

# **POLICY ON COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLANS**



**FOURTH DRAFT**

**Informal Consultation**

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**World Food Programme**  
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## **Executive Summary**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and commitments in the World Humanitarian Summit's Grand Bargain make clear that sustainable development, including ending hunger and improving nutrition, depends on effective partnerships that span both humanitarian and development contexts. As the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing the challenges of global hunger and nutrition, WFP embraces this partnership imperative, seeking to align and integrate its food assistance capacities and programmes with interventions and investments of governments, other United Nations agencies and a range of actors from the private sector and civil society, which can together generate the systemic changes needed for sustainable development. Partnership and collective action at the country level are at the heart of the global call to action of the 2030 Agenda. The WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021) affirms and deepens this commitment. As WFP focuses on its core business of saving lives, it will do so in ways that contribute to building resilience and stimulating productive opportunities for poor and marginalized people over the longer term.

WFP has used projects in a range of programme categories to implement its operations at the country level. Country strategies were introduced in 2009 to help WFP deliver coherent, focused portfolios of assistance. These country strategies have not been mandatory and have been internally endorsed, without Board approval. The project-based approach has significant limitations including: i) high transaction costs resulting from fragmentation among projects; ii) limited coordination among different operation types; iii) lack of synergy between strategic and programme planning; and iv) limited opportunity for the Board to provide strategic oversight and governance.

This Policy on Country Strategic Plans outlines WFP's approach to strategic and programmatic planning at the country-level. WFP's programme categories and project documents will be replaced by Country Strategic Plans that provide the framework for coherent country portfolios.

Country Strategic Plans respond to the increasingly complex world in which WFP operates. While WFP's larger operations address protracted humanitarian needs resulting from conflict and disasters, several challenges to global food security and nutrition are emerging. Guided by WFP's Strategic Plan (2017–2021), the Country Strategic Plan approach leverages WFP's strengths and capacities in humanitarian response and recovery, seizing opportunities to apply these capabilities beyond saving lives.

The approach has been informed by reviews and evaluations; best practices in other organizations; and lessons learned through experience in selected countries. The approach seeks to: i) support countries in making progress towards zero hunger; ii) operationalize the WFP Strategic Plan at the country level; and iii) enhance strategic coherence, focus, operational effectiveness and partnerships to provide better support to efforts to address food insecurity and malnutrition, including in emergencies and protracted crises.

The approach has two core elements: a national strategic review that identifies what is needed to achieve zero hunger in line with Sustainable Development Goal 2; and preparation of a Country Strategic Plan that identifies WFP's role in achieving outcomes in conjunction with other partners, including in conflict and protracted crises and when responding to disaster.

Combined with new financial and corporate results frameworks, Country Strategic Plans have the potential to improve the quality of WFP's assistance by: i) identifying WFP's specific contributions within a country; ii) establishing the basis for effective partnerships, including with the Rome-based agencies; iii) increasing effectiveness and efficiency in emergency response; iv) aligning WFP's contribution with national Sustainable Development Goal targets and national and United Nations plans; v) providing greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts; vi) integrating capacity building and resource mobilization more fully; vii) reducing transaction costs; and viii) enhancing performance reporting and accountability. The results-oriented focus of Country Strategic Plans clarifies the relationships between resources deployed and results achieved while linking strategic, programme and operational planning.

Country Strategic Plans will be vehicles for resource mobilization and management. They will ensure compliance with Board decisions and adhere to guidelines and procedures regarding the allocation of multilateral contributions for development.<sup>1</sup>

## **Draft decision**

The Executive Board:

- *approves* the Policy on Country Strategic Plans (WFP/EB.2/2016/xxx) (the CSP Policy);
- *requests* the *Executive* Director to submit Country Strategic Plans containing pilot country portfolio budgets for Executive Board approval in 2017 (pilot CSPs);
- *notes* that the CSP Policy provides for modification of WFP's existing programme categories, and accordingly *authorizes*, pending normative amendments expected to be approved at EB.2/2017, the temporary application to the pilot CSPs of provisions of the WFP General Rules and Financial Regulations referring to existing programme categories as if such references were to the Country Strategic Plan; and
- *requests* the Secretariat to propose for Executive Board approval at EB.2/2017 amendments to the programmatic terminology employed in WFP General Rules and Financial Regulations to accommodate the Country Strategic Plans framework.

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<sup>1</sup> WFP Strategic Resource Allocation Committee. SRAC Guidelines and Procedures (III) – Allocation of Multilateral Contributions (for Development).

## Introduction

1. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World* report from 2015<sup>2</sup> states: “Over the past 30 years, the typology of crises has gradually evolved from catastrophic, short-term, acute and highly visible events to more structural, longer-term and protracted situations [...]. In other words, protracted crises have become the new norm, while acute short-term crises are now the exception.” The Committee on World Food Security adopted the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises in 2015,<sup>3</sup> in recognition of the impact on affected populations of food insecurity and undernutrition.
2. WFP’s mandate allows it to apply development tools and perspectives to its humanitarian responses, providing communities with early recovery and development-enabling interventions that help build resilience and contribute to productive opportunities over the long term. Through this mandate, WFP’s experience in both humanitarian and development contexts has enabled it to establish unique strengths and capacities to support food security and nutrition, including in contexts of protracted crisis.
3. In keeping with the 2030 Agenda and commitments in the Grand Bargain emerging from the World Humanitarian Summit,<sup>4</sup> as WFP focuses on its core business of saving lives, it must do so in ways that contribute to outcomes that provide productive opportunities over the longer term, collaborating across institutional boundaries at the humanitarian–development–peacebuilding nexus while ensuring that it does not deviate from the humanitarian principles. In the language of the Grand Bargain, “The ultimate aim is to shrink humanitarian needs over the long term with the view of contributing to the outcomes of the Sustainable Development Goals.” Prevention, mitigation and preparedness for early action are critical. The Strategic Plan (2017–2021) provides the framework for WFP to make significant contributions in these areas in different contexts.
4. This policy outlines WFP’s strategic approach to planning, programming and implementing activities and operations at the country level. The approach facilitates the effective and efficient implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, encompassing humanitarian as well as development efforts, and furthers alignment of WFP’s country planning with the plans of governments, other United Nations agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and a range of actors from the private sector and civil society. Country Strategic Plans (CSPs) consolidate WFP’s assistance in a given country, establishing a strategy for up to five years<sup>5</sup> and outlining programme and operational plans. In accordance with the arrangements outlined in this policy, WFP’s current programme categories and project documents will eventually be replaced by CSPs.
5. This policy prepares WFP to deliver on its commitments under the Strategic Plan and thus to play a crucial role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including through its strengths and effectiveness in emergencies, and supporting the Grand Bargain resulting from the World Humanitarian Summit. It recognizes the need for change and builds on WFP’s successful record and best practices while addressing gaps in strategic, programme and operational planning and implementation.
6. WFP’s strategic engagement and partnerships resulting from the CSP approach are context-specific and responsive, so not every Strategic Result in the Strategic Plan (2017–2021) will apply in every country at all times. The design and implementation of each CSP will reflect the needs in the specific country or region, the added value that WFP can bring in a particular time and place, and the presence and capabilities of other actors. WFP will work with partners to implement programmes that strengthen the capacity of communities and countries to manage

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<sup>2</sup> FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2015. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*, page 38. Rome.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/activities/cfs-fipc/en/>

<sup>4</sup> “The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need.” World Humanitarian Summit, Istanbul, Turkey, 23 May 2016.

<sup>5</sup> CSPs are expected to last for five years; exceptions may be granted to accommodate operational considerations.

underlying risks, save lives and livelihoods, and ultimately end hunger. WFP will select the appropriate tool or mix of tools based on a rigorous analysis of needs and context, beneficiary preferences, operational goals, efficiency and evidence of potential impact.

7. The CSP approach presented in this policy has been under development since 2014 and is informed by internal evidence, reviews and evaluations; broad consultations, including with the Board; best practices in other organizations; and lessons learned through experience in selected countries.

## **Rationale for the Country Strategic Plan Approach**

### **The Current Planning Architecture**

8. In delivering on its mandate, WFP currently implements projects in the following programme categories depending on the specific needs and context:<sup>6</sup>
  - Emergency operations (EMOPs) are WFP's responses to new emergency needs and last for up to one year, with the possibility of extension for one more year.<sup>7</sup> Their emphasis is on saving lives, reducing malnutrition and protecting livelihoods.
  - Protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) respond to needs for up to three years and may be extended for a maximum of three years. They focus on re-establishing and stabilizing livelihoods and food security to the extent possible, while providing relief as necessary.
  - Development programmes comprise country programmes (CPs) and development projects (DEVs). CPs last for up to five years and include several components, while DEVs are generally limited to a single activity.
  - Special operations (SOs) are undertaken to rehabilitate and enhance transport and logistics infrastructure to facilitate the timely and efficient delivery of food assistance, especially for emergency and protracted relief, and to enhance coordination within the United Nations system and with other partners through the provision of common services.
  - Trust funds are not a programme category in themselves, but are used as mechanisms for programming extra-budgetary resources received as contributions for specified purposes – such as providing services to governments, development partners and other United Nations organizations – that do not fall within one of the four programme categories but that are consistent with WFP's objectives and policies.<sup>8</sup>
9. Country strategy outlines were presented to the Board for information and guidance in tandem with development projects until the end of 2002. Since 2009, country strategy documents have been used to guide WFP's delivery of coherent and strategically focused assistance through its operations in a country. These documents, which focused on strategic direction, were voluntary, endorsed internally and not submitted to the Board for approval.

### **Limitations Addressed by the Country Strategic Plan Approach**

#### ***High transaction costs resulting from fragmentation among projects***

10. Fragmentation among projects with different approval processes, durations and planning cycles increases the transaction burden of internal processes. The multiple processes required to design, draft, submit, approve, implement and manage each project limit efficiency and significantly increase transaction costs in terms of time and resources. In addition, the fragmented approach to programming among projects limits coherence among activities.

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<sup>6</sup> For a list of the purposes of WFP programmes, projects and activities, see Article II of WFP General Regulations.

<sup>7</sup> See "Definition of Emergencies" (WFP/EB.1/2005/4-A/Rev.1).

<sup>8</sup> Extra-budgetary resources are available for implementing activities that are within WFP's regulatory framework, but are not explicitly approved by the Board.

### ***Limited coordination among different project types***

11. In 2015, 42 of WFP's 75 country offices implemented projects in more than one programme category, excluding trust funds and regional operations. Each programme category has its own strategy, which is often not synchronized with those of other categories. In 2001, the Board recommended re-examining the use of different instruments for development, relief and emergency assistance. Members pointed out that the existence of separate programme categories often led to the perception that humanitarian and development activities in a country were not coordinated.<sup>9</sup>
12. A 2010 programme category review<sup>10</sup> attempted to clarify the relationship between programme categories and WFP's Strategic Objectives in order to address perceived inconsistencies in use of programme categories. The review found that the project-based approach continued to fall short of promoting interconnections between humanitarian and development responses, linkages that are essential in recovery and transition contexts, and for achieving sustainable results. A fragmented approach to response also tended to reduce the effectiveness of assistance.

### ***Lack of synergy between strategic and programme planning***

13. As country strategies are optional and focus on higher-level objectives, they have not always contributed to effective programme design and implementation, thereby limiting the potential impact of assistance. One of the main concerns raised during the 2013 business process review regarded the unclear relationship between country strategies and project documents. In many cases, the contents of the two documents overlap, while in others there is no readily identifiable link between them.
14. The short duration of many projects adds to the challenge of achieving outcomes.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Limited strategic oversight and governance***

15. The business process review also raised concerns about the rationale for having project documents approved by the Board and country strategies approved by an internal committee, when the latter are intended to provide a strategic framework for the former. Its review of isolated project documents gives the Board a fragmented picture of WFP's work in a country, reducing its ability to provide strategic oversight and guidance. This has sometimes left Board members feeling overwhelmed by the volume of projects, making it difficult to provide meaningful, strategic inputs to or guidance on WFP's work and/or positioning at the country level. In the 2014 statistics on the use of Board time, the Executive Board Bureau noted that the Board spent close to 40 percent of its time discussing and approving individual operations and welcomed a review of how this time could be used more strategically. Furthermore, a large proportion of WFP's interventions – those that are included in EMOPs, as well as activities supported by trust funds – are not submitted for approval by the Executive Board, further reducing the ability of the Executive Board to advise strategically on WFP's portfolio in a country.

### **Opportunities for improvement**

16. In 2011, WFP's Oversight Office reviewed the country strategy process internally<sup>12</sup> and drew the following conclusions and recommendations:
  - An improved country strategy document could become the main channel through which the Board approves WFP's plans in a given country, but the review and approval process needs to be adjusted.

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<sup>9</sup> WFP/EB.3/2001/INF/20.

<sup>10</sup> WFP/EB.A/2010/11/Rev.1.

<sup>11</sup> The synthesis of four strategic evaluations undertaken in 2011 on various dimensions of the transition from food aid to food assistance under the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013) pointed out that the short-term project approach limited the potential of the strategic planning process. Office of Evaluation. 2012. *Four Strategic Evaluations on the Transition from Food Aid to Food Assistance: A Synthesis (Full Version)* (OE/2012/S002).

<sup>12</sup> Oversight Office/Office of Internal Audit (OSA). 2011. *Internal Review: Country Strategy Process Review – Advisory Services Report*.

- The internal review process should be improved to ensure better communication of corporate issues during the early stages of country strategic planning and to derive corporate benefit from lessons learned and best practices.
  - The internal management committees reviewing country strategies and project documents should be merged to ensure that operations reflect strategic plans.
  - Adequate resources and support should be made available to ensure capacity in strategic planning at the country level.
  - A policy paper should be submitted to the Board on using the country strategy as the main document for obtaining the Board’s approval of WFP operations in a country and delegating the approval of subsidiary documents that is currently with the Board.
17. The potential for improving country strategies to incorporate new ways in which WFP can contribute to national food security and nutrition initiatives was also identified in the four strategic evaluations referenced in footnote 11.<sup>13</sup> Since 2013, WFP’s Annual Evaluation Report has also consistently highlighted this potential. The 2013 Annual Evaluation Report reaffirmed the importance of country strategies and recommended clarifying their role in WFP’s governance, partnership, strategic and operational frameworks. The 2014 Annual Evaluation Report recommended that WFP clarify, communicate and implement requirements for country office strategic planning and establish them as the basis for systematic long-term planning and performance management of country portfolios, with attention to national contexts, capacities, partnerships and funding. The 2015 Annual Evaluation Report recommended increasing the focus of the country strategy process to align it with national and local systems.

## **The Country Strategic Plan Approach**

18. The CSP approach builds on the achievements of the current planning architecture and exploits opportunities for improvement.

### **The evolving context of hunger**

19. Nearly 800 million people – 11 percent of the world’s population – are undernourished, 25 percent of the world’s children are stunted,<sup>14</sup> and approximately 2 billion people suffer from micronutrient deficiencies.<sup>15</sup> Most of these people live without social protection, often amid conflict and instability. Conflicts are becoming increasingly complex and protracted, with the resultant protracted displacements reaching their highest levels since the 1940s. More than 125 million people are currently affected by humanitarian crises.<sup>16</sup> On average, in 2014 and 2015, WFP provided direct food assistance to more than 78 million people per year in 82 countries; approximately 42 percent of expenditure was on emergency operations, 38.5 percent on early recovery activities, 6.9 percent on development activities and 7.6 percent on special operations; 77 percent of food transfers and 89 percent of cash-based transfers (CBTs) went to saving lives and protecting livelihoods in emergencies. This support ensured that the food security of emergency-affected populations was stabilized or improved through general distributions of food, or CBTs, which increased food consumption and dietary diversity. Activities were also conducted to prevent deterioration in nutrition and related mortality and to support acutely malnourished people in emergencies.

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<sup>13</sup> These four strategic evaluations examined: i) WFP’s role in social protection and safety nets; ii) WFP’s role in ending long-term hunger; iii) from food aid to food assistance – working in partnership; and iv) how country offices adapt to change.

<sup>14</sup> FAO. 2015. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World – Meeting International Hunger Targets: Taking Stock of Uneven Progress*. Rome.

<sup>15</sup> FAO. 2013. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World – The Multiple Dimensions of Food Insecurity*. Rome.

<sup>16</sup> “Commitment to Action – Transcending humanitarian-development divides – Changing People’s Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need”. World Humanitarian Summit, Istanbul, Turkey, 23 May 2016.

20. Lack of gender equality and women’s empowerment hinders progress in all areas of sustainable development, especially ending poverty and hunger. In many countries, despite progress in reducing poverty overall, food insecurity, undernutrition and over-nutrition persist. Hunger is increasingly an urban challenge as well as a rural problem. Climate change increases risk for the poorest countries and most vulnerable people. These dynamics require all stakeholders to work together in combatting hunger, adapting their ways of working accordingly. The changing nature of food insecurity and food systems in individual countries means that responses must be tailored, adaptable and context-specific. For WFP, this requirement has led to a reconsideration of its approach to country-level actions based on lessons learned from its experience in many regions and contexts, and including the need to work in partnership. Improvement of country-level actions through the CSP approach is essential in enabling WFP to deliver on its objectives in evolving global and country-specific contexts.

### **Translating the Global Vision for Zero Hunger into Action**

21. In September 2015, world leaders formulated the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which sets out an ambitious 15-year timeframe for achieving sustainable development and ending poverty, hunger and inequality. The Agenda situates humanitarian action within the broader context of human progress and development, with a clear focus on the most vulnerable people and a strong commitment to leaving no one behind. The Agenda is led and driven by Member States, global in coverage and universally applicable; its 17 global goals are integrated and indivisible. Each government will set its own national targets, guided by the global vision of the goals and adapted to the national context.
22. Ending hunger must be achieved in the context of increasingly complex and protracted humanitarian needs. Building on WFP’s strengths and experience across its mandate, the development of this Policy on Country Strategic Plans is integrated with the formulation of a series of interrelated documents and processes starting with the Strategic Plan (2017–2021), the Corporate Results Framework (CRF), and a revamped financial framework. Together, this planning and budgeting architecture allows WFP to align relief, early recovery and development interventions accordingly, while upholding its commitment to prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable people in support of the 2030 Agenda. These comprehensive frameworks and tools will equip WFP to design and deliver efficient and effective emergency responses and coherent, strategy-focused portfolios that maximize impact at the country level.
23. The Strategic Plan (2017–2021) provides the overall framework for WFP’s contribution to achieving zero hunger. It prioritizes two goals – SDG 2 on achieving zero hunger, and SDG 17 on partnering to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda – while contributing to other SDGs depending on country contexts and national priorities. WFP has five Strategic Objectives, which relate to SDGs 2 and 17, and eight Strategic Results.
24. Although SDG 2 lies at the core of WFP’s mandate, it is clear that no single agency or entity owns any of the SDGs. To achieve progress on all the goals, including zero hunger, partnerships will be required that span across sectors and areas of expertise within countries and among partners, including WFP and the other Rome-based agencies.
25. The CRF consolidates the current Strategic Results Framework and the Management Results Framework to provide a holistic view of both operational and management results. WFP links its performance planning, monitoring and reporting system to the CRF while ensuring alignment to the Strategic Plan (2017–2021).



26. To achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, each country will determine, under government leadership, its own priorities and targets and the actions required to reach these. Similarly, WFP's Strategic Plan will be translated into country-level action through enhanced country strategic planning. In implementing the Strategic Plan, WFP will work closely with national stakeholders and United Nations country teams to determine how best to support national strategies to achieve zero hunger across contexts, making the necessary links across sectors and ensuring coherence with and support of countries' broader strategies.
27. WFP's revamped financial framework and the associated country portfolio budget provide a clear link from corporate strategy to resourcing for country-level results to activity-based resourcing. This linkage enhances transparency and accountability in determining WFP's contribution to zero hunger and the 2030 Agenda.

### **The Country Strategic Plan approach**

28. Local contexts provide the parameters for national needs and priorities and for WFP's strategic engagement and partnerships in a country. Context not only determines the priorities for action, but also affects how actions can be carried out and reflects the challenges that partners and people will face in achieving zero hunger. The 2030 Agenda emphasizes the importance of recognizing that some contexts involve greater challenges than others and thus have special needs for assistance.<sup>17</sup> Context-sensitive responses will require different actions in a single country and at different times, in line with the differing needs of women, men, girls and boys and their communities. It is therefore important that partners agree on the context to which they are responding and reflect it appropriately at the country-outcome level.
29. WFP's existing portfolio of policies and operations implemented in a range of contexts will make a significant contribution to a world seeking not just to end hunger and develop sustainably, but also to do so in ways that leave no one behind, strengthening capacities and building resilience along the way. The Strategic Plan defines a framework for realizing this opportunity, and the CSP approach operationalizes this framework at the country level. The approach is context-specific and -responsive; therefore, not every Strategic Result under the Strategic Plan (2017–2021) will apply to every country at all times.
30. The CSP approach seeks to: i) support countries in making progress towards zero hunger; ii) operationalize the WFP Strategic Plan at the country level from 2017 onwards; and iii) enhance strategic coherence, focus, operational effectiveness and partnerships to provide better support to efforts to address food insecurity and malnutrition, including in emergencies and protracted crises. The planning process has two core elements: a national zero hunger strategic review process followed by formulation of a WFP CSP. The approach maintains WFP's flexibility to respond to sudden changes in context, particularly emergencies, which will continue to be a major focus of WFP operations.

### **National Zero Hunger Strategic Reviews**

31. WFP's engagement at the country level should be formulated within the broader context of the country's efforts to achieve zero hunger by 2030, in line with SDG 2. In this regard, it will be important to have a country-owned national zero hunger strategic review to establish the baseline for the country, WFP and other partners. In addition to providing a baseline, strategic reviews identify priority actions and make recommendations that inform the strategic outcomes and action plans of governments, WFP and other national stakeholders and partners, including FAO and IFAD.

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<sup>17</sup> The 2030 Agenda, paragraph 56: "In deciding upon these Goals and targets, we recognize that each country faces specific challenges to achieve sustainable development, and we underscore the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small-island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing the middle-income countries. Countries in situations of conflict also need special attention."

32. A national zero hunger strategic review is an open, consultative and comprehensive analysis of the challenges the country faces in achieving zero hunger by 2030. It should identify gaps in the national policy framework and programmes; the economic environment, fiscal policy, financial requirements and funding sources as well as partnerships for the SDGs (SDG 17) and for achieving zero hunger; opportunities and requirements for collaboration with the public and private sectors; and the implementation capacities of government institutions and non-governmental partners at the national and local levels.
33. Working together with the other Rome-based agencies, WFP will participate in and support the facilitation of independent, country-led national zero hunger strategic reviews, including discussions of how government and national stakeholders, WFP and the country's other partners can best support national progress towards zero hunger. Led in country by a nationally recognized convener, strategic reviews bring together a wide range of government institutions and other national, multisector stakeholders. Strategic review reports are usually produced by independent institutions, in coordination with the government and other stakeholders. The review should be undertaken in line with the United Nations country team's work to deliver as one. Together the Rome-based agencies, including WFP, may also work to facilitate reviews in countries where there is no operational presence. The commitment to work together reflects the collective determination of the Rome-based agencies to partnering and collaborating, and to jointly supporting and championing the goal of achieving zero hunger.
34. The management and implementation of strategic reviews will reflect country conditions and capacities, and should include government participation and collaboration among a wide range of public and private, national and international stakeholders. Information and evidence from assessments and studies of the Rome-based agencies and others will feed into the reviews as relevant. Strategic reviews may be funded through various sources, including WFP resources and/or contributions from other actors. WFP will advocate for national funding of strategic reviews, as well as for joint Rome-based agency funding to be made available. Strategic review reports are country-owned documents that are not subject to the approval of the Board.

### **Country Strategic Plans**

35. CSPs are informed by country-led national zero hunger strategic reviews<sup>18</sup> or similar analyses as well as evaluations, assessments, feasibility studies, etc. They are developed in line with the planning processes of governments and United Nations country teams. CSPs will constitute a new framework for the implementation of programmes, projects and activities. They will replace separate project documents for CPs, DEVs, PRROs, EMOPs and SOs and will comprise WFP's entire humanitarian and development portfolio in a country.<sup>19</sup> CSPs will:
  - i) define WFP's position, role and specific contribution based on country needs and WFP's strengths;
  - ii) specify those outcomes determined by or with the government and partners to which WFP will contribute during the timeframe of the CSP; and
  - iii) identify the strategic guidance, resources and technical support that WFP will dedicate to maximizing its own contributions.
36. CSPs are designed for a period of up to five years. In circumstances such as conflict, WFP may develop CSPs of a reduced duration. The consultative analytical planning process enhances WFP's added value, fosters engagement with governments and convenes partners around a common approach to eliminating hunger. The plans align WFP's assistance with national and United Nations plans and programmes, and facilitate more effective attention to food security and nutrition.

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<sup>18</sup> Where it is not possible to undertake a strategic review, WFP's contribution to the achievement of national objectives will be defined in an Interim Country Framework until a strategic review has been conducted.

