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Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

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Evaluation reports

For consideration

Executive Board documents are available on WFP's website (<https://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

Management response to the recommendations from the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Bhutan (2019–2023)

Background

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for Bhutan for 2019–2023. The evaluation was conducted between April and December 2022.
2. Taking a utilization-focused and consultative approach, the evaluation served accountability purposes and generated learning to inform the preparation of the next CSP.
3. The evaluation team made four recommendations, of which three are strategic and one is operational.
4. The following response sets out whether WFP management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with the evaluation recommendations and sub-recommendations and presents the planned (or completed) actions together with the responsibilities and timelines for their implementation.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUMMARY REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BHUTAN (2019–2023)						
Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Responsible WFP office or division (with supporting offices and divisions in brackets)	Management response	Actions to be taken	Action lead office or division (with supporting offices and divisions in brackets)	Deadline for completion	Status of implementation
<p>Recommendation 1: Optimal strategic focus and alignment with national priorities and the SDGs</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Deadline: December 2023 (for CSP submission to 2024 first regular session)</p>	Country office	Agreed				
<p>1.1 The new country strategic plan should build on WFP's internal capacity and competitive advantages and be aligned with changing government priorities and capacity. The following key issues should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFP Bhutan should focus on selected services that are important in meeting the population's needs and that match the Government's priorities (taking into consideration ongoing government reforms, absorption capacity and the next five-year plan). 	Country director with the technical team	Agreed	<p>1. The CSP for 2024–2028 is aligned with the Government's 13th five-year plan and the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF) for 2024–2028. It builds on the latest evidence and a review of internal and external capacities.</p>	Country director (regional bureau, WFP headquarters)	December 2023 (CSP to be submitted for Board approval at the 2024 first regular session)	Completed
			<p>2. The CSP for 2024–2028 will expand WFP's country capacity strengthening activities in support of the consumption of safe, nutritious and healthy diets through school meals (at government and monastic schools), social protection, food fortification and social and behaviour change initiatives.</p>	Nutrition programme policy officer	December 2023	Completed

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFP Bhutan should strike a balance between consolidating its work and expanding the scope of the country strategic plan in terms of the sectors that it addresses. It seems logical to take the next steps to support school nutrition (including its expansion to monastic schools) and social and behaviour change communication on healthy diets (which is clearly a priority area of work). Support for agriculture should be increased within a food systems approach, building on the value proposition developed in the decentralized evaluation. Future support on disaster risk management needs to be less fragmented, combining a role in advocacy and partner coordination with selected areas of country capacity strengthening support, in line with government priorities. 			3. WFP's country capacity strengthening activities will enable the Government to support the participation of smallholder farmers in climate-smart food production and food value chains and contribute to the economic empowerment of rural women as part of national food systems.	Agriculture programme policy officer	December 2023	Completed
			4. The new CSP prioritizes country capacity strengthening for emergency preparedness and response. Key shifts are WFP's alignment with the United Nations' business continuity plan and government planning in risk analysis, early warning and district contingency planning and simulation; and a new partnership with the royal youth volunteers (De-Suung).	Emergency preparedness and response programme policy officer	December 2023	Completed

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<p>1.2 Develop a theory of change together with the country strategic plan line of sight.</p> <p>WFP Bhutan has shown that it has the capacity to achieve results in terms of the quantity, timeliness and quality of its support. The challenge to be met for the next country strategic plan is to shift to a more integrated portfolio with maximized economies within the portfolio, as well as in relation to country office staffing (see recommendation 4). To adopt a more integrated country strategic plan, WFP Bhutan should develop a theory of change so as to better identify intersectoral connections (links between country strategic plan outcomes and synergies) and to provide insight into the institutional and individual/household-level outcomes and outputs.</p>	Country director with the technical team	Agreed	5. WFP's high-level theory of change adopts a food systems approach that uses country capacity strengthening as its core modality. The design of the CSP involved United Nations and government stakeholders in developing a portfolio of programme-level theories of change that identify risks and assumptions and explore opportunities for integrated programming.	Programme policy officers – all	December 2022	Completed
			6. WFP annual workplans and performance reviews will continue to be developed and agreed with government partners and will include an analysis of cross-cutting contributions (on gender equality, disability inclusion, digitalization and protection) and programme integration.	Programme policy officers – all	December 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way

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The theory of change should also identify the key assumptions and risks, in particular in relation to the ongoing public sector reforms. It is also suggested that an annual check be established to review progress in country strategic plan implementation based on the theory of change and line of sight.						
<p>1.3 Build on existing evidence and address evidence gaps, taking into account the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFP Bhutan should invest in a set of needs assessment studies to address evidence gaps, with attention paid to the generation of baseline data on institutional capacity and gaps, including in relation to the challenges at the school and district levels concerning the integration of the Mobile Operational Data Acquisition-based monitoring system for the national school feeding and 	Country director with the technical team	Agreed	7. A regional bureau mission in the third quarter of 2023 was undertaken as part of the development of a country capacity strengthening road map that will integrate joint capacity needs assessments with government partners at the policy, institutional and individual levels in smallholder value chains, school meals, social and behaviour change, emergency preparedness and response, gender and disability mainstreaming, and digitalization.	Programme policy officers – all	December 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way

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<p>nutrition programme into the education management information system, and to identify the capacity development needs of teaching staff in relation to the expansion of social and behaviour change communication on nutrition through schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study should be undertaken on how best to (further) integrate gender and disability inclusion across the portfolio. • The next country strategic plan should indicate that the key evidence gaps will be filled in collaboration with the relevant government counterpart agencies. 			<p>8. The integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women and disability inclusion in the new CSP builds on the “leave no one behind” analysis presented in the 2022 decentralized evaluation of WFP’s support to smallholder farmers and its expanded portfolio across the agriculture value chain and a review of external studies on gender and disability.</p>	Partnerships officer (gender focal point)	July 2023	Completed
			<p>9. Evidence gaps will be reviewed annually with government and United Nations partners. Since the CSP evaluation, WFP has undertaken a Fill the Nutrient Gap study (2023). The studies planned during the implementation of the new CSP include an examination of the utility potential of micro-risk insurance for smallholder farmers, a review of food value chains, options for a national system for social protection, and simulation studies of district-level emergency preparedness and response.</p>	Programme policy officers – all	July 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way

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Recommendation 2: Achieve better harmonization with United Nations entities and processes Priority: High Deadline: December 2023, and implementation of the new CSP	Country office	Agreed				
2.1 Develop a partnership strategy to position WFP Bhutan more clearly in relation to other United Nations entities. Develop a partnership strategy, with a focus on maximizing complementarities with other United Nations agencies – both for programmatic work, in line with the results of the ongoing common country analysis process and the next United Nations sustainable development partnership framework, and for operational aspects, as part of the roll-out of the United Nations' Business	Country director with the technical team	Agreed	1. A partnership action plan is included as part of the CSP package and is aligned with the UNSDCF for 2024–2028.	Partnerships officer	December 2023	Completed
			2. WFP has partnered with the Ministry of Health in the development of a national social and behaviour change strategy and will partner with UNICEF to provide United Nations support for the Government's planned introduction of a life-cycle approach to social protection for vulnerable groups, which will include school meals.	Nutrition programme policy officer	December 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way

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<p>Operations Strategy – and with service providers (civil society and non-governmental organizations, academia and private sector actors). In particular, WFP should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek further collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund on social and behaviour change communication on nutrition – to ensure that messages are coherent for key nutrition target groups across the life cycle, with a focus on adolescent girls and boys as future parents – and on disability-inclusive schools; • advocate the development of a common Rome-based agency approach to country capacity strengthening and further explore joint resource mobilization opportunities; and • explore opportunities for joint advocacy on disaster risk management with selected partners, including the United Nations Development Programme. 			<p>3. WFP support for the “One UN” approach to partnership includes examples of joint resource mobilization with the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and joint advocacy and knowledge sharing with the United Nations country team for emergency preparedness and response, in support of the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s business continuity plan and the inter-agency contingency plan.</p>	Partnerships officer	December 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way

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<p>2.2 Continue engagement in technical working groups. Continued engagement in the relevant sectoral technical working groups – on social and behaviour change communication and emergency logistics – is recommended, as the working groups provide a good platform for coordination, knowledge-sharing and collaboration on advocacy and policy development with a wide range of actors.</p>	Country director with the technical team	Agreed	4. WFP will expand its partnerships with government, other United Nations entities, the private sector and civil society organizations to promote joint approaches, advocacy and knowledge sharing in the areas of climate risk, value chain development, social protection, social and behaviour change, emergency preparedness and response, digital innovation, gender and disability mainstreaming, and protection.	Partnerships officer	December 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way
<p>Recommendation 3: Enhance the management of development results, reporting and accountability and increase flexibility to plan for and respond to dynamic operational environment Priority: High Deadline: December 2023, and implementation of the new CSP</p>	Country office	Partially agreed				

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<p>3.1 Review the result indicators and improve performance monitoring.</p> <p>Define, track and analyse a comprehensive set of indicators across all country strategic plan activities, including improved indicators for monitoring capacity strengthening and gender equality, disability and social inclusion.</p> <p>Draw on the updated corporate results framework and define and improve supplementary country-specific indicators to ensure monitoring coverage.</p> <p>For the remaining time under the current country strategic plan, it is suggested that WFP start collecting data on the Systems Approach for Better Education Results indicator.</p>	Country director with the technical team	Partially agreed. WFP monitoring will continue to function primarily through WFP's government partnerships. Indicator selection and use requires high-level advocacy to agree adoption, capacity strengthening of government officers and updates to national management information systems before indicators can be introduced.	1. All indicators for second-generation CSP are aligned with the latest update to the corporate results framework (2023). They include indicators for country capacity strengthening and data will be disaggregated by gender, age and disability.	Programme associate – monitoring and evaluation	December 2023	Completed
			2. A Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) exercise was launched in the fourth quarter of 2023 (desk review). A SABER mission is planned for 2024 and will contribute to the CSP baseline and evidence base.	Nutrition programme policy officer	July 2024	Under way

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<p>3.2 Develop a knowledge management plan.</p> <p>Develop a knowledge management plan and system for capturing, storing and disseminating relevant information internally and externally. Particular attention should be paid to generating and storing baseline and follow-up data, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving the tracking of the inputs and outputs of country capacity strengthening efforts for the Government (reports on workshops and other training, joint field mission reports and so on); regularly preparing knowledge products (memos, case study papers, PowerPoint presentations, videos, blogs and so on) to present an analysis of data on the national school feeding and nutrition programme and an overview of insights gained from two years of support for smallholder farmers; and 	Country director with the team, in particular the monitoring and evaluation officer; programme officers together with the communications and advocacy officer	Partially agreed. All activities will operate with and through WFP's government partnerships. The country office's approach to knowledge management and results will continue to rely on country capacity strengthening to build government capacity and resources (human, digital, financial and logistic) to collect, manage, analyse and use data and information.	3. Knowledge management commitments will be integrated into WFP's five-year cooperation framework with the Government.	Country director, partnerships officer	July 2024 (pending new Government and launch of the 13 th five-year plan)	Not started
			4. WFP's annual workplans and reviews with its government partners will include activity planning, tracking, monitoring and progress analysis.	Partnerships officer; programme policy officers	January 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way
			5. WFP's communications plan covers the identification, management and use of knowledge products.	Communications and advocacy officer	January 2023 and throughout CSP implementation	Under way
			6. A decentralized evaluation is planned for the fourth quarter of 2026 and will explore the results of WFP's contributions to country capacity strengthening and review the country office's use of corporate and country-specific country capacity strengthening indicators.	Programme associate – monitoring and evaluation	December 2026	Not started

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accompanying annual country reports with a more detailed annual report, or set of reports, for each area of work to support external advocacy while meeting internal requirements. 						
Recommendation 4: Enhance resource mobilization Priority: High Deadline: July 2023, and implementation of the new CSP	Country office	Agreed				
4.1 Strengthen and diversify the resource mobilization strategy A strong resource mobilization strategy should include close collaboration with the Government and other partners on joint activities and should look beyond traditional bilateral donor agencies to explore options for gaining access to non-conventional and less competitive funding sources. Such options can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (further) technical collaboration; corporate social responsibility funds; and 	Country director together with the budget and programme associate and the programme officers	Agreed	1. WFP has developed a partnership action plan that includes a subsection on resource mobilization.	Partnerships officer	July 2023	Completed
			2. A draft resource mobilization strategy will be updated with regional bureau support to identify and target the private sector and other non-traditional donors and secure long-term support from existing donors.	Partnerships officer (regional bureau)	July 2024	Under way

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> further work with international financial institutions and/or efforts to foster market linkages with private sector entities – especially in India or other countries in Asia – for engagement either with WFP Bhutan or directly with government agencies. <p>Rather than seeking to reap the rewards of ad-hoc opportunities, such arrangements should be based on clear decisions related to WFP’s strategic positioning in Bhutan.</p>						