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## Summary report on the evaluation of the WFP country strategic plans for the Republic of Türkiye (2018–2025)

### Executive summary

The evaluation of the three consecutive country strategic plans for the Republic of Türkiye covering the period 2018–2025 was conducted between February 2024 and April 2025. Taking a utilization-focused, consultative approach, the evaluation served both accountability and learning purposes and has informed the preparation of the country strategic plan for 2026–2028. The evaluation assessed WFP's strategic positioning, its contribution to outcomes, its efficiency in implementing the plans, and the factors explaining its performance.

The period under evaluation was marked by significant changes in WFP's portfolio. Until April 2020, WFP managed the emergency social safety net programme for Syrian refugees until it was handed over to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. WFP then shifted its focus to implementing a livelihood programme in Türkiye and launched an emergency response to the two earthquakes in the south-east of the country in early 2023. That work was followed by a recovery programme.

WFP's work in Türkiye has been responsive to national priorities and emerging needs and crises, providing essential support to refugees and earthquake response efforts through cash-based transfer assistance. However, the transition to development-oriented interventions has faced challenges due to inconsistent strategic planning and difficulties in achieving sustainable results at scale. Legal and social barriers for refugees, economic shocks and WFP's internal planning gaps have collectively hindered WFP's ability to bridge the gap between emergency response and sustainable development. Limited engagement with government institutions has further constrained WFP's ability to fully integrate its programmes into Türkiye's development space.

*In line with WFP evaluation policy (2022) (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.*

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During the period under evaluation, WFP's interventions in Türkiye adhered to humanitarian principles and reached the most vulnerable population groups, but their effectiveness was hampered by limited direct engagement with affected people; gaps in community feedback mechanisms; uneven access of beneficiaries to assistance; and minimal integration of environmental considerations. These shortcomings ultimately limited the ability of the programmes to achieve lasting results.

WFP benefited from flexible donor funding and advance financing, which helped to sustain operations during the period under evaluation. However, the cost-efficiency and scalability of interventions were limited by the absence of a clear resource mobilization strategy; a reliance on short-term funding; and high cost per beneficiary for the implementation of certain interventions, particularly in livelihood and recovery programmes.

While WFP's partnerships contributed to programme delivery, strategic engagement with some partners could have been enhanced. Furthermore, low visibility of the organization and inconsistent coordination hindered the effective use of these partnerships to strengthen programme implementation.

The evaluation made three recommendations. First, strategically reposition WFP in Türkiye, considering WFP's recognized global comparative advantages, and – in the context of low funding levels – establish contingency plans to ensure programme viability, including through the development of strategic partnerships. Second, in line with national priorities, develop a strategic framework (covering intervention logic, monitoring, partnership engagement, and environmental considerations) to strengthen community resilience. Third, support the Government's efforts to enhance emergency preparedness and response capacity in areas prone to shocks and stressors, particularly at the subnational level.

## **Draft decision\***

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of the WFP country strategic plans for the Republic of Türkiye (2018–2025), (WFP/EB.2/2025/6-C/9) and the management response (WFP/EB.2/2025/6-C/9/Add.1) and encourages further action on the recommendations set out in the report, taking into account the considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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\* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the decisions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

## Introduction

### Evaluation features

1. The evaluation of three consecutive country strategic plans (CSPs) for the Republic of Türkiye covering the period 2018–2025 was commissioned by the Office of Evaluation to serve accountability and learning purposes, and to inform the design of the next CSP for the country.
2. The evaluation assessed the activities implemented by WFP under the transitional interim CSP (T-ICSP) for 2018–2019, the interim CSP (ICSP) for 2020–2022, and the CSP for 2023–2025. It was conducted between February 2024 and April 2025 by an external independent team.
3. The evaluation utilized a theory-based, mixed-methods approach, employing document reviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions with beneficiaries (including refugee and livelihood site visits), and a survey. Throughout the evaluation, gender and inclusion considerations were fully integrated. Data collection took place in Türkiye during April and September 2024. In April 2025, workshops with internal and external stakeholders were conducted in Gaziantep and Ankara to present the main findings and conclusions of the evaluation, and to refine the draft recommendations.
4. The main intended users of the evaluation are the WFP country office in Türkiye, the technical divisions in WFP headquarters, the WFP Executive Board, the Government of Türkiye, partner United Nations entities, and donors. Other potential users include civil society and non-governmental organizations in Türkiye, and WFP's beneficiaries.

### Context

5. Türkiye is an upper-middle-income country ranked 45th of 193 countries in the Human Development Index for 2022.<sup>1</sup> The country has experienced continuous economic growth over the past two decades, becoming the 17th largest economy in the world.<sup>2</sup> However, despite these achievements, Türkiye suffers from long-standing structural economic and social challenges, including high inflation, low productivity growth and weakening foreign direct investment, with the economic downturn that began in 2018 continuing to jeopardize development gains.
6. Türkiye has made significant progress in reducing hunger over the past two decades. From 2000 to 2023, undernourishment remained below 2.5 percent, while child stunting decreased from 18.8 to 6 percent and child wasting fell from 3 to 1.7 percent.<sup>3</sup> However, unhealthy diets persist, with large segments of the population consuming energy-dense but low-nutrient foods. Food insecurity has been exacerbated by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the effects of the conflict in Ukraine, rising food prices and agricultural losses from the major earthquake in 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2024. *Human Development Report 2023/2024. Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world*.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank. 2024. *The World Bank in Türkiye – Overview*.

<sup>3</sup> Welt Hunger Hilfe and Concern Worldwide. 2023. *2023 Global Hunger Index: The power of youth in shaping food systems*.