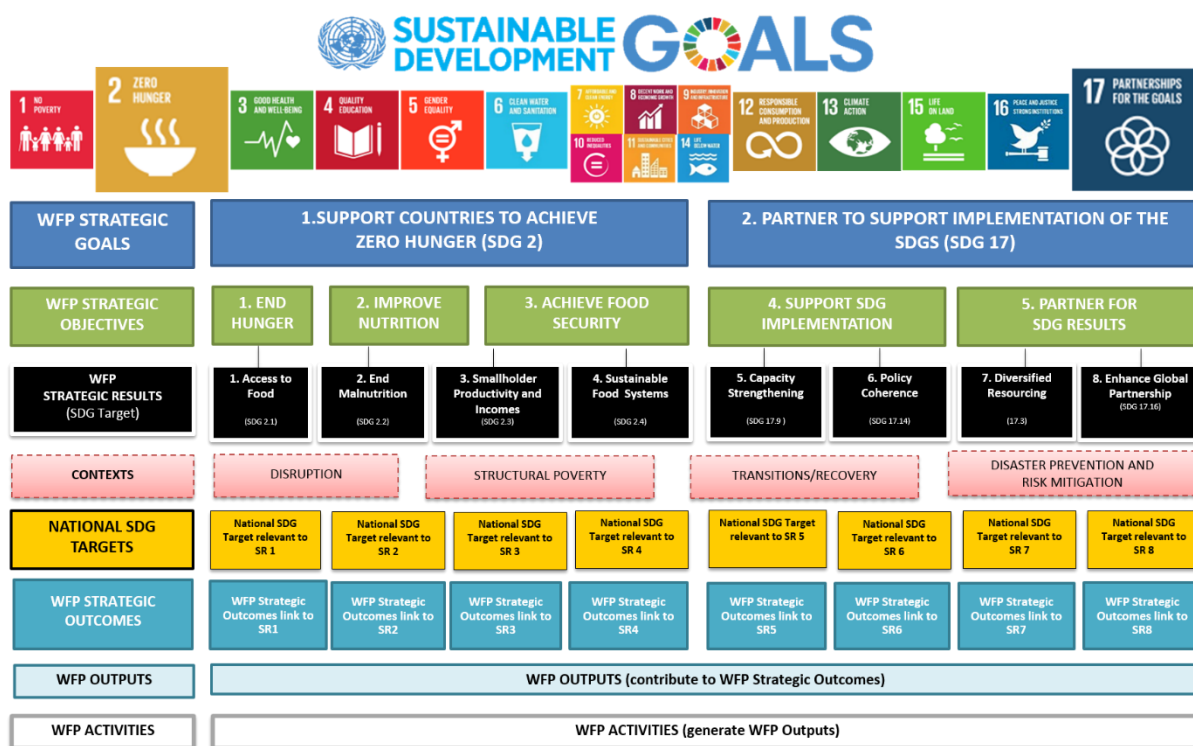
<sup>19</sup> Including activities funded from trust funds: although some activities or outcomes may continue to be funded by trust funds, the programmatic framework and rationale for them will be included in the CSP.

37. CSPs are structured around strategic outcomes that are linked to WFP Strategic Results and national SDG targets, and that WFP is well placed to support. Strategic outcomes span humanitarian and development contexts, including emergencies, protracted crises and structural poverty. WFP will determine with governments and other partners the strategic outcomes through which it can contribute towards SDG 2, SDG 17 and other SDGs, depending on the country context and national priorities. CSPs should also indicate the criteria and/or conditions under which WFP support might no longer be required.

**Focus on Results: Addressing the Gap between Strategic and Operational Planning**

38. A portfolio approach to strategic and operational planning at the country level for programmes, projects and activities enables WFP to integrate the strategic orientation of its assistance with performance management and budgeting processes to strengthen its capability to manage for results. Throughout its lifecycle, the design, planning, implementation, measurement, reporting and performance management of the CSP are based on its results chain, which clarifies the relationship between resources deployed and results achieved while linking strategic, programme and operational planning. The results chain of a CSP translates the results framework of the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021) to the country level, as illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021) results framework**



39. The CSP results chain is at the core of WFP’s results-based management approach at the country level. It provides a model that defines the necessary steps for achieving stated objectives, and outlines the causal relationships and underlying assumptions regarding how results are to be achieved. Figure 2 provides an example of the results chain of a CSP.

**Strategic Goals**

40. In a WFP CSP results chain, the highest-level results are WFP’s two Strategic Goals: Strategic Goal 1 is in line with SDG 2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; and Strategic Goal 2 with SDG 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. As noted in the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021), WFP’s prioritization of these two SDGs link its own history and mandate, and the interconnections among all 17 SDGs.

### ***Strategic Objectives***

41. Underpinning WFP's Strategic Goals are its five Strategic Objectives, which relate to the elements of SDG 2 and SDG 17 addressed by WFP. The Strategic Objectives frame WFP's programmatic and operational focus, and link the Strategic Goals to the Strategic Results through which WFP contributes to country and global efforts towards achievement of SDGs 2 and 17 and their targets.

### ***Strategic Results***

42. The Strategic Results elaborated in WFP's Strategic Plan (2017–2021) focus WFP's actions on what countries need rather than on what WFP can provide. WFP's eight Strategic Results are mapped to the SDG 2 and SDG 17 targets that are relevant to WFP's capacities and mandate, aligning WFP's support to national and global efforts on the SDGs. WFP CSPs contribute to the WFP Strategic Results that are relevant to and prioritized in specific countries, in collaboration with multiple stakeholders and partners.

### ***National SDG targets***

43. Nationally defined SDG targets adapt the global SDG targets to the local context. Based on national zero hunger strategic reviews and in line with the planning processes of governments and United Nations country teams, WFP will identify the national SDG targets and results that it is well placed to support.

### ***Strategic outcomes***

44. Guided by the WFP Strategic Results, and taking into account local context and priorities and its own strengths, WFP will contribute to relevant national SDG targets through a set of strategic outcomes related to each WFP Strategic Result.
45. WFP adheres to the United Nations Harmonized Terminology for Results-Based Management adopted by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which defines outcomes as: "The intended or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, usually requiring the collective effort of partners. Outcomes represent changes in humanitarian conditions which occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of impact."<sup>20</sup> WFP strategic outcomes describe the short- to medium-term effects that contribute to the achievement of national SDG targets and WFP Strategic Results. WFP strategic outcomes describe the people who will benefit (SDG2) or entities (SDG17), the geographic scope, the result that is sought, and the foreseen timeframe of the programme intervention. Formulated at the country level, WFP strategic outcomes are aligned with standardized strategic outcome categories included in the Corporate Results Framework.
46. WFP strategic outcomes are developed at the country level jointly with the government and key partners. WFP strategic outcomes make a substantive contribution to meeting humanitarian needs and achieving national priorities; reflect the goal or the target implied or established in a country's national plan and regional framework to which WFP's assistance contributes; and identify the target populations, institutions and systems to be supported. WFP and partners contribute to strategic outcomes through the outputs of their activities. Strategic outcomes are typically included in United Nations strategic planning frameworks and humanitarian response plans in a country and/or articulated through national plans, including zero hunger, development and humanitarian plans. Attribution of results at the strategic outcome level is typically collective, combining contributions from WFP and various governmental and non-governmental actors. The planning horizon for strategic outcomes should correspond to the time frame of the CSP – typically five years.

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<sup>20</sup> OCHA, Policy Instructions for Evaluations. <https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/Evaluation%20Policy.pdf>. This definition is consistent with the United Nations Development Group definition of outcome. <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/UNDG-RBM-Handbook-2012.pdf>.

47. Because strategic outcomes reflect the specific situation and dynamics of a country, their wording needs to be appropriate to the national context, resonate with national and subnational actors and show clear alignment with national priorities and goals. Individual strategic outcomes vary from country to country in pitch and formulation, but they all show a clear link to the achievement of a national SDG target, and hence also a WFP Strategic Result. To be truly valuable, strategic outcome statements must be sufficiently consistent with the terminology and policy environment of the specific country to foster consensus among the government and other main stakeholders during the country strategic planning process. Cooperation on the prioritization and framing of results statements also helps to build consensus and joint ownership.

**Figure 2: Example of the results chain for a WFP CSP and operational plan**



48. A central feature of CSPs is that each strategic outcome is tied to only one higher-level result – a WFP Strategic Result/SDG target or Strategic Objective. To maintain focus and coherence, there should be relatively few strategic outcomes. In cases of ambiguity, a strategic outcome may need to be reformulated or divided into two separate results statements to maintain the identifiable link between cause and effect.
49. The CSP logical frameworks are based on the CRF, which specifies the corporate outcome indicators to be used by all WFP offices for monitoring. WFP country offices retain the flexibility to complement or fill gaps in the CRF with country-specific outcome indicators as required.

**Outputs and activities: Linking WFP’s work to other SDG targets**

50. WFP adheres to the United Nations Harmonized Terminology for Results-Based Management adopted by OCHA, which defines outputs and activities as follows:
- Outputs are changes in skills, abilities and/or capacities of individuals or institutions, or in availability of new products and services that result from the completion of activities in an intervention under the control of WFP.
  - Activities are actions taken or work performed through which inputs – such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources – are mobilized to produce specific outputs.
51. As the full definition of outputs specifies that they “are achieved with the resources provided and within the time period specified”. A WFP output may be linked directly to one and only one higher WFP strategic outcome. Planning and implementation of activities will be determined during annual country operational planning and performance management processes.
52. As stated in the WFP Strategic Plan, the starting point of WFP’s work is its contribution to the achievement of zero hunger as enshrined in SDG 2 and SDG 17. The interrelated challenges and solutions involved in ending hunger and poverty mean that WFP will contribute directly and indirectly to many other SDGs through the outputs of its activities. WFP’s primary focus on ending hunger thus serves as an entry point and rationale for contributing to SDGs other than SDG 2 and SDG 17.

53. For example, by supporting a school meals programme in food-insecure areas of a country, WFP may contribute to national SDG 2 targets related to access to food, improved nutrition or smallholder livelihoods. To reflect this contribution, the strategic outcomes, results and objectives of WFP's results chain will all be oriented towards WFP Strategic Goal 1 – Support countries to achieve zero hunger (SDG 2). However, the activities and outputs associated with this support may also make substantial contributions to the achievement of other national SDG targets, such as those relating to education (SDG 4), gender equality and equity (SDG 5), family income (SDG 1) and health (SDG 3). These contributions to other national SDG targets may be identified and mapped at the country level, in relevant national, United Nations and other planning frameworks.
54. In support of SDG 17, WFP may respond to the request of a national government and partners to provide specific services that support achievement of other SDGs. While these services may match WFP's strengths and capacity, they may not be directly focused on zero hunger efforts. When supporting the response to an emergency, WFP may provide supply chain, logistics and communications support to the broader humanitarian community, such as procurement services and provision and management of communication systems, storage facilities, cargo and personnel transport. The activities and outputs associated with this support, while not necessarily directly supporting zero hunger, can make substantial contributions to the achievement of several national SDG targets. These contributions can be identified and mapped at the country level, in relevant national, United Nations or other frameworks.

#### ***Country Strategic Plans and emergency response***

55. While WFP's mandate clearly articulates humanitarian and development responsibilities, the organization's comparative advantages and experience require it to prioritize emergency, life-saving and development-enabling work, particularly targeting the poorest and most marginalized people. CSPs will facilitate implementation of results-focused portfolios, which will include activities addressing humanitarian needs, as required by context.
56. During their formulation, CSPs will include strategic outcomes and activities that respond to protracted crises and humanitarian needs, and to other national priorities. Unforeseen emergency responses will be integrated into CSPs through CSP revisions where a CSP exists, and delivered through a limited-duration emergency operation in countries where WFP does not have an operational presence or a CSP in place. In some cases, the emergency situation may elicit a significant or drastic change in the context and require WFP to develop a new CSP.

#### **Interim Country Framework**

57. To ensure flexible and rapid adaptation of a WFP response to a sudden change in context, or to sustain humanitarian assistance, WFP may use an Interim Country Framework to bridge the gap between a limited-duration emergency operation or a CSP that has been rendered inadequate by a significant or drastic change in context and a new CSP informed by a national zero hunger strategic review. Interim Country Frameworks will be used during the transitional period in 2018. After 2018, they will be used in exceptional circumstances when ongoing conflict or instability undermines governance, including the functioning of national institutions, making it unfeasible to develop a CSP informed by a national strategic review, and in countries where WFP has no operational presence.
58. The Interim Country Framework articulates WFP's strategic orientation, programme framework and strategic outcomes in a country, pending development of a strategic review-informed CSP. Based on in-country evidence – such as national plans, analyses, multi-sector processes, common country assessments, mid-term or other reviews and evaluations – and the objectives and outcomes of current projects/project components, the Interim Country Framework should consolidate all the activities in a country to formulate WFP Strategic Outcomes that are aligned with the WFP Strategic Plan and the implications for performance monitoring, including risk management.

59. To the extent possible, the Interim Country Framework should be informed by consultations and coordinated with the plans of other United Nations agencies. Ideally, for Interim Country Frameworks used to transition in 2018, the strategic outcomes formulated will not imply substantial modifications of the country office's commitments. Stakeholders must be consulted if the regrouping under strategic outcomes results in significant changes to commitments made with donors, governments and other partners. As funding commitments will be considered in the formulation of strategic outcomes, discussions with donors and/or the host government will be necessary.

### **Rapid emergency responses**

60. Sudden-onset and other unforeseen emergencies require short-term, rapid response, for which WFP is well equipped. Where WFP has an approved CSP in place, the country office will:
- introduce one or more WFP strategic outcomes or augment one or more existing WFP strategic outcomes to respond to emergency needs; and
  - develop these outcomes and articulate WFP's response, drawing on existing emergency operation templates.
61. Where WFP does not have an approved CSP or Interim Country Framework in place, the country office will:
- develop an emergency operation that is limited in duration and draws on existing emergency operation templates; and
  - embed the limited-duration emergency operation into an Interim Country Framework if the operation is to continue beyond six months, and into a CSP if WFP presence continues to be required and as soon as conditions for a strategic review are satisfied.
62. Rapid response mechanisms financed by the Immediate Response Account will be adapted to the new approach, while preserving the speed and effectiveness of these mechanisms.
63. Rapid emergency responses, whether incorporated into an approved CSP or an Interim Country Framework, or stand alone as a limited-duration emergency operation, will apply the Country Portfolio Budget created as part of the Financial Framework Review.

### **Regional responses**

64. Certain situations warrant regional strategic, resourcing and operational coordination. Regional initiatives, including emergency responses, are normally implemented through individual CSPs with additional or augmented WFP strategic outcomes as may be appropriate. The regional bureau coordinates the planning, design and pursuit of these strategic outcomes in the countries participating in the regional response, and develops and oversees joint resource mobilization strategies. Country-specific CSPs may include a regional strategic chapeau developed by the regional bureau. Limited regional emergency operations or other regional initiatives formulated and managed by regional bureaux will be used as and when appropriate.

## **Impact of the Approach**

### **Emerging evidence of benefits**

65. As a means of positioning WFP at the country level in relation to national zero hunger efforts, the approach of combining a national zero hunger strategic review with a CSP has been tested internally in many countries. Several CSPs have been reviewed and endorsed through WFP's internal strategic programme review process.

66. A 2015 mid-term review of the Strategic Plan (2014–2017)<sup>21</sup> found that an enhanced approach to country strategic planning:
- presents an opportunity for consolidating the transition from food aid to food assistance by – together with the Financial Framework Review – strengthening the linkages between financial and short- and long-term operational goals;
  - offers an important opportunity to increase WFP’s role in capacity development, particularly through national zero hunger strategic reviews, which offer an alternative to the “piecemeal” approach much criticized in evaluation reports to date; and
  - enables WFP to develop strategic and programme plans that respond better to country needs through a less fragmented approach.
67. An evaluability assessment of the Strategic Plan (2014–2017) carried out in 2015/16 found that instituting an enhanced approach to country strategic planning together with complementary budget systems is critical in filling gaps in the current planning architecture, shifting the focus from projects to country-level outcomes and enabling assessment of cost efficiency and effectiveness. According to the assessment, these elements have strong potential for reorienting WFP’s performance management towards the support of national objectives and priorities, particularly in ending hunger, which will be critical as WFP aligns its Strategic Plan with the vision and goals of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>22</sup>

### **Projected Impact**

68. WFP’s approach to country strategic planning has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of WFP’s assistance in the following ways.
69. *Increased effectiveness and efficiency in emergencies and protracted crises:* The approach enables WFP to orient emergency responses more strategically, while maintaining flexibility and agility. By articulating and focusing on strategic outcomes in rapidly evolving and/or volatile emergency situations – rather than on particular activities only – WFP will be in a much better position to respond quickly, flexibly, and efficiently with a range of appropriate activities and modalities. The approach also facilitates transition to recovery and resilience-building programmes especially in protracted crises.
70. As a context evolves to recovery, the CSP enables a multi-sector approach to recovery programming, addressing risk and building resilience for food security and nutrition, which requires wide consultation and long-term collaboration. In each context, all aspects of the programme cycle will be examined through a resilience lens to determine how actions can best be integrated with national government strategies and partner-supported programmes.<sup>23</sup> The integration of emergency responses into the country portfolio as soon as conditions permit allows WFP to optimize its response to protracted situations by addressing both short- and long-term issues, thereby increasing the effectiveness of its interventions, while maintaining flexibility to respond quickly and efficiently to any change in the situation.
71. *Improved alignment with national SDG targets and partners:* CSPs are informed by country-led national zero hunger strategic reviews that reflect national SDG targets and government ownership of the 2030 Agenda. CSPs articulate how WFP’s assistance in a country contributes to broader national plans and priorities for transitioning from and/or phasing out external assistance. The longer-term planning horizon of CSPs facilitates the setting of criteria for transition and the identification of actions to achieve conditions – such as capacity of government counterparts – the expected timeframe, contextual assumptions, and external factors that could influence progress towards these objectives. Using the reviews as a tool for fitting the SDGs – particularly SDG 2 – into the local context, national planning institutions play a leading role in

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<sup>21</sup> WFP/EB.1/2016/4-A.

<sup>22</sup> WFP Office of Evaluation. 2016. *Evaluability Assessment: WFP’s Strategic Plan 2014–2017 – Advisory Report*. Rome (OEV/2015/022).

<sup>23</sup> WFP/EB.A/2015/5-C.



the formulation of zero hunger strategic reviews and are responsible for incorporating priority issues and recommendations identified by the reviews into national policies, strategies, plans and programmes. The reviews also foster greater coherence among operations and strategies of the Rome-based agencies and other partners, particularly at the country level, helping WFP to forge deeper partnerships through consensus on common approaches to eliminating hunger.

72. *Greater focus, improved visibility and communication:* The approach helps WFP to articulate its specific contribution to national efforts and reposition itself at the country level. Through the country strategic planning process, governments and development partners have greater understanding of WFP's multifaceted mandate and are increasingly involving WFP in policy and programme dialogue across the humanitarian–development spectrum. Its enhanced positioning and visibility is enabling WFP to communicate its value added to all stakeholders.
73. *Integration of operational support, technical assistance and resource mobilization:* National zero hunger strategic reviews systematically integrate strategic, resource and technical assistance planning that is informed by analyses of resourcing and capacity constraints. CSPs ensure targeted institutional capacity enhancement to support governments in designing and managing their nationally owned hunger solutions, and to equip WFP country offices with information, skilled staff and required capacities in line with the WFP People Strategy.
74. *Flexibility to plan for and respond to dynamic operational contexts while balancing humanitarian and development work:* CSPs are context-specific and adaptable to changes in the operating environment. They promote links between humanitarian and development assistance and enable effective resilience-building by ensuring that crisis response supports recovery and long-term development, and that development activities are informed by an understanding of risk and protect vulnerable people from crisis. At the same time, the CSP and its budget structure improve transparency and alignment with funding commitments while maintaining programmatic resource-allocation flexibility.
75. *Increased strategic guidance and reduced transaction costs:* CSPs will enhance the strategic role and efficiency of the Board, increasing its ability to provide strategic oversight and guidance. This is possible because the plans: i) present a comprehensive picture of WFP's intervention in a country including emergency responses<sup>24</sup> and activities funded by trust funds rather than the fragmented view obtained from individual project documents; and ii) reduce the number of projects to be discussed by the Board, resulting in time and cost savings. CSPs will also increase operational efficiency. By integrating strategic and programme planning, resourcing, technical support and performance management, and replacing individual project documents, CSPs reduce the process-management burden for WFP at the country, regional and Headquarters levels and increase the efficiency and quality of planning and implementation.
76. *Harmonization with other United Nations agencies and processes:* The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) reinforces the need for simplified, inclusive and nationally owned programming processes with clear lines of accountability. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is the strategic, medium-term results framework that guides the collective vision and response to national development priorities of the United Nations system at the country level.
77. The WFP approach to country strategic planning is aligned with and supportive of the nationally owned programming processes referred to in the QCPR; WFP will endeavour to maintain this alignment with subsequent QCPRs. The approach also clarifies WFP's contribution to the collective vision and response outlined in the UNDAF guidelines that are being prepared by the United Nations Development Group. Country strategic planning cycles will be aligned with national and – consequently – UNDAF planning cycles. National zero hunger strategic reviews will complement the common country analyses that inform UNDAFs, and CSPs will ensure that WFP outcomes are coherent with both national and UNDAF outcomes and complement the outcomes of other United Nations agencies. Emergency responses will also be aligned with

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<sup>24</sup> Emergency responses are expected to be integrated into the country portfolio as soon as conditions permit, making these responses more visible to the Board.

strategic response plans (SRPs) and joint resource mobilization efforts of the humanitarian programme cycle by adequately reflecting emergency-related outcomes and activities.

78. *Enhanced performance management, reporting and accountability:* CSPs respond to a QCPR recommendation that programmes deliver demonstrable results at the country level. The plans articulate the cause and effect relationships between WFP's assistance, the resources it employs, and the results it achieves. By clarifying the links between resources and results, CSPs improve reporting on results, and accountability to beneficiaries, host governments, donors and other partners. The approach will make it easier to evaluate country portfolios, measure progress and extract lessons from country-level actions. Country portfolio evaluations will help WFP identify and consider patterns or specificities of a thematic nature or at a regional level.

## **Policy Implementation**

### **Roles of WFP Country Offices, Regional Bureaux and Headquarters**

79. WFP country offices are responsible for the country strategic planning process, with the support of Headquarters divisions and the relevant regional bureau. In consultation with Headquarters divisions and the relevant regional bureau, the Country Director leads in-country steps in the process, including the selection of a strategic planning team, the development and implementation of a work plan and the allocation of resources. Country Directors mobilize participation from all technical areas to ensure adequate inputs and collective ownership. They also ensure alignment of country strategic planning cycles with United Nations calendars and national development planning.
80. WFP regional bureaux coordinate the scheduling of CSPs in their region and monitor their timely preparation. They provide strategic and technical guidance and support, and oversee quality standards from a regional perspective, formulating and disseminating best practices and lessons learned across the WFP offices in their regions. Regional bureaux also provide in-country support to strategic planning processes and focus on assisting country offices in the formulation of portfolios informed by national zero hunger strategic reviews. They provide a regional perspective, coordinate the planning and design of a regional response, as provided in paragraph 64, and are accountable for strategic outcomes in countries participating in the regional response.
81. Headquarters provides guidance and support throughout the country strategic planning process. Headquarters divisions set guidelines and quality standards and deliver training, technical support and quality assurance, collecting and disseminating lessons learned. In coordination with regional bureaux, Headquarters divisions may also directly support national and WFP strategic planning processes by deploying subject specialists and contributing to the articulation of WFP outcomes and activities, and by promoting innovations, partnerships and cross-functional thinking. All CSPs and Interim Country Frameworks will be subject to rigorous internal quality assurance and approval.

### **Partnerships**

82. WFP's Strategic Plan builds on WFP's identity as the world's largest humanitarian organization. This identity brings a responsibility to fulfil commitments and expectations in emergency response and recovery in contexts of crisis and disruption, aiming to save lives through first-rate food assistance designed and implemented in partnership with national governments, international agencies and other actors. The Strategic Plan affirms this critical dimension of WFP's work, and provides a coherent and transparent framework for WFP to improve its support to countries in making progress towards the achievement of zero hunger using skills, capacities and competencies built up not only through humanitarian action but also in development initiatives. These skills, capacities and competencies are unique, significant, and global in reach, offering scope for a new generation of systemic interventions and strengthened partnerships motivated by the transformative spirit of the 2030 Agenda.

83. The country strategic planning process is aligned with WFP's Corporate Partnership Strategy (2014–2017), which defines partnership as “Collaborative relationships between actors that achieve better outcomes for the people we serve by: combining and leveraging complementary resources of all kinds; working together in a transparent, equitable and mutually beneficial way; and sharing risks, responsibilities and accountability, to achieve objectives that could not be achieved as efficiently, effectively or innovatively alone, and where the value created is greater than the transaction costs involved.”<sup>25</sup>
84. The two-pronged approach of a national zero hunger strategic review process followed by formulation of the CSP adheres to the principles of the partnership strategy; promotes these values during engagement with governments, donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, United Nations agencies – including the Rome-based agencies – and other actors at the country level; and enhances opportunities to build and strengthen partnerships through the consultative planning process. The national zero hunger strategic review process fosters coherent support to countries in achieving zero hunger, and generates consensus on coordination of individual partner actions; and the CSPs articulate the short- and long-term contributions of partners to national SDG targets and WFP strategic outcomes, drawing on the complementary strengths of partners.
85. The country strategic planning process fosters private-sector investments in ending hunger, including through resource mobilization and the scaling up and harnessing of market forces to sustain socio-economic development. The planning process contributes to the priorities of the WFP Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy (2013–2017)<sup>26</sup> by seeking resource and capacity transfers from the private sector to support WFP activities. In line with this strategy, the country strategic planning process in selected countries includes identification of opportunities to design new funding models that leverage domestic and international, public and private resources to maximize progress towards national humanitarian and development objectives.
86. In line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and as an integral part of implementing the 2030 Agenda, national zero hunger strategic reviews include assessment of private-sector resource flows to enhance understanding of the food security and nutrition situation in a country and to facilitate use of the transformative potential of the private sector in promoting inclusive and sustainable development.
87. Plans for continued