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## **Management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Lesotho (2019–2024)**

### **Background**

1. This document presents the WFP management response to the recommendations in the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for Lesotho for 2019–2024. The evaluation covered CSP activities implemented between July 2019 and mid-2023 and took account of the transitional interim CSP for January 2018–June 2019. Taking a utilization-focused, consultative approach, the evaluation served the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informed the preparation of a new CSP for Lesotho.
2. The evaluation made six recommendations. The response presented below sets out whether WFP agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with the evaluation recommendations and sub-recommendations and presents the planned (or completed) actions, responsibilities and timelines for their implementation.

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#### **Focal points:**

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Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
<b>1. Reinforce the approach to capacity strengthening across the new country strategic plan.</b>	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Country Capacity Strengthening Unit))					
1.1 Continue to assess capacity needs but rebalance the approach to country capacity strengthening to include advocacy at the highest levels to support the strengthening of government systems and improve the necessary preconditions for a successful handover of activities.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Country Capacity Strengthening Unit))	Agreed	1. Review and align capacity needs mapping for the new CSP and design new capacity strengthening strategies where needed.	Activity managers	May 2024	Not started
			2. Update capacity strengthening strategies.	Activity managers	July 2024	Not started
			3. Identify key stakeholders for capacity strengthening; develop and implement an advocacy strategy to communicate WFP's focus areas.	Head of programme (communication, advocacy and marketing unit)	July 2024	Not started
1.2 Consider increasing government capacity strengthening activities at the district level to complement national-level work.			4. Develop the country office capacity strengthening implementation plan, setting out steps and guidelines for capacity strengthening activities at all levels.	Head of programme	August 2024	Not started

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
1.3 Strengthen the monitoring of capacity development activities and their outcomes.			5. Hold internal and external quarterly reviews of capacity strengthening activities.	Monitoring and evaluation unit	June 2029	Not started
			6. Conduct annual surveys and biannual workshops with external partners to review progress and the capacity strengthening strategies.	Monitoring and evaluation unit	June 2029	Not started
<b>2. Link the theory of change for the next country strategic plan to stronger monitoring, evaluation and learning and deeper gender analysis.</b>	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division; Gender Equality Office))					
<p>2.1 The theory of change for the next country strategic plan should spell out how WFP activities will contribute to the desired outcomes and state the key assumptions on which effectiveness depends. It will be important to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ make more realistic assumptions;</li> <li>➤ specify WFP's role in relation to the Government and other partners; and</li> <li>➤ provide a clear explanation of the results that could be attributable to WFP and how they will be monitored.</li> </ul>	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division; Gender Equality Office))	Agreed	1. Develop a theory of change for the new CSP.	Head of programme	October 2023	Completed

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
2.2 Elaborate a specific sub-theory of change that outlines pathways for achieving gender-transformative results.			2. Conduct a gender analysis to inform the formulation of the CSP, thereby ensuring its alignment with national priorities with respect to gender.	Gender focal point	October 2023	Completed
<p>2.3 The country strategic plan should include a monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy that is linked to the theory of change. The strategy should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ streamline corporate results framework reporting to the extent possible;</li> <li>➤ coordinate monitoring and evaluation activities with those of other United Nations entities;</li> <li>➤ support the strengthening of data gathering and analysis by the Government;</li> <li>➤ improve monitoring protocols for all levels of results; and</li> <li>➤ ensure that monitoring information is used to inform strategic decision making during the implementation of the country strategic plan.</li> </ul>			3. Develop and implement a monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy.	Monitoring and evaluation unit	December 2025	Ongoing

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
<b>3. Reconsider WFP's approaches to resilience building and the humanitarian-development nexus in Lesotho.</b>	Country office (regional bureau)					
3.1 In preparing the next country strategic plan, draw on an analysis of multisectoral vulnerabilities and related coping strategies in Lesotho.	Country office (regional bureau)	Agreed	1. Conduct an in-depth study of the livelihoods and coping strategies of shock-affected people to design and implement appropriate interventions for different socioeconomic groups.	Resilience unit	June 2025	Ongoing
3.2 Work with partners (Government, United Nations, others) to build a common understanding of resilience to food crises in Lesotho.						
3.3 Invest in gathering evidence on and analysing the effectiveness of resilience interventions, in order to inform decisions on which interventions should be scaled up by all stakeholders, including the Government.			2. Conduct a study of the effectiveness of national resilience interventions and identify those that can be scaled up.	Resilience unit	January 2026	Not started
3.4 Support efforts to establish a single registry to coordinate interventions by various entities at the humanitarian-development nexus.			3. Support the Government in establishing a single registry for resilience interventions.	Resilience unit	June 2026	Not started

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
<b>4. Strengthen targeting and prioritization to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, given limited resources, while maintaining WFP's own capacity to respond to humanitarian crises.</b>	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division; Resilience and Food Systems Service; School-based Programmes))					
4.1 Continue to support the strengthening of the Lesotho vulnerability analysis committee.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division; Resilience and Food Systems Service; School-based Programmes))	Agreed	1. Continue supporting vulnerability assessments technically and financially.	Vulnerability analysis and mapping unit	June 2029	Ongoing
4.2 Support the development of national guidelines on the targeting of vulnerable households for crisis response and resilience-building activities.			2. Advocate for regular updating of the national information system for social assistance with key stakeholders, especially the Department of Social Development, the Disaster Management Authority, and the United Nations Children's Fund.	Vulnerability analysis and mapping, social protection and resilience units	December 2026	Ongoing
			3. Organize South-South and triangular cooperation for the Disaster Management Authority and the Department of Social Development.	Social protection unit	June 2026	Not started
4.3 Continue to support community-based approaches to targeting that support equity and inclusion.			4. Continue enhancing the targeting capacity of line ministries.	Head of programme	December 2029	Ongoing

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
<b>5. Contribute to strengthening the humanitarian–development nexus by deepening engagement with the national social protection system.</b>	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Social Protection Unit))					
5.1 Support efforts to address the needs of chronically food-insecure households through social protection programmes rather than through emergency response.	Country office (regional bureau and headquarters units (Social Protection Unit))	Agreed	1. Facilitate coordination between the Disaster Management Authority and the Department of Social Development to identify chronically food-insecure people who can be supported through social assistance programmes.	Social protection unit	June 2028	Ongoing
5.2 Support the Government in the development of shock-responsive social protection mechanisms.			2. Engage with ministries hosting social assistance programmes to advocate for some of those programmes to be shock responsive	Social protection unit	June 2029	Not started
			3. Facilitate the development of standard operating procedures for shock-responsive social protection.	Social protection unit	June 2026	Not started
			4. Support the development of scalability frameworks for the programmes identified for scale-up as part of shock response operations; alternatively, revise the child grants programme scalability framework to cover all social assistance programmes.	Social protection unit	June 2026	Not started

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
5.3 Improve the link between social protection and rural development efforts and instruments to provide pathways to self-reliance for social assistance beneficiaries. This would involve helping to strengthen coordination across government agencies concerned with social protection, agriculture and rural development.			5. In collaboration and consultation with the Department of Social Development and other key stakeholders, target the beneficiaries of social assistance programmes for resilience building and income-generating activities.	Head of programme	June 2029	Ongoing
5.4 Work with the Government to support and institutionalize early childhood care and development food assistance as part of the primary school system in order to include the most vulnerable children.			6. Advocate for the registration of early childhood care and development centres and the allocation of a small budget that would replace the contribution made by parents.	School feeding unit	June 2029	Ongoing
			7. WFP and Ministry of Education and Training to enhance the criteria for including early childhood care and development centres in the early childhood care and development food assistance.	School feeding unit	January 2025	Ongoing



Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office	Management response	Actions	Action lead office	Action deadline	Status
<b>6. Strengthen country office capacity to cover new roles while making the best use of limited resources.</b>	Country office					
6.1 In the next staffing review, ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ core support services are aligned with internal and external demand; and</li> <li>➤ technical services, including monitoring, evaluation and learning and gender, are adequately staffed.</li> </ul>	Country office (regional bureau)	Agreed	1. Undertake a staffing review exercise.	Country office management (Human resources unit)	August 2024	Not started
6.2 Invest in training country office staff in social protection and advocacy.		Agreed	2. Capacitate staff on new roles.	Country office management and human resources unit	June 2029	Ongoing
6.3 Ensure access to additional specialist expertise to support advocacy and systemic capacity strengthening, especially in fields such as nutrition, social protection and transformative gender approaches.	Regional bureau (country office; headquarters (Human Resources Division))	Agreed	3. Request support from the regional bureau and headquarters; engage consultants and staff on temporary duty assignment; and explore working with academic institutions.	Country office management and human resources unit	June 2026	Not started