7. Since 2014, Türkiye has hosted the world's largest refugee population, with 3.3 million refugees as of September 2024.<sup>4</sup> Most refugees live in regular accommodation among the host population; a minority of 57,000 reside in temporary accommodation centres.<sup>5</sup> Although the Ministry of Labour and Social Security supports refugee employment through work permits, challenges – such as employer quotas, location restrictions and limited Turkish language skills – persist.
8. Refugees face food insecurity due to limited employment, low incomes and rising food prices. In 2020, 4 percent of Syrian refugees (around 157,000 people) were acutely food insecure, and 58 percent (2.3 million) were marginally food secure.<sup>6</sup> This has led refugees to resort to negative coping strategies such as reducing essential expenses, buying food on credit and involving children in income-generating activities.
9. According to the 2024 Global Gender Gap Report,<sup>7</sup> Türkiye ranked 127th of 146 countries in terms of equality between men and women. While female labour force participation has grown over the past two decades, it remains well below male levels, particularly for refugees, for whom 81 percent of men participate in the workforce compared with 14 percent of women.<sup>8</sup>
10. Two earthquakes struck south-eastern Türkiye on 6 February 2023, directly affecting 9.1 million people in 11 provinces. The disaster claimed 50,000 lives, injured 100,000 people and displaced 3 million individuals.<sup>9</sup>
11. Protection concerns in Türkiye include child labour; conflict and tensions between refugees and host communities; domestic violence; sexual violence against women and girls; forced child begging; child marriages; and alcohol and substance abuse. Since the earthquakes in 2023, social sector services have been disrupted or reduced, and these specialized services for children, women, persons with disabilities and older persons need to be re-established.<sup>10</sup>
12. From 2019 to 2021, Türkiye received a yearly average of USD 2.8 billion in gross official development assistance.<sup>11</sup> The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan,<sup>12</sup> established in response to the Syrian crisis, has appealed for an average of USD 1.3 billion annually between 2018 and 2023, securing a yearly average of USD 516 million in funding.<sup>13</sup> The multi-year strategic plan between the United Nations and the Government of Türkiye is outlined in the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF) for 2021–2025.

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<sup>4</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM). 2024. *Overview of Migrant Situation: September 2024*.

<sup>5</sup> Source: IOM. *Migrant Presence Monitoring – Türkiye Overview of the Situation with Migrants, Q2 2018–2023*. May 2024 data from [PMM website](#) (accessed 23 May 2024).

<sup>6</sup> Food Security Information Network and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2021. *2021 Global Report on Food Crises: Joint Analysis for Better Decisions*. Turkish Red Crescent. 2023. *Complementary Emergency Social Safety Net (C-ESSN) Project: Findings of Post Distribution Monitoring Survey (Round 2)*.

<sup>7</sup> World Economic Forum. 2024. *Global Gender Gap 2024: Insight Report*.

<sup>8</sup> World Bank. [Gender Data Portal – Türkiye](#).

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2023. *Türkiye Earthquake Humanitarian Needs and Response Overview*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. [Data Explorer](#). Official development financing (ODF) by country and region.

<sup>12</sup> See the [Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan website](#).

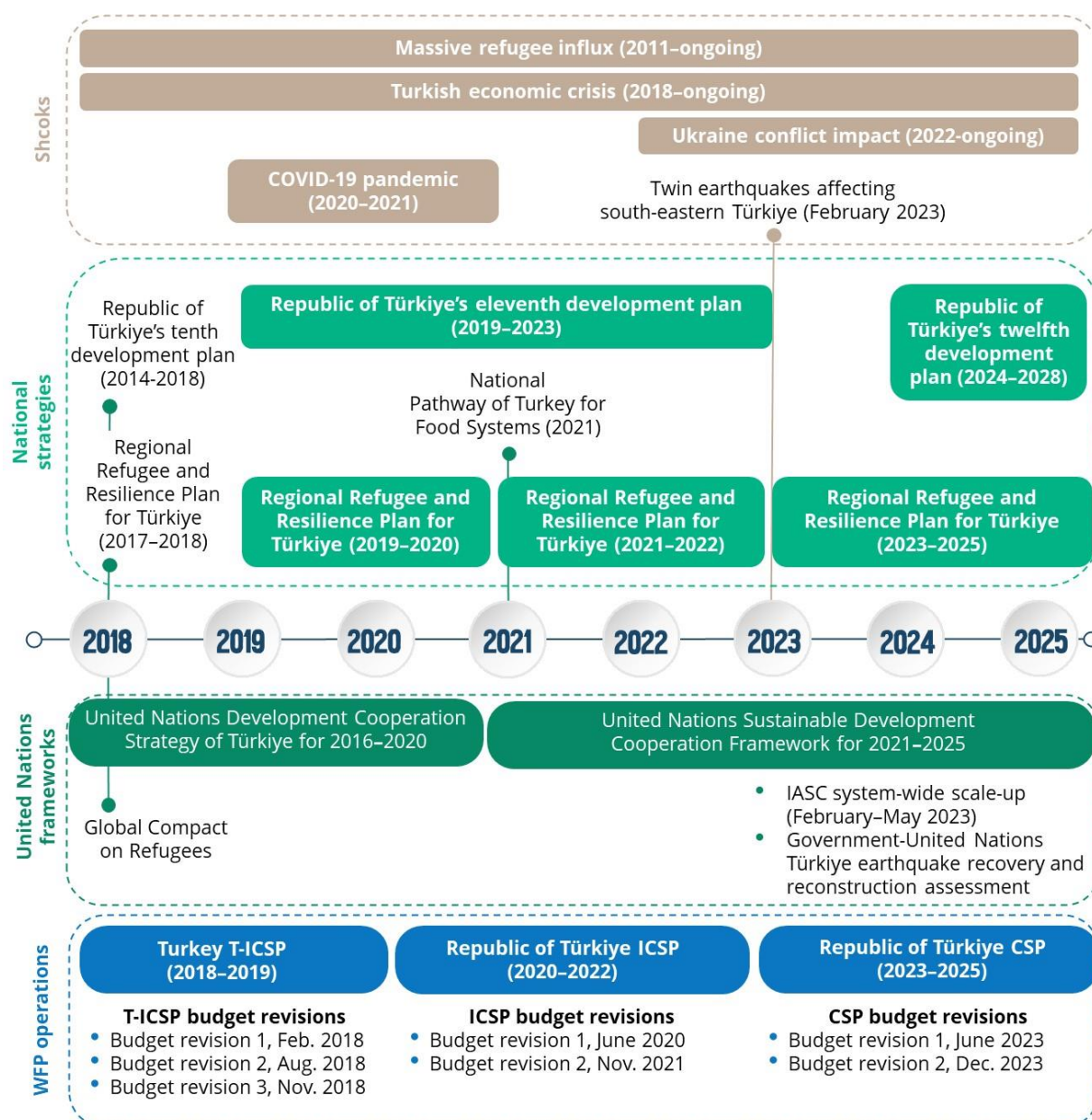
<sup>13</sup> Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan. [2018–2023 annual reports](#).

