.

59. Most CCS initiatives are likely to require activity in more than one domain in order to foster sustainable social change.

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[44] For the purposes of this policy, the individual domain refers to people in society who contribute to achieving zero hunger through work-related roles. It does not include individual citizens or members of households who improve their own food security and nutrition status, nor the development of WFP personnel's own internal capabilities.

In **Peru**, a rice fortification law that promotes consumption of fortified rice was approved, and WFP's advocacy and technical assistance successfully supported and accompanied this remarkable milestone for the fight against anaemia in the country.[45] This law sets an outstanding example for bottom-up policymaking where a regional government with WFP's active capacity strengthening investment assumed a leading role to transform a local policy into a national tool to achieve Zero Hunger (enabling domain).

In 2021, WFP facilitated capacity strengthening initiatives involving 220,000 individuals from national stakeholder organizations and provided seconded expertise to nearly 500 national institutions such as national statistical committees, national disaster management agencies, and ministries of education, for example in Armenia, Kenya, India, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste (organizational and individual domains).

Portfolio of work

60. Based on its mandate as well as context and needs, WFP offers CCS support in key technical and functional areas, in line with the systems strengthening approach outlined in the Strategic Plan (2022–2025), notably in the areas of social protection, emergency preparedness and response and food systems. Building on its experience and positive results, the organization continues to engage its CCS efforts also in areas such as nutrition, school-based programmes, research/assessment/monitoring, supply chain and cash-based programming. While this policy update aims to support the integration of CCS across all relevant technical and functional areas, each WFP technical unit is the custodian of its respective area.

The wide reach of CCS interventions is illustrated across different regions and areas of engagement.

- In **Colombia**, WFP has capitalized on the whole-of-society approach to strengthen institutional effectiveness and accountability. WFP Colombia launched the Innovation for Nutrition agenda, working with the Government to reset the nutrition agenda and connect high-level decision makers to communities, the private sector and academia.

- In the **Philippines**, WFP has strengthened government capacity to respond in the aftermath of natural disasters by supporting the programme design and delivery of mechanized food packing systems that accelerate response times and require fewer human resources. The Government now runs the systems autonomously.

- Across **southern Africa**, WFP has supported the capacities of national vulnerability assessment committees, which provide gender-sensitive data analyses that inform measures to mitigate the impact of climate change on livelihoods.[46]

61. Once the policy update has been approved, WFP will produce materials related to its implementation such as guidance on embedding CCS in second-generation CSPs. These materials will also explore WFP's CCS offer across different technical and functional areas in greater depth.

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[45] WFP Peru Annual Country Report. 2021.

[46] WFP. 2019. Capacity Strengthening: Beyond the APR 2018 series.

Acronyms

ASP	Adaptive Social Protection
BRC	Burundi Red Cross
CCS	country capacity strengthening
CSP	country strategic plan
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
NGO	non-governmental organization
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSTC	South–South and triangular cooperation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund