



Workshop on the localization policy

Thursday, 10 October 2024, 14:00–17:00
WFP headquarters

Policy context

The localization agenda gained traction during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. Since then, localization has been prioritized by the humanitarian community in key multilateral and inter-agency fora, such as the Grand Bargain and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. As a signatory of the Grand Bargain Workstream 2 on “more support and funding tools for local and national responders”, WFP had committed to transferring at least 25 percent of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible by 2020 to improve outcomes for affected people and to reduce transactional costs.

The strategic plan for 2022–2025 commits WFP to strengthening the capacity of local governments and organizations and to prioritizing local and equal partnerships. WFP is making substantial investments in localization through its programming on integrated resilience and on home-grown school feeding; by strengthening national and local social protection, supply chain and food systems; and by supporting women-led groups and local organizations in coordination mechanisms.

The key components of localization – partnerships, capacity strengthening, funding, participation, and coordination – are embedded across several of WFP’s policies, key strategies and pieces of guidance. Among others, the draft resilience policy update (2024), the cash-based transfer policy (2023), the country capacity strengthening policy update (2022), the gender policy (2022), the WFP strategy for supporting social protection (2021), the protection and accountability policy (2020), the school feeding strategy (2020–2030), the local and regional food procurement policy (2019), the emergency preparedness policy (2017) and the peacebuilding policy (2013).

WFP is developing a localization policy in view of its strategic objectives and commitments and building on its localization efforts through a broad spectrum of operations across different contexts. The policy aims to define the scope of its localization efforts and to bring clarity to better position WFP as it continues to invest and support a diverse range of local actors. The policy would also help clarify how to balance WFP’s commitments to the reassurance action plan and the localization agenda.

Launched in 2023, the policy process has included a literature review of current WFP and United Nations practices and global trends, internal and external consultations. It is critical for WFP to expand on these consultations in the spirit of the extensive partnerships with national and local actors and international partners. In response, WFP plans to undertake further consultations with key stakeholders to inform the policy document that will be presented to the Executive Board at its annual session in June 2025.

Session objective

To invite an open and inclusive dialogue on the proposed policy, gather diverse perspectives and feedback from all Executive Board members, and to use this input to refine and enhance the policy for better alignment with WFP strategic objectives and global commitments.

Approach and format

The workshop will serve as a platform for open discussion and collaboration. A combination of scene setting interventions, small group discussions and plenary feedback will be applied to encourage an informal, participatory and constructive engagement and exchange across all participants. Participants will be divided into working groups to discuss three topics. Each group will nominate a representative to report back to plenary.

Agenda

14:00–14:20	1. Welcome and setting the scene <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Ms Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department➤ Representative of Switzerland
14:20–15:40	2. Moderated small group discussions on three topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Topic 1: Localization across different operational contexts➤ Topic 2: Risks of engaging or not engaging in localization➤ Topic 3: Localization priorities and outcomes for diverse local and national actors
15:40–16:40	3. Reporting back on group work
16:40–16:50	4. Technical take-aways from the discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Ms Brenda Behan, Director, Gender, Protection and Inclusion Service
16h50-17h00	5. Strategic reflections and closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Ms Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department

Background documents provided to the participants

1. Brief on the localization policy
2. White paper on risk [working draft]

Questions for discussion in small groups (agenda item 2)

1. **Topic 1: Localization across different operational contexts**
 - What are WFP's comparative advantages in localization in emergencies?
 - How does that change/differ in more stable contexts?
2. **Topic 2: Risks of engaging or not engaging in localization**
 - Are there risks to engaging in localization? How can these be managed?
 - Are there situations where localization may not be appropriate?
3. **Topic 3: Localization priorities and outcomes for diverse local and national actors**
 - What should WFP's localization efforts aim to achieve for:
 - i) national and local authorities;
 - ii) community-based and grassroots organizations;
 - iii) Local private sector.
 - Engaging with small NGOs and representative groups: what are the challenges and how can we address them?