## Country strategic plans

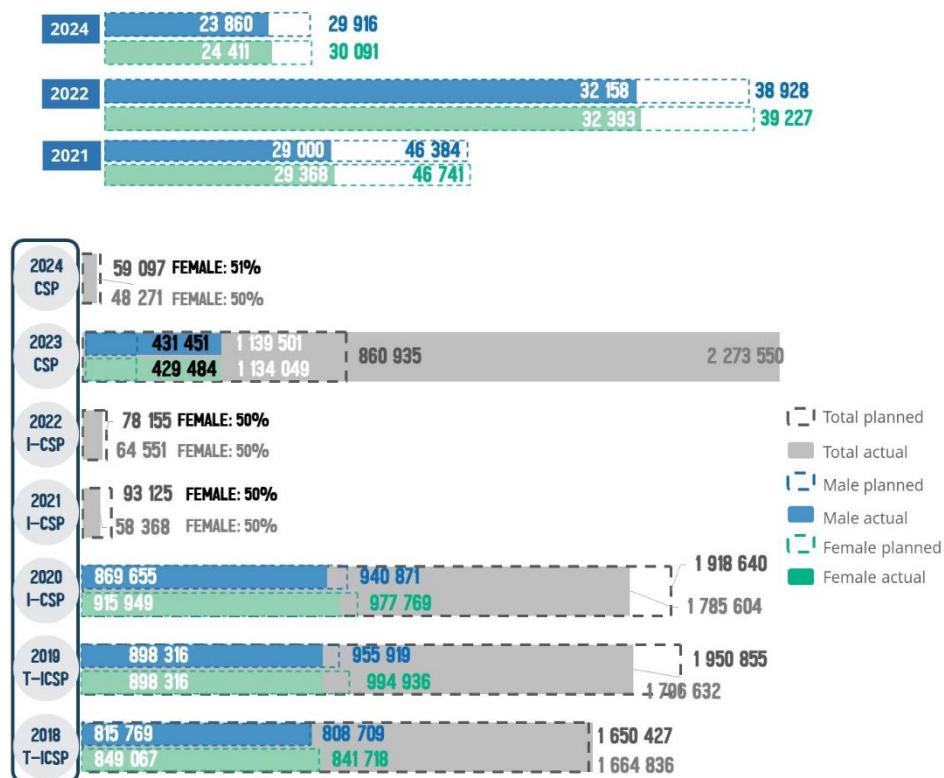
13. The T-ICSP, ICSP and CSP were approved by the Executive Board in February 2018, November 2019 and November 2022, respectively. These consecutive programming documents reflect shifts in WFP's strategy aimed at adapting to the evolving needs of vulnerable people in Türkiye, including Syrian refugees, host communities and victims of the February 2023 earthquakes. These shifts included expanding WFP's logistics and supply chain engagement in Türkiye to enhance the efficiency of the humanitarian response; strengthening social safety nets to support livelihoods; and fostering the long-term resilience of crisis-affected populations.
14. Following the handover of the emergency social safety net (ESSN) programme to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 2020, WFP continued to provide direct in-camp assistance, and food security and livelihood initiatives designed to facilitate the integration of refugees and host communities into formal employment. Initial investments were made in building partnerships to support school meal projects, although WFP did not invest systematically in nutrition programmes.
15. In 2023, WFP launched a large-scale response to the earthquakes in south-eastern Türkiye, which was enabled by two budget revisions. The first budget revision introduced emergency food assistance for people affected by the earthquake in 11 provinces; established micro-grants to support the re-establishment of small and micro food-based businesses and increase employment and training in earthquake-affected communities; and set up logistics and emergency telecommunication support for the Government and humanitarian actors. The second budget revision in 2024 focused on transitioning from the earthquake emergency response to recovery efforts in the agrifood sector.
16. Throughout the period under evaluation, WFP has been continuously procuring food from Türkiye, leveraging Türkiye's strategic geographic position and its own advanced logistics capabilities to enhance humanitarian response efforts across the region. In 2023, 7 percent of all food procured by WFP was sourced in Türkiye.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> ["Update on food procurement"](#) (WFP/EB.A/2024/10-D).

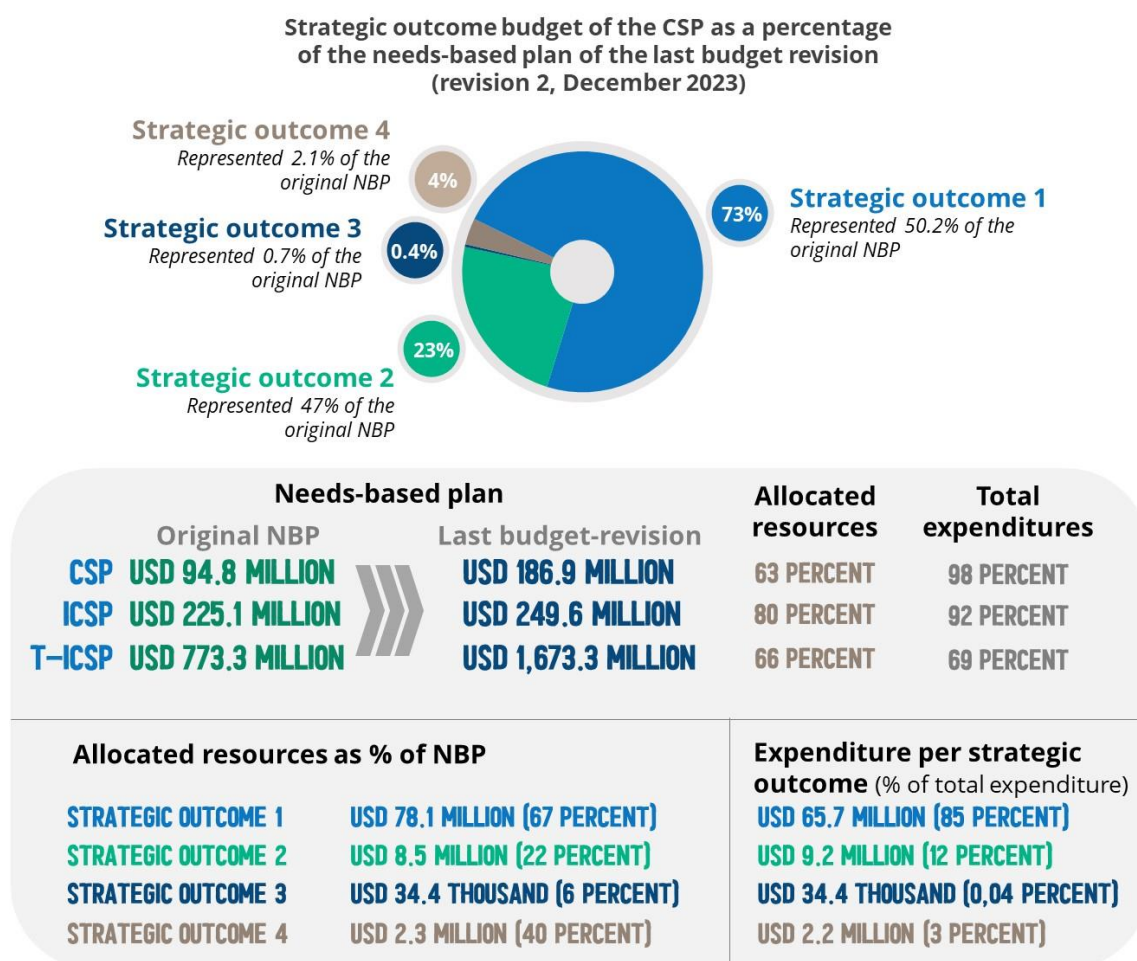
**Figure 1: Country context and WFP operational overview, 2018–2025**



**Figure 2: Numbers of beneficiaries reached during the period 2018–June 2024**

17. Under the T-ICSP, the third budget revision took the needs-based plan (NBP) budget to USD 1.67 billion; the expenditure rate of the actual allocated budget of USD 1.1 billion was 98 percent. Under the ICSP, the NBP rose from USD 225 million in the original plan to USD 250 million following the second budget revision. Allocated resources were 80 percent of the revised NBP, of which 92 percent was spent. Under the CSP, the original NBP of USD 95 million was increased to USD 187 million following the February 2023 earthquakes and the second budget revision. By 12 September 2024, allocated resources were 63 percent of the NBP, of which 69 percent had been spent. Under the CSP, crisis response represents the largest share of the budget (76 percent of the NBP) while resilience building remains a smaller portion (24 percent of current NBP).

**Figure 3: Country strategic plan outcomes, budget, funding and expenditures (2018–2024) as of September 2024**



Note: The T-ICSP (2018–2019) and ICSP (2020–2022) contained just one strategic outcome.

## Summary of key conclusions and insights from the evaluation

### Strategic relevance and coherence

WFP's work in Türkiye has been responsive to national priorities, providing essential support for refugees and earthquake response efforts through cash-based transfer (CBT) assistance. However, the transition to development-oriented interventions has faced challenges due to inconsistent strategic planning, and external socioeconomic and political factors. Limited engagement with government institutions has further hindered WFP's ability to fully integrate its programmes into Türkiye's development space.

- The three plans were designed to support the UNSDCF for 2021–2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals, with WFP's added value most evident in humanitarian assistance and emergency response. **Maintaining its responsiveness to national needs and priorities, WFP has made significant contributions to relief efforts.** WFP's added value in rapidly addressing immediate needs was demonstrated in its earthquake response, and in its capacity to address the protracted situation of refugees by offering essential support through the ESSN programme and by providing e-vouchers in refugee camps. **The CSPs demonstrated contextual relevance,** aligning with Türkiye's strategies for migration management and social protection, notably through the ESSN programme. However, limited engagement with government institutions hindered WFP's ability to align more effectively



- with national systems in the development space, thereby making it difficult to improve programme integration and the results of livelihood and earthquake recovery interventions.
19. In line with its mandate, **WFP employed an evidence-based approach** under the three plans, seeking to assist refugees and host communities through targeted interventions and by leveraging a strong monitoring and evaluation system for decision making in relation to relief efforts.
  20. However, while the livelihood and earthquake recovery programmes were relevant to the needs of beneficiaries, several **challenges hindered WFP's ability to fully leverage its comparative advantages in the development domain**. For example, WFP's engagement at the humanitarian–development nexus – moving from refugee and earthquake response efforts towards development-oriented interventions – lacked a strategic progression grounded in a comprehensive understanding of WFP's internal capacities and comparative advantages in livelihood and recovery programming. The shift into these areas was driven more by external funding opportunities than by a long-term needs-based strategy, which limited the depth, scale and sustainability of interventions.
  21. WFP's humanitarian assistance and emergency response maintained strong **internal coherence**, leveraging the organization's comparative advantages in emergency response, CBTs and food assistance delivery. In contrast, both livelihood interventions and recovery programming lacked well-defined, evidence-based strategies, thus undermining coherence and feasibility. This was manifested in an underdeveloped intervention and scale-up logic, capacity gaps and insufficient stakeholder engagement.
  22. **WFP adapted to evolving needs in Türkiye** through programmatic adjustments and budget revisions. In doing so, WFP was able to respond to shocks that greatly affected the refugee population, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the prolonged economic downturn and inflation. In its response to the February 2023 earthquakes, which left a large share of the population in the south-east of the country without access to needs, WFP also demonstrated its capacity to quickly adapt to a new food security challenge. Conversely, the evaluation found that WFP could have adapted more effectively to external factors such as inflation and economic pressures, which limited the purchasing power of households in receipt of CBTs, particularly large households.

### Effectiveness and sustainability

**WFP's humanitarian and emergency responses have proven effective in meeting immediate needs and managing crises, but its development work in livelihoods and recovery has struggled to achieve sustainable results at scale. Legal and social barriers for refugees, economic shocks and its own internal planning gaps have collectively hindered WFP's ability to bridge the gap between emergency response and sustainable development.**

23. **WFP's refugee and emergency responses under outcome 1 of the CSP for 2023–2025 have effectively contributed to stabilizing beneficiaries' living conditions** and improving their access to essential services in a timely manner. The ESSN and camp e-voucher programmes significantly contributed to improving refugee welfare and food security, helping to reduce debt, limit the use of negative coping strategies and increase access to education. However, these positive effects were countered by inflation and the Government's cautious approach to increasing transfer amounts – aimed at maintaining parity with the national social security system and reducing tensions with host communities. While transfer values were adjusted, the changes were not sufficient to offset the impacts of inflation.
24. **WFP successfully developed institutional capacity**, as demonstrated by the effective handover and subsequent management of the ESSN programme by the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), which has made use of well-developed systems for beneficiary enrolment,

verification, transfer management, reconciliation, monitoring and coordination, as well as beneficiary outreach and information strategies.

25. **WFP's continuing e-voucher programme for refugees residing in camps has shown mixed results.** Although the programme offers autonomy in purchasing (contributing to psychosocial support, well-being and dignity), the assistance amount was insufficient to cover basic needs, especially for vulnerable people such as refugees with disabilities, older individuals, and households with only one adult member. During the period under evaluation, the Government implemented a camp decongestion strategy, which reduced the number of camp residents in receipt of assistance from 50,000 to 40,000. This led to a corresponding decline in e-voucher transfers.
26. **WFP's earthquake response was notably effective** in terms of scale and speed, highlighting the organization's capacity to respond rapidly and flexibly during large-scale emergencies. The operational success of the response is reflected in the large number of beneficiaries reached and the proactive adaptation of CBT assistance to meet evolving needs and to adjust for inflation. WFP's decision to invest the remaining emergency response funds into **earthquake recovery efforts was timely. The activities were appropriately targeted** and tailored to rebuild local food production systems and restore market functionality. However, early recovery interventions **showed mixed results** due to limited scale, funding constraints and a resource-intensive design that focused primarily on individuals. Considering the effort needed to address broader goals such as value chain restoration and regional economic revitalization, these interventions have yet to yield strong outcomes.
27. As part of the earthquake emergency response, **WFP provided valuable logistics and emergency telecommunications support** to the Government and the humanitarian community. This service was assessed to be effective in terms of speed and scale. The emergency telecommunications service extended connectivity to all humanitarian hubs, providing critical communications infrastructure during the early response. Logistics services included storage and transportation in three regional hubs, as well as local mobile storage units. WFP's critical added value was also proven in its facilitation of links between local and international logistics partners for the crisis response.
28. **The development-oriented activities under outcome 2 of the CSP for 2023–2025,<sup>15</sup> such as livelihood initiatives and technical assistance, faced significant barriers that limited their long-term results.** Livelihood initiatives achieved short-term gains in employability for participants, and the inclusion of vulnerable members of host communities contributed to increased social cohesion. However, these successes did not translate into sustainable development outcomes beyond the individual level, with the programme's effectiveness being undermined by challenges relating to scalability, misalignment with labour market needs, and missed opportunities to engage key national stakeholders. Legal and social barriers facing refugees – such as difficulties in entering the Turkish labour market, and cultural norms limiting women's ability to join the workforce – hampered the programme's ability to foster lasting economic self-reliance and integration for a broader group of refugees.

