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Management response to the recommendations from the summary report on the synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP's performance measurement and monitoring from centralized and decentralized evaluations (2018–2021)

Background

1. This document presents the WFP management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the synthesis of evidence and lessons from centralized and decentralized evaluations of WFP's performance measurement and monitoring conducted between 2018 and 2021.
2. Its purpose is to contribute to WFP's global and regional evidence base and to support key corporate decision making about performance measurement and monitoring in the short and medium term.
3. The synthesis was prepared in 2022 for consideration by the Executive Board at its 2023 first regular session.
4. The synthesis makes four recommendations focusing on strengthening the resourcing and use of the monitoring function as an integral component of the programme cycle in support of learning objectives; increasing the use of qualitative data collection, analysis and reporting and providing enhanced support to improve country office monitoring systems, as well as sub-recommendations on how each overall recommendation can be implemented. In some instances, the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division (RAM) has agreed to a recommendation while proposing a different action lead or timeline so as to ensure consistency among actions and to facilitate implementation.

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5. The synthesis evaluation notes, and RAM agrees, that there are opportunities to improve resourcing of the monitoring function and making greater use of monitoring data for learning and programme adaptation beyond their use for reporting. Further, the synthesis provides strong evidence of a desire and need at both the country and corporate levels to expand qualitative data collection, analysis and reporting, which mirrors ongoing workstreams within RAM and will remain a priority area. Importantly, the synthesis acknowledges that WFP is constantly working to improve its performance management and monitoring systems and that steps have been and are being taken to address many of the weaknesses identified in the evaluations reviewed.
6. In conclusion, WFP agrees with all evaluation recommendations and sub-recommendations, and this response sets out the actions that it plans to implement. Notably, in line with the WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025 and its renewed focus on robust, timely and relevant evidence throughout the project cycle, RAM will continue to advocate increased resourcing for the monitoring function at all levels using data from the vulnerability assessment and mapping (VAM) and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) planning and budgeting tool. RAM will also continue efforts to ensure uptake and learning on data quality, completeness and use through enhancing staff capacity and systems to enable strengthened performance measurement and accountability to the people that WFP serves.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUMMARY REPORT ON THE SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE AND LESSONS ON WFP'S PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND MONITORING FROM CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS (2018-2021)					
Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office (with supporting offices and units in brackets)	Management response	Actions to be taken	Action lead office (with supporting offices and units in brackets)	Action deadline
<p>Priority: High Deadline: June 2024 Recommendation 1: Strengthen the resourcing and use of the monitoring function as an integral component of the programme cycle in support of learning objectives.</p>	RAM (Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division (PRO); country directors and country office heads of programmes)	Agreed	Actions detailed below in response to the sub-recommendations.	RAM (PRO; country directors and country office heads of programmes, Corporate Planning and Performance Division (CPP))	June 2024
<p>1.1. Strengthen communication and advocacy, including with regional and country directors, emphasizing that an effective and adequately resourced monitoring function is an integral part of the programme cycle. Advocate the use of the monitoring function not only for accountability but also in providing fundamental support for learning and programme or operational adjustments. Efforts should consider the importance of country office-level mechanisms for reflection with decision leaders, drawing from best practices, such as regular debriefing meetings, and acting on the results of analysis from the vulnerability analysis and mapping and monitoring and evaluation planning and budgeting tool. (Strategic)</p> <p>Priority: High <i>(Starting June 2023, in line with design, approval and implementation of second-generation country strategic plan (CSP))</i></p>	RAM (regional directors and country directors; Programme Cycle Management Unit (PRO-M); Field Monitoring Service (RAM-M); regional monitoring advisors)	Agreed	Based on the annual data from the VAM and M&E evidence planning and budgeting (EPB) tool RAM will continue to advocate increased resourcing for the monitoring function at all levels. These efforts will aim to ensure increased knowledge and use of the annual EPB data among country office managers. This work will be complemented by an “evidence for leaders” advocacy campaign, which will facilitate in-depth discussion and exchange of best practices related to monitoring and its resourcing during regional bureau meetings attended by country office senior management.	RAM (Communications, Advocacy and Marketing Division (CAM), regional directors and country directors; PRO-M; RAM-M; regional monitoring advisors)	June 2024

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<p>1.2 Consolidating and expanding on existing initiatives, take further steps to improve the visibility and use of monitoring data in the programme cycle. This may include enhancing existing templates, dashboards and guidance, and encouraging evaluations to capture lessons learned on monitoring, when appropriate. WFP should also track the use of published guidance relating to monitoring and performance measurement in order to examine whether the use of data for learning objectives has improved. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: High (June 2024)</p>	RAM-M (regional monitoring advisors; country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; Office of Evaluation (OEV))	Agreed	<p>RAM-M will customize and make available a corporate solution for case management with regard to process monitoring findings. Using the solution that is used for beneficiary feedback mechanisms, this will create synergies and enable triangulation of data, with the aim of more informed decision making and programme cycle adjustments.</p> <p>RAM-M will also standardize and automate the use of outcome monitoring data for decision making by rolling out the Survey Designer across country offices.</p> <p>RAM will continue to ensure uptake and learning on data usage through a survey . of country offices and regional bureaux conducted twice yearly. This survey seeks to understand how monitoring guidelines have been communicated by regional bureaux and implemented by country office and field office staff and the support that they need to enable them to further adapt and operationalize the guidance.</p>	RAM-M (regional monitoring advisors; country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; OEV)	June 2024
<p>Priority: High Deadline: February 2024 Recommendation 2: Increase the use of qualitative data collection, analysis and reporting to better capture and enhance understanding of and learning from WFP's achievements.</p>	RAM (CPP)	Agreed	Actions detailed below in response to the sub-recommendations.	RAM (CPP)	February 2024

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<p>2.1 WFP should explore how the evidence gathered through qualitative data collection and analysis approaches – including, but not limited to, data on cross-cutting issues – can be better incorporated into corporate reporting and can better complement evidence gathered through more quantitative approaches, and should gather and share examples of instances where this is effectively achieved. (Strategic)</p> <p>Priority: High (February 2024)</p>	RAM (CPP, convenors and relevant members of the qualitative evidence generation task force)	Agreed	<p>CPP will:</p> <p>a) Review, with RAM support, existing qualitative data collection and analysis approaches and plans in order to define what can be considered for integration in corporate reports;</p> <p>b) Explore, with RAM support, how improved qualitative data available can be incorporated into corporate reporting and develop plans to integrate it in the production of future corporate reports.</p>	CPP (RAM, convenors and relevant members of the qualitative evidence generation task force)	February 2024
<p>2.2 Programme and policy monitoring and evaluation leads should build on current efforts in results measurement, including through qualitative evidence generation approaches, to facilitate learning at the country level. Such efforts should build on the tools and guidance that have been developed by the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division. High priority areas include gender, country capacity strengthening and resilience building. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: Medium (Starting June 2023, in line with design, approval and implementation of second-generation CSP)</p>	Monitoring and evaluation leads in the Programme and Policy Development Department (PD) and convenors of the qualitative evidence generation task force (RAM-M, CPP)	Agreed	PD monitoring teams will support and strengthen the use of qualitative results for learning and accountability across programmatic units. This will be done by identifying programmatic evidence gaps and supporting country office in their efforts to fill these evidence gaps with qualitative data and integrate qualitative results into their programmatic evidence bases.	PRO (RAM-M, Resilience and Food Systems Service, Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service, Gender Office)	February 2024

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<p>Priority: High Deadline: January 2024 Recommendation 3: Provide enhanced support for improving country office monitoring systems based on the main threats to credibility identified in the evaluation synthesis.</p>	RAM (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation, PD policy and programme leads)	Agreed	Actions detailed below in response to the sub-recommendations.	RAM (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation, PD policy and programme leads)	January 2024
<p>3.1 <i>Frameworks</i>: Regional bureaux should work with country offices to ensure that the indicators in the monitoring, review and evaluation plan are selected based on the logical framework and are relevant for measuring programme objectives and that the plan is implemented. This may include providing technical support on indicators, assumptions and targets, or the development of additional resource documents and training. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: High (June 2023, in line with design, approval and implementation of second-generation CSP)</p>	Regional monitoring advisors (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation)	Agreed	<p>The implementation of WFP's new corporate results framework will continue to be accompanied by technical support and capacity strengthening on all revised and new indicators to ensure that the purpose of the indicator as well as data collection and analysis methods are well understood and used.</p> <p>As part of alignment with the new corporate results framework a review of country office logframes and monitoring, review and evaluation plans will be conducted at headquarters and regional bureaux to ensure that the corporate indicators selected are relevant and accurate.</p>	Regional monitoring advisors (RAM, PD policy and programme leads, country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation)	June 2023

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<p>3.2 <i>Data gaps</i>: WFP should document the use, and distil the learning from implementation, of existing guidance on addressing the gaps in the monitoring data used for setting baselines and the gaps in routine monitoring data collection activities. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: High <i>(January 2024)</i></p>	RAM-M (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation with country office annual country report (ACR) focal points)	Agreed	<p>RAM will follow-up with regional bureaux and country offices on the uptake and use of existing guidance (e.g., the corporate results framework indicator compendium and monitoring standard operating procedures) through an annual review of available baseline and other data in CSP logframes in the country office tool for managing effectively (COMET).</p> <p>Gaps in data availability and knowledge of existing guidance will be addressed through refresher training to further build field staff capacity with regard to mandatory monitoring requirements.</p>	RAM-M and regional monitoring advisors (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation)	June 2023
<p>3.3 <i>Data quality</i>: WFP should document the use and distil the learning from implementation of existing guidance on data quality issues such as data consistency among countries and interventions, the frequency of data collection and the double counting of beneficiaries. (Strategic)</p> <p>Priority: High <i>(January 2024)</i></p>	RAM-M (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; COMET focal points)	Agreed	<p>RAM-M will seek to understand the extent to which corporate data quality guidance has been communicated by regional bureaux and implemented by country office and field office staff and what further support is needed to operationalize it.</p> <p>Building on the data quality guidance, RAM-M will continue to train staff in the use and tracking of data quality preventive and detective measures and controls.</p>	RAM-M (regional monitoring advisors, country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; COMET focal points)	January 2024

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<p>3.4 <i>Data disaggregation</i>: WFP should take steps to document and distil the learning from the use of data disaggregation guidelines and aim to close any remaining gaps through the development of additional guidance or training. This may include monitoring the implementation of the guidance in the corporate results framework for 2022-2025 and the associated indicator compendium, minimum reporting requirements and the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division guidance note on data stratification and disaggregation. (Strategic)</p> <p>Priority: Medium <i>(January 2024)</i></p>	RAM (CPP; PD policy and programme leads; monitoring and evaluation with country office ACR focal points)	Agreed	<p>As part of the country office and regional bureau survey, conducted twice a year, RAM-M will seek to understand the extent to which the RAM data stratification and disaggregation guidance note has been communicated by regional bureaux and implemented by country office and field office staff, as well as what further support they need to enable them to adapt and operationalize the guidance.</p> <p>In terms of communication and training, RAM will continue to sensitize on this guidance and share best practices.</p>	RAM (CPP; PD policy and programme leads, monitoring and evaluation with country office ACR focal points)	January 2024

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<p>Priority: High Deadline: January 2024 Recommendation 4: Provide enhanced support for improving country office monitoring systems based on the enabling factors identified in this synthesis.</p>	RAM (Country Capacity Strengthening Unit (PRO-TC), regional bureau and country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation, Technology Division (TEC), Innovation and Knowledge Management Division (INK), regional monitoring advisors, PD policy and programme leads)	Agreed	Actions detailed below as per the sub-recommendations.	RAM (PRO-TC, regional bureaux and country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation, TEC, INK, regional monitoring advisors, PD policy and programme leads)	January 2024
<p>4.1 <i>Government collaboration</i>: Building on existing efforts, guidance and support should be made available to country offices for identifying ways to improve government relationships and build the capacity of government monitoring systems. This may include approaches such as joint monitoring or the inclusion of data collection in an existing government system. (Strategic)</p> <p>Priority: High (July 2024)</p>	RAM-M and PRO-TC (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; regional monitoring advisors)	Agreed	WFP will map and assess existing guidance on strengthening national monitoring capacity and, as relevant, adapt corporate guidance and develop more specific materials, aligned with WFP's country capacity strengthening policy update.	RAM-M and PRO-TC (country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; regional monitoring advisors)	July 2024

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<p>4.2 <i>Financial and staff resources</i>: At the headquarters and regional levels, strengthen leadership's use of results and analysis from the vulnerability analysis and mapping and monitoring and evaluation planning and budgeting tool in advocating the allocation of adequate and more consistent human and financial resources to monitoring at the country office level. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: Medium <i>(Starting June 2023, in line with design, approval and implementation of second-generation CSP)</i></p>	RAM-M (regional directors; regional monitoring advisors; country directors)	Agreed	<p>RAM-M will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ support country offices by ensuring that there are adequate levels of budgeting and staffing for evidence generation activities for new CSPs in the VAM and M&E planning and budgeting tool during the CSP review process (the strategic programme review process and the electronic programme review process); ➤ develop and make available analytical reports on the results of EPB data and discuss and present results through region specific webinars with country office, regional bureau and headquarters colleagues; and ➤ strengthen regional bureau monitoring capacity to ensure the uptake and use of results from the VAM and M&E EPB tool at the regional and country levels. 	RAM-M (regional directors; regional monitoring advisors; country directors)	January 2024

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<p>4.3 <i>Technology</i>: Relevant headquarters divisions and units should continue to support digital data collection and survey platforms such as the Codebook and Survey Designer, focusing on improving data quality and timeliness. The Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division should also continue to provide support for improving inclusiveness in remote monitoring data collection. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: High (January 2024)</p>	RAM (TEC; regional bureau and country office heads of programme and monitoring and evaluation)	Agreed	<p>RAM is engaging headquarters counterparts in the rollout of the Codebook, Survey Designer and other RAM information management ecosystem products.</p> <p>RAM will continue to collaborate with headquarters units to select and integrate standardized indicator methodologies in the Codebook and Survey Designer, including in particular process monitoring indicators.</p> <p>RAM will develop an automated solution for registering and following up on process monitoring findings for corrective action by linking process monitoring data collection tools (e.g.. MODA) with a corporate case management solution (SugarCRM).</p> <p>RAM will continue to support efforts to improve inclusiveness in remote monitoring data collection. For example, RAM will continue to advocate individual level data collection (e.g., reduced coping strategy index, nutrition indicators) and the inclusion of women in remote monitoring surveys.</p>	RAM (TEC; regional bureaux, country office heads of programmes and monitoring and evaluation; PD policy and programme leads)	January 2024

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<p>4.4 <i>Knowledge management</i>: Regional bureaux should work with country offices to develop a plan for knowledge management that incorporates monitoring data and analysis, and templates that can be adapted by country offices, with a focus on supporting the use of monitoring data in decision making. See recommendation 1. (Operational)</p> <p>Priority: High (January 2024)</p>	Regional bureau knowledge management focal points (INK; regional monitoring advisors, PD policy and programme leads)	Agreed	<p>The knowledge for action working group (regional bureau knowledge management focal points and INK) will convene monthly to exchange good practices in knowledge management and formulate an action plan for the first and second quarters of 2023 with concrete activities to strengthen knowledge management. This will include the management of monitoring data such as by making available report and visualization templates.</p> <p>The RAM training and knowledge management Hub will promote improved knowledge management by outlining processes that country offices can use to share monitoring reports with regional bureaux and headquarters.</p>	INK (Regional bureau knowledge management units, RAM, regional monitoring advisors, PD policy and programme leads)	January 2024

Acronyms

ACR	annual country report
CAM	Communications, Advocacy and Marketing Division
COMET	country office tool for managing effectively
CPP	Corporate Planning and Performance Division
CSP	country strategic plan
EPB	evidence planning and budgeting
INK	Innovation and Knowledge Management Division
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
OEV	Office of Evaluation
PD	Programme and Policy Development Department
PRO	Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division
PRO-M	Programme Cycle Management Unit
PRO-TC	Country Capacity Strengthening Unit
RAM	Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division
RAM-M	Field Monitoring Service
TEC	Technology Division
VAM	vulnerability assessment and mapping