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برنامج الأغذية العالمي

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## Security report

### Introduction

1. Although restrictions introduced in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic eased in 2022, humanitarian needs rose worldwide, driven by an increase in conflict and violence. WFP response capacities were stretched by the outbreak of war in Ukraine and worsening insecurity in the Sahel particularly in Burkina Faso, in addition to crises in Haiti, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Greater access constraints and increasing security risks required adaptability and resilience.
2. WFP scaled up its operations to reach 160 million beneficiaries in 2022, a 25 percent increase from 2021. As demand for humanitarian support grew, WFP security services<sup>1</sup> responded ever more rapidly and with augmented capacity in locations affected by the complex drivers of hunger. As WFP scaled up its humanitarian operations in locations including Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the Sahel, it faced increasing challenges. Deteriorating security environments in urban settings added complexity to the issues encountered in remote field locations.
3. According to United Nations assessments, the global security environment in 2022 was characterized by heightened levels of threat to humanitarian organizations including WFP. The role of non-state armed actors continued to grow. Violent extremism expanded, especially in west, central and eastern Africa, triggering record population displacements, undermining humanitarian conditions and weakening resilience.
4. In this context, WFP Security was key to the timely delivery of WFP programmes, collaborating with partners and assisting personnel in the most affected countries. Security also enabled WFP to reach beneficiaries while reducing disruption to humanitarian operations. However, by the end of 2022, global economic conditions marked by high

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, "security services" or "WFP security services" refer to the security activities and personnel of WFP collectively. The term "Security Division" refers to the headquarters-based unit that provides guidance and support for field operations.

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inflation rates and rising energy and food prices further exposed WFP personnel, cooperating partners and contractors to high levels of insecurity.

5. Through inter-agency cooperation, the Security Division has continued to play a significant role within the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS), obtaining WFP-relevant regulatory frameworks to guide and support operations and security risk management decision making.

## Highlights from 2022

### Staffing:

- The global security workforce comprised 518 employees, an increase of 16 percent from 2021.
- 71 percent were national personnel.
- 55 percent of the personnel operated in areas designated as emergencies.

## Incidents

6. In 2022, the number of safety and security incidents affecting WFP personnel, cooperating partners and contractors providing services for WFP fell marginally by 0.6 percent from 2021 to 1,736 incidents.<sup>2</sup> However, compared to 2020, the number of incidents represents an increase of over 40 percent. Sixty-two percent of incidents directly involved WFP personnel, assets or operations. Of the total number of incidents, 20 percent (345) involved WFP with cooperating partners and contractors, whereas 18 percent (313) affected cooperating partners or contractors while they were performing duties on behalf of WFP. No WFP personnel lost their lives in acts of violence or work-related security incidents during the year.
7. Key trends and figures include the following:
  - Eighteen fatalities were recorded, including two among WFP personnel in two separate non-work-related road safety incidents. Four fatalities were recorded among WFP dependents.
  - Crime remains the most common threat for WFP globally. Hazards – predominantly road safety incidents – accounted for half of the deaths and serious injuries.
  - The share of incidents involving violence or the threat thereof rose from 26 percent in 2021 to 31 percent.
  - An increasing share of security incidents affected WFP partners.
  - Nineteen abductions involving 61 personnel of WFP, cooperating partners and contractors were reported; this is a 52 percent increase from the number of abductions in 2021. The majority of those involved (49) were national staff. Two WFP dependents were abducted in 2022. The Regional Bureau for Western Africa recorded the highest number of abductions, with Burkina Faso and Cameroon accounting for six cases each.
  - Eighty percent (1,388) of the security incidents recorded in 2022 affected nationally recruited personnel working for WFP, cooperating partners or contractors.

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<sup>2</sup> Incidents are related to WFP programming and do not include any incidents that affected cooperating partners and contractors independently from WFP operations.

- Seventy-three percent of all security incidents impacting WFP involved male personnel; female personnel were affected in 27 percent of the cases, for a total of 180 incidents (compared to 149 in 2021). Three female WFP staff members reported sexual assaults (in Guatemala, Lesotho and the Sudan). Since 2018, there has been a steady increase in incidents affecting female WFP personnel, a trend which the Security Division is addressing through an increased focus on awareness raising, pre-deployment training and women's security awareness training.

### Major incident trends

8. The share of incidents involving violence or the threat thereof rose sharply in 2022, from 26 percent in the previous reporting period to 31 percent. The number of incidents resulting in the abduction, serious injury or death of personnel increased by 5 percent compared to 2021, with 61 incidents involving 112 WFP personnel, their dependents, employees of cooperating partners or contractors. Approximately 60 percent of incidents that had a major impact on WFP personnel and their dependents were security incidents involving violence; this rate increased to 85 percent for WFP partners and contractors.

### By threat

9. Overall, trends in security threats are unchanged from previous reporting periods: over half of reported incidents are rooted in crime (57 percent) and more than a quarter stem from hazards in the operating environment (28 percent). The number of **criminal incidents** dropped slightly compared to 2021 (a reduction of 47 incidents). Crime affected 461 personnel working for WFP, cooperating partners or contractors and 510 WFP assets. Sixty-one incidents resulted in death, severe injury or abduction, representing a 55 percent increase compared to 2021, with a peak in **abductions**, from 15 in 2021 to 19 in 2022. Thefts, burglary, harassment and robbery accounted for half the incidents. Harassment, intimidation and the arrest of WFP personnel were on the rise, as well as threats of violence against WFP personnel and hostile surveillance. The countries<sup>3</sup> most affected by criminal incidents include Haiti, the Sudan, Uganda, Afghanistan, Cameroon and South Sudan. The share of incidents related to **armed conflict** decreased from 12 to 8 percent of the total amount of incidents recorded in 2022.
10. The impact of civil unrest remained low even though the increased prices for fuel, fertilizer and food linked to the conflict in Ukraine created turmoil in many countries. In Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, crowds targeted United Nations/WFP assets and premises. Food shortages amid a wave of protests in Haiti prompted the looting of WFP warehouses. The countries with the highest number of civil unrest incidents included the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria, the Sudan and Yemen. Incidents linked to **extremism and terrorism** remained low at 33, or 2 percent of the total number of incidents. Twenty-seven of these incidents occurred in West Africa, which saw an expansion of terrorist activity in the Central Sahel, coastal states and the Lake Chad Basin area. Incidents in the **hazards** category increased from 22 percent to 28 percent in 2022. Hazards accounted for 60 percent of deaths and serious injuries. The countries most affected included South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda. In response to this, the Security Division and the Occupational Safety and Health Unit<sup>4</sup> worked together to visit field locations to prevent a recurrence of hazard incidents. Measures to upgrade vehicle tracking systems

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<sup>3</sup> WFP incidents described in this report are those that occurred within the areas of responsibility of WFP country offices.

<sup>4</sup> The Occupational Safety and Health Unit aims to reduce workplace injuries and improve the physical and mental well-being of personnel by establishing workplace safety and health rights and ensuring that personnel receive occupational safety and health training and support. Workplaces include WFP offices, warehouses, workshops, garages, port and aviation operations, clinics, guesthouses, construction sites, logistic hubs and fuel storage areas.

and speed-control tools were implemented. Awareness campaigns were also conducted for WFP personnel to prevent occupational safety and health accidents.

### By region

11. Eastern Africa remained the region with the highest number of incidents in 2022, accounting for 39 percent of the total, notably due to the high number of incidents in South Sudan alone (305). Western Africa and the Sahel together accounted for 17 percent of all incidents. Significant decreases in the number of incidents in Cameroon (down 66 percent compared to 2021) and the Central African Republic (down 51 percent) were offset by a rise in incidents in Chad due to floods during the rainy season (up 1.2 percent). Two countries with open conflicts saw sharp increases in incidents, namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo (up 54 percent) and Mozambique (up 56 percent). Meanwhile the growing prevalence of crime in Madagascar resulted in a 72 percent increase in incidents from 2021.
12. Starting from a low base, the Latin America and the Caribbean region recorded an 83 percent increase in incidents from 2021 due to a rise in violence in Haiti and Colombia. In the Asia and the Pacific region, there was a slight decrease in incidents; although incidents increased in Myanmar by 10 percent, Afghanistan and Pakistan saw half the number of recorded incidents as in 2021.
13. Incidents in the Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe region dropped by 27 percent from 2021, with decreases of 46 percent in Yemen and 43 percent in Lebanon. Eastern Africa was the region with the highest number of road safety incidents, accounting for 43 percent of these, with South Sudan, the Sudan and Ethiopia most affected.

### Country operational focus

**Afghanistan:** The situation in Afghanistan has been marked by an accelerated food crisis that began at the end of 2021, several months after the Taliban takeover, and worsened in 2022. The United Nations and its partners launched an appeal for over USD 5 billion in January 2022 as Afghanistan faced the highest prevalence of insufficient food consumption in the world, exacerbated by drought. While the level of violence in 2022 was lower than in previous years, operations were affected by criminal activities including looting and by pressure put on humanitarian actors. Throughout the year, Security supported the scale-up of operations through road security assessments, access negotiations and the securing of areas for pre-positioning. As a result, by the end of 2022 the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service was able to operate in 27 destinations including 23 domestic destinations.

**Burkina Faso:** The security and humanitarian conditions worsened throughout the country after the January 2022 coup d'état that toppled President Kaboré. The number of internally displaced persons reached over 10 percent of the population, while non-state armed groups expanded control in western, central and eastern regions. New tactics deployed by non-state armed groups involved encircling urban centres in the north and eastern regions, isolating the population by cutting off access to infrastructure and communication. This led to situations of famine, in violation of Security Council resolution 2417 (2018). In several instances, the affected communities reported having to resort to "eating tree leaves" to survive. Non-state armed groups also executed civilians who attempted to flee besieged cities. In July 2022, the Security Division supported the creation of a lifeline for the city of Djibo (in Soum province) using helicopters, working closely with national authorities to select helicopter landing zones. The division also developed a tailored concept of operations, conducted pre-mission security briefings and monitored operations. Facing a critical security situation, the authorities grew less cooperative towards United Nations entities and insisted on controlling food distribution areas and prioritization; they also requested that a government representative join helicopter missions. The task of cultivating trust within such a complex political landscape required

constant confidence-building efforts involving field security personnel. Adaptation and mitigation measures were introduced to overcome constraints and tensions with national actors. Based on the outcome of the security risk management process in December, the Secretary-General through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security decided to impose temporary restrictions on eligible family members of international UNSMS personnel in the Centre Region, including Ouagadougou. To overcome access constraints including those posed by national authorities or non-state armed groups on humanitarian aid, WFP often resorted to using commercial contractors as primary agents for delivery.

**Mali:** The risks of collateral damage affecting the civilian population in Mali and other Sahel countries increased. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project estimated that 50 percent of military operations in Mali in 2022 targeted civilians. Operations were also impacted by geopolitical developments and shifts in alliances in Mali and Burkina Faso, which distanced themselves from Western allies. The decrease in aerial surveillance and air strikes following the exit of the French Operation Barkhane benefited non-state armed groups, which made further territorial inroads in the Liptako-Gourma region. Further insecurity and humanitarian needs arose from inter-jihadist clashes, which exacerbated access challenges. In the Niger, WFP operations continued to be challenged by a complex threat environment characterized by active jihadist groups on the western and southern borders. Access constraints stemmed from insecurity as well as Government-imposed restrictions.

**The Lake Chad Basin:** The Boko Haram insurgency continued to engulf northeast Nigeria as well as border regions with neighbouring countries, namely Logone-et-Chari, Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga in Cameroon's Far North; the Diffa region of south-eastern Niger; and the Lac region of Chad. In 2022, the Islamic State West Africa Province consolidated territory and established an operational footprint in central Nigeria, further south of its traditional area of influence. Across the Sahel, the growing scarcity of key sources of livelihood compounded by climate change also fuelled increasing population displacements. This further altered local coping mechanisms, aggravating patterns of conflict and violence.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo:** Security in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo deteriorated in 2022. The *Mouvement du 23 mars* (M23) rebellion continued to expand in North Kivu and attempted to cut off supply routes used by national forces. While conditions on the ground worsened, the Security team reinforced its capacities to support relief aid and facilitated access negotiations with both the government armed forces and M23. To manage risk, humanitarian aid modalities were adjusted with the increased use of cash-based transfers in place of general food distributions. The Security team worked with other members of the United Nations country team to review evacuation plans, which were successfully used during the evacuation and relocation of non-essential personnel in November 2022, when M23 encircled Goma and staff members with non-critical functions were relocated.

**Haiti:** In Haiti, WFP has focused on scaling up operations and crisis management following the breakdown of law and order in September 2022, which was characterized by the takeover of gangs and organized crime. Security worked to create conducive conditions for WFP to stay and deliver. Following the reinforcement of the security unit, contingency and evacuations plans were drawn up and plans to stay and deliver succeeded in minimizing operational disruptions. Only two of the five subregional offices (Gonaïves and Les Cayes) were affected by looting and civil unrest and were forced to close after September. In October, the Security Division supported the decision-making process that led to the introduction of risk avoidance measures including alternative work modalities, and it prepared contingency plans. WFP security support was instrumental in minimizing delays and interruption in programme delivery in a context of increasing security and safety risks for personnel and assets.

**Myanmar:** Several regions continued to see active conflict between the military regime and resistance movements. While no direct attack was registered, the risk of collateral damage during crossfires, arson attacks or bomb attacks remained high. The military continued to

exercise strict control over all United Nations and partner activities to ensure that no supplies could reach the resistance. Access was a constant challenge for WFP, with missions and convoys severely restricted. Increasing use of improvised explosive devices, anti-personnel and other types of landmines was reported. Roads were often shut down by the military during security operations with no warning. In November 2022, a convoy was trapped for 27 days in Mrauk-Oo. In Rakhine State, where WFP has its largest presence in the country, a fragile ceasefire was reached in November 2022. Despite growing humanitarian needs, operations in the country remained limited; authorities continued to restrict visas and refused international security personnel other than those from the Department of Safety and Security. WFP's ability to improve personnel safety was affected: specific requests for armoured vehicles were denied.

**Somalia:** Operations in Somalia continued to face major challenges in 2022, with insecurity affecting all United Nations agencies and partners. In June, joint offensives against Al-Shabaab were conducted by a coalition of federal, state and clan forces during a military campaign that started in Hiraan in central Somalia. It expanded to Middle Shabelle, Galgaduud and Mudug. Al-Shabaab retaliated by conducting several high-profile complex attacks against urban centres and increasing their use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. Targets included military, international and government assets and personnel throughout central and southern Somalia, forcing multiple reviews of access routes. The Security Division provided surge operational capacity and analytical support to the country office during this critical period.

**Ukraine:** Multiple challenges affected the emergency response in 2022, for which the Security Division mobilized increased resources. Operations had to adjust to moving conflict lines, with the temporary relocation of WFP personnel and assets. In the early stages of the conflict, the movements were from eastern to western regions, moving away from Kyiv in February; as the conflict spread, WFP refocused operations towards the southeast areas. The Security Division also supported the deployment of WFP personnel and assets in Poland. Programmes were severely affected by access constraints while the humanitarian situation required urgent scale-up. Throughout the year, the Security Division worked closely with other United Nations entities and cooperating partners to open access and provided continuous monitoring and analysis support to partners in high-risk areas. The Security Division supported the negotiations leading to the signature of the Black Sea Grain Initiative in July 2022 through security assessments, monitoring and reporting on the situation in Odessa and contributed to the creation of standard operating procedures. From the outset, the Security Division identified serious issues related to the notification system, as there was no communication between the parties to the conflict. In the areas not controlled by the Ukrainian authorities, no operations could take place. The conflict presented technological constraints that needed to be factored into the planning; in particular, missions close to the frontlines were affected by the jamming of communications and no satellite phones, GPS or VHF systems could be used. Among the significant risks facing operations, Security recorded indirect targeting and frequent shelling near civilian facilities and drone attacks causing collateral damage in urban centres. From October onwards, the tactics of the warring parties changed and involved direct air strikes. Increased need for support emerged following the counter-offensive from the Ukrainian side in the autumn, with security services helping to pre-position food and non-food items. Between October and November 2022, WFP expanded north and south to the regions of Kharkiv and Kherson as Ukrainian authorities re-established control. The Security Division advocated additional mitigation measures including the establishment of a deconflicting mechanism to support operational needs throughout the country. A focus on information-sharing with national authorities, other United Nations entities and cooperating partners enabled WFP to minimize the suspension of road missions.

## **Developing a collaborative security culture with cooperating partners**

14. In 2022, the Security Division focused its partnership approach on two objectives to develop a collaborative security culture with cooperating partners: ensure safe programme delivery to the last mile; and provide support to cooperating partners under the Saving Lives Together framework. The primary focus was to support local personnel because they continue to face the highest risks to their safety, whether they work for WFP or a cooperating partner. WFP worked at the headquarters level with the Global Interagency Security Forum and the Humanitarian Network Practice Weeks/Forum, bearing in mind the importance of localization. Regular interaction with WFP partners focused on how best to support local non-governmental organizations in exercising effective security risk management.
15. As an active member of the Saving Lives Together framework, the Security Division supported cooperating partners and other humanitarian organizations at the country and headquarters levels, improving security information-sharing, providing security advice and supporting humanitarian access. Security training and expert advice has been increasingly offered to local partners. In addition, the Security Division addressed a considerable number of requests outside of the Saving Lives Together framework, enhancing support to international non-governmental organization humanitarian partners via the humanitarian coordination mechanism, including medical evacuations, and providing security and logistical support for emergency responses and critical missions.

## **Operational security response**

### **Operationalizing enhanced WFP regional and country access strategies**

16. In 2022, WFP operations continued to be challenged by ongoing conflict and access constraints, characterized by a lack of secure, principled and consistent humanitarian access to beneficiaries. In addition, state and non-state armed actors and *de facto* authorities imposed restrictions on personnel and humanitarian activities. WFP operations have continued to be affected by violence in civilian areas, attacks and abductions targeting humanitarian personnel, civil unrest and the misappropriation and destruction of WFP relief items.
17. In this context, WFP country operations established multifunctional technical access cells and designed access strategies in countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and South Sudan. The Security Division helped to expand the operationalization of the WFP country access strategy and optimized the implementation of dedicated toolkits in hard-to-reach areas where access was constrained by a high threat environment.
18. In the central Sahel, field security teams improved acceptance strategies in Mali, the Niger and Burkina Faso including through the rollout of a mapping tool. Stronger capacity for humanitarian negotiations assisted with planning. The Security Division also improved capacity for information gathering and analysis, as well as civil-military coordination. Access was measured in qualitative terms through data integration and the mapping of monitoring data collected by WFP personnel and third parties.
19. Through enhanced early warning capacity, signals of civil unrest were identified in Mali, Burkina Faso, South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the country office security team launched targeted advocacy and sensitization efforts for the local population to improve acceptance.

### **Strengthening the Security Division's ability to respond to evolving security requirements using technology**

20. The Security Division focused on existing and emerging technologies to gain efficiency in monitoring compliance with UNSMS and WFP internal security obligations with minimal disruption of country operations. Initiatives were introduced to improve activities that were resource, labour and time-intensive through automated processes and data-driven analysis. This work included quarterly assurance statements; key performance indicators; data collection methodologies; the creation and adoption of information management platforms; workflow imaging; and digitized task control. These efforts resulted in better onboarding processes and record/data maintenance.
21. For field operations, technology innovations focused on supporting the safety of personnel and assets and mitigating threats by increasing monitoring capacity. In Haiti, due to access constraints and deteriorated security conditions with gangs overpowering the national security services, the Security Division identified the need for drones to support road assessments.
22. In 2022, the business transformation team of the Security Division focused on matching field requirements with applicable technology, bearing in mind affordability while introducing the strategic value of innovation. The Security Division initiated a review of field needs and over 40 field personnel reported their most frequent tasks, priorities and requests in order to improve workflows. Digital opportunities to support monitoring personnel and tracking were identified (to reduce lengthy processes); manage compliance; and support reporting functions and crisis management.
23. Technology continued to be a key asset for crisis response in countries such as South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia; in particular, the mapping of access and networks of influence of the actors in conflict has improved the Security Division's capacity in this regard.
24. In terms of training, the Security Division placed more emphasis on prevention and mitigation capabilities in 2022. First responder training courses such as the Emergency Trauma Bag and Individual First Aid Kit for WFP personnel were delivered in Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen. Training also focused on headquarters and surge deployers. Individual First Aid Kit was delivered as part of the Ukraine emergency response and in all neighbouring countries. It was also provided in Burundi, in Dubai for the WFP Fleet Centre and the Fast Information Technology and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team, in Haiti and at headquarters for surge deployment. The gradual lifting of COVID-19 restrictions also allowed for Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments training to be delivered to WFP personnel deployed in high-risk countries, notably Afghanistan, Burkina Faso and Kenya. Women's security awareness training was provided to female WFP personnel at headquarters and in the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean (the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Peru and Colombia); Asia and the Pacific (Afghanistan); and the Middle East and North Africa (Iraq). More than a training course, women's security awareness training provides a safe forum for female personnel to share security concerns and experiences.

### **Budget and staffing optimization through enhanced planning and tracking**

25. In 2022, the Security Division continued to reinforce its internal control mechanisms to ensure that security considerations systematically contributed to the corporate programme review and approval process.

26. Totalling USD 25.9 million, security-related costs at headquarters and regional bureaux accounted for 5.2 percent of the programme support and administrative (PSA) budget.
27. In field locations, the estimated total security-related costs amounted to USD 80.3 million, representing 12.2 percent of the total direct support cost (DSC) budget at the country office level, as shown in the table below.

<b>WFP SECURITY EXPENDITURES – 2022</b>				
<b>Description</b>	<b>USD</b>		<b>Description</b>	<b>USD</b>
Headquarters and regional bureau personnel	9 888 672		Field personnel	47 103 900
Department of Safety and Security	12 705 239		Residential security country office	2 733 160
Headquarters and regional bureaux – other costs (Security Emergency Fund, training, security assistance missions)	3 263 049		Security equipment	2 134 315
			Local cost – shared security budgets	8 500 000
			Security guards (only country offices)	11 770 500
<b>Total for security under PSA</b>	<b>25 856 960</b>		<b>Total for security under DSC</b>	<b>80 275 322</b>
% total PSA	5.2%		% total DSC	12.2%
<b>PSA total</b>	<b>496 100 000</b>		<b>DSC total</b>	<b>656 869 040</b>

**Abbreviations**

COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
DSC	direct support costs
M23	<i>Mouvement du 23 mars</i>
PSA	programme support and administrative (budget)
UNSMS	United Nations Security Management System