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<sup>15</sup> Under the T-ICSP and the ICSP, the livelihood activity was implemented under strategic outcome 1.

29. **Under outcome 3 of the CSP for 2023–2025, WFP and the Ministry of National Education jointly conducted a cost-benefit analysis of school meals.** This study corroborated the findings of the Education Reform Initiative, which found that one quarter of school-aged children in Türkiye attend school hungry. As of the finalization of this evaluation, no concrete steps had been taken to advance the collaboration between the Government and WFP in this domain.
30. WFP successfully strengthened the capacity of the TRC, helping to ensure a **sustainable handover** of the ESSN programme. Under the livelihood programme, WFP also invested in complementing the efforts of national institutions, such as the Turkish employment agency (ISKUR) and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye, to increase sustainability. WFP's interventions in Türkiye supported the integration of humanitarian and development-focused activities, facilitating the transition from food assistance to livelihood programmes. However, inconsistent entry points into national frameworks and systems – notably, limited collaboration with the Ministry of National Education – limited their potential for scale-up.

### Results achieved on cross-cutting themes

**WFP's interventions in Türkiye upheld humanitarian principles and reached the most vulnerable population groups, but their effectiveness was hampered by limited direct engagement with food-insecure and crisis-affected populations; gaps in community feedback mechanisms; uneven access of beneficiaries to assistance; and minimal integration of environmental considerations. These shortcomings ultimately hindered WFP's ability to achieve lasting results.**

31. WFP's interventions in Türkiye **adhered to humanitarian principles and inclusion**, ensuring that assistance was impartial and based on needs. For example, WFP's advocacy in relation to transfer values and partnerships with national actors, including TRC and ISKUR, ensured that assistance remained needs-based, while the use of cash assistance provided dignified access to services, thereby empowering beneficiaries to make their own choices.
32. In terms of **accountability to affected people**, the closure of the community feedback mechanism following the handover of the ESSN programme created gaps in WFP's capacity to consistently engage with affected people. These gaps were only addressed when a new hotline opened in September 2024. This ultimately reduced WFP's understanding of and responsiveness to the concerns and needs of affected people; a situation compounded by inadequate efforts to provide information and hold structured consultations with beneficiaries and cooperating partners during the design of the programme.
33. WFP achieved near parity between women and men in terms of beneficiary numbers. However, despite notable efforts by WFP to design programmes with a focus on equitable access principles, disaggregated data collection and targeted training, some **gaps persisted in mainstreaming equitable access** consistently across CSP activities. As exemplified by its CBT assistance, WFP's ambition to ensure equality for women and men was more aspirational than practical, mainly due to systemic barriers that continued to undermine the sustainability of these efforts. WFP's blanket approach to its CBT assistance programmes – in which provisions for households with specific vulnerabilities were lacking – has not succeeded in promoting equal access and benefits for women within the Turkish population and the refugee community. Since 2017, WFP's referral mechanisms linking refugees to protection actors and service providers have supported refugees affected by gender-based violence and other vulnerabilities. However, gaps in the implementation of those mechanisms – including limited household visits, insufficient needs assessments and a lack

of conflict analysis – have hindered their ability to address systemic barriers to the achievement of equality between men and women.

34. WFP has made **good progress in disability inclusion**. The introduction of the severe disability allowance in 2018 ensured that CBTs were responsive to the financial burdens associated with living with a disability and demonstrated progress in accommodating the specific needs of families caring for members with disabilities. Although disability considerations have not been systematically embedded in livelihood and earthquake recovery interventions, during the CSP for 2023–2025, more systematic collection and reporting of disability data began to emerge, marking a step forward in this domain.
35. The three CSPs largely overlooked the **integration of environmental dimensions**. The environmental implications of various interventions in livelihoods, emergency response and recovery remain in the early stages and lack a systematic approach. However, since 2024, advancements have been made in the use of environmental and social sustainability screening tools for field-level agreements and refugee programmes.

### Resourcing and efficiency

**During the period under evaluation, WFP effectively utilized flexible donor funding and advance financing to sustain operations for the ESSN programme and earthquake response efforts. However, the cost-efficiency and scalability of interventions were limited by the absence of a clear resource mobilization strategy; a reliance on short-term funding; and resource-intensive interventions, particularly in the livelihood and earthquake recovery programmes.**

36. For the ESSN programme and WFP's response to the 2023 earthquakes, **WFP benefited from relatively stable and flexible donor funding and advance financing** to support the continuity of its operations. This enabled more efficient allocation of resources to meet priorities. WFP reprioritized its ICSP and CSP interventions to address evolving needs, funding volatility and operational challenges. However, without this emergency-driven funding, there would have been significant challenges to operational continuity. This situation led WFP to adopt an opportunistic approach to resource allocation after the ESSN programme handover, which limited its ability to develop a cohesive, long-term strategic approach for more development-oriented interventions.
37. **The absence of a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy** or approach, combined with the low profile that WFP maintained over the reference period, hindered WFP's ability to plan for long-term needs. In addition, development-oriented donors in Türkiye typically prefer partners with lower or negotiable overhead rates; WFP's fixed indirect support cost rate limited its flexibility in this regard.
38. **WFP's humanitarian CBT assistance demonstrated timely targeting and delivery**, with the ESSN programme utilizing 99 percent of its budget prior to the handover. WFP made timely adjustments to its CBT assistance to address challenges such as the depreciation of the Turkish lira and inflation. The earthquake response, which attracted significant funding through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee earthquake appeal, was also marked by strong cost-efficiency, benefiting from WFP's field presence, rapid mobilization, and partnerships with other actors, all of which facilitated operations. The camp e-voucher programme demonstrated cost-efficiency through streamlined operations and the contracting of corporate supermarkets, which minimized transaction and administrative costs.
39. **The cost-efficiency of the livelihood programme was low**, hindered by high per-beneficiary costs and scalability concerns. While support was beneficial for targeted individuals, the programme's limited broader impact raises questions about its overall

cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness compared to other types of WFP support. Similarly, the lack of a clear strategy in terms of initial resource allocation and planning during the set-up of the **earthquake recovery programme** undermined cost-efficiency and the potential to generate sustainable outcomes at scale.

### **Factors affecting WFP performance**

**WFP's partnerships contributed to programme delivery, but a lack of strategic engagement, low visibility and inconsistent coordination undermined its ability to fully leverage partnerships for more effective programme implementation.**

40. **Some of WFP's partnerships – such as those with the TRC, ISKUR and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye – produced strong results**, helping to enhance programme implementation. WFP's engagement with government institutions varied across programme components. Strong collaboration was evident in the ESSN programme, e-voucher programme and earthquake response efforts, where WFP's partnerships with national institutions and private companies enabled swift access to earthquake-affected areas and rapid resource mobilization. However, WFP's generally low profile prevented deeper collaboration and strategic alignment with the Government and the donor community, and limited opportunities for joint action and constructive feedback loops, particularly for development-oriented activities. This was compounded by the absence of a more deliberate partnership strategy, which could have helped to strengthen WFP's position in the country. Additionally, inconsistent participation in United Nations coordination structures led to unnecessary and avoidable duplication and inefficiencies.
41. **Collaboration with private sector actors yielded notable results** in certain areas, particularly in the livelihood and earthquake response programmes. During earthquake response efforts, timely support from the private sector filled critical gaps, demonstrating the value of the private sector in complementing humanitarian efforts. Furthermore, partnerships with the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye resulted in vocational training and job placements. Despite these successes, WFP's engagement with the private sector lacked strategic depth, with partnerships often formed on a project-by-project basis rather than as part of a broader vision for private sector collaboration.
42. **Over the years, WFP has attempted to diversify its pool of cooperating partners**, in line with its evolving portfolio, particularly following the ESSN programme handover. From 2021 onwards, reflecting its increased focus on livelihoods, the country office has engaged with new private sector partners, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye and local non-governmental organizations. During the period under evaluation, engagement with cooperating partners remained primarily transactional, with limited opportunities for meaningful participation beyond implementation. Due to a lack of opportunities for input during programme design and overall decision making, new and existing partners were engaged mainly as service providers rather than strategic collaborators.
43. **WFP struggled to align human resources with the evolution of its programming in Türkiye**, adopting an ad hoc approach to recruitment that lacked strategic workforce planning. This was reflected in the restructuring process following the handover of the ESSN programme, which led to significant staff reductions and reassignment of monitoring staff to livelihood roles. The result was a mismatch of skillsets and inadequate retraining opportunities, which reduced staff morale and, consequently, operational efficiency and effectiveness. A second restructuring exercise took place in 2024, resulting in a further reduction and the closure of most suboffices in the country, with offices maintained in Gaziantep, Mersin and Hatay only.

44. **WFP adheres to corporate monitoring and evaluation guidelines in Türkiye, producing high-quality, disaggregated monitoring data** capable of capturing diverse beneficiary needs. During the period under evaluation, the country office mostly used data to support evidence-based programming or adjustments, particularly during the implementation of the ESSN programme. However, the evaluation found that WFP's knowledge management systems remain underdeveloped, notably in terms of systematically documenting decision-making processes and underlying rationales to support institutional memory.

## Summary of lessons learned

45. The evaluation compiled lessons learned from the consecutive CSPs implemented in Türkiye, with a view to generating insights relevant for WFP more broadly.
- **To achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes in resource-constrained settings, programmes should leverage partnerships, integrate complementary interventions and prioritize multisectoral solutions.** WFP's livelihood and earthquake recovery programmes were effective in supporting individual beneficiaries but failed to scale up sufficiently to drive systemic change. Future approaches should align with development frameworks and engage a diverse range of stakeholders.
  - **Economic competition between host communities and refugees can intensify social tensions; it is therefore critical that livelihood programmes emphasize mutual benefits.** The experience in Türkiye with vocational training and community-based value chains shows that collaboration between host and refugee communities, economic empowerment and social cohesion can be promoted to foster resilience and integration.
  - **Humanitarian CBTs can be particularly beneficial when tailored to women's specific needs from the start.** In Türkiye, a lack of attention to the specific needs of women and men constrained gains in women's autonomy. Future WFP programmes should analyse specific needs through beneficiary consultations, offer personalized registration and benefit options, and monitor outcomes for women and men.
  - **Integrating humanitarian programmes into national social protection systems boosts scalability, efficiency and sustainability while avoiding parallel structures.** In Türkiye, integrating the ESSN programme into national systems enabled its rapid expansion, enhanced accessibility and long-term sustainability, and strengthened the capacity of the national system.
  - **Proactively integrating protection into cash-based assistance programmes enhances the capacity of such programmes to identify and address vulnerability among beneficiaries.** Embedding oversight of protection and incorporating feedback systems into CBT programmes proved crucial to providing better services for beneficiaries in Türkiye. WFP's standardized data processing generates insights that enable timely adjustments of programming.
  - **Balancing WFP's cost structure with donor preferences for flexible overhead rates is essential for programmes to remain competitive and secure funding in development-focused settings.** In Türkiye, donor preferences for lower or flexible overheads have conflicted with WFP's fixed 6.5 percent rate, pointing to the need for WFP to align its funding models with operational circumstances.



## Recommendations

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP office and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<b>Recommendation 1. Strategically reposition WFP in Türkiye, considering WFP's recognized global comparative advantages, and – in a context of low funding levels – establish contingency plans to ensure programme viability, including through the development of strategic partnerships.</b>	Strategic	Country office	Middle East, Northern Africa and Eastern Europe Regional Office (MENAEEERO)	High	Fourth quarter 2025
<b>1.1 Consolidate WFP's value proposition when developing the new CSP.</b> Focus on a smaller number of high-impact interventions where WFP offers unique value, notably in the areas of refugee assistance, community resilience, and emergency preparedness and response.	Operational	Country office	MENAEEERO	High	Third quarter 2025
<b>1.2 Develop strategic partnerships, communication strategies and a knowledge management system.</b> WFP should implement a comprehensive partnership and communication strategy, framed by the CSP, to solidify its position in the country and guide engagement with key stakeholders including government entities, United Nations partners, donors, local non-governmental partners and private sector actors. WFP should also develop a knowledge management system to retain institutional memory.	Operational	Country office	MENAEEERO	High	First quarter 2026
<b>1.3 Identify a minimum viable funding level to maintain core operations in Türkiye.</b> Draft a resource mobilization strategy aimed at securing funding from diverse funding sources to support a coherent CSP, ideally as part of the CSP development process. This should include contingency implementation models (e.g. regional cost-sharing mechanisms supported by MENAEEERO and WFP headquarters, or other models) to ensure programme continuity throughout the CSP period. By combining funding diversification and adaptable implementation structures, WFP can sustain operations effectively, even under financial constraints.	Operational	Country office	MENAEEERO	High	Third quarter 2025

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<b>1.4 Develop and implement a strategic staffing plan</b> to align human resources with the operational needs of the CSP, thereby ensuring adequate capacity and expertise for effective implementation.	Operational	Country office	MENAEERO	High	Third quarter 2025
<b>1.5 Strengthen equitable access to programmes through targeted, data-driven approaches and closer engagement with beneficiaries through mechanisms for accountability to affected people and community feedback.</b> WFP should leverage data disaggregated by population group, beneficiary type and disability status to design programmes that benefit target groups with diverse needs. WFP should also embed protection and measures relating to accountability to affected people to ensure that beneficiary views are heard and acted upon and that no one is left behind.	Strategic	Country office	MENAEERO	High	From the third quarter 2025 onwards
<b>Recommendation 2. In line with national priorities, develop a strategic framework (covering intervention logic, monitoring, partnership engagement, and environmental considerations) to strengthen community resilience.</b>	Thematic	Country office	MENAEERO	High	First quarter 2026
<b>2.1 Draft a clear intervention logic with a robust monitoring system to define expected results</b> and outline how to reach them. Closely reflecting the intervention logic, the monitoring system will allow for an assessment of the effectiveness of resilience-building activities, tracking both short- and long-term results.	Operational	Country office	MENAEERO	High	First quarter 2026
<b>2.2 Deepen engagement</b> with local governments, communities, cooperating partners and other relevant stakeholders to build ownership, help align WFP's activities with local needs and ensure sustainability beyond the intervention.	Operational	Country office	MENAEERO	High	From the first quarter 2026 onwards
<b>2.3 Ensure that environmental considerations are systematically integrated into the design, implementation and monitoring of local resilience-building activities.</b> This includes strengthening mitigation measures identified in environmental screenings, embedding best practices in relation to sustainability (e.g. climate-smart agriculture and eco-friendly supply chain approaches), and enhancing monitoring frameworks to track environmental outcomes throughout project implementation.	Operational	Country office	MENAEERO	Medium	From the first quarter 2026 onwards

Recommendations and sub-recommendations	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP office and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<b>Recommendation 3. Support the Government's efforts to enhance emergency preparedness and response capacity in areas prone to shocks and stressors, particularly at the subnational level.</b>	Thematic	Country office	MENAEERO, WFP headquarters	High	From the third quarter 2025 onwards
<b>3.1 Assess government interest in WFP's support for emergency preparedness and response to determine areas where WFP can add value.</b> Engage in discussions with national and local authorities to understand emergency preparedness and response priorities in areas prone to shocks and stressors – particularly at the subnational level – and explore potential roles for WFP within the existing emergency preparedness and response framework.	Operational	Country office	MENAEERO	High	Third quarter 2025
<b>3.2 Strengthen WFP's capacity to support local and national readiness and response</b> by ensuring that expertise in emergency preparedness and response, community resilience and capacity development is in place and strategically positioned at the national and provincial levels, focusing on areas where WFP has an active operational presence and established partnerships.	Operational	Country office	MENAEERO	High	Third quarter 2025

**Acronyms**

CBT	cash-based transfer
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
ESSN	emergency social safety net
ICSP	interim country strategic plan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISKUR	Turkish employment agency
NBP	needs-based plan
T-ICSP	transitional interim country strategic plan
TRC	Turkish Red Crescent
UNSDCF	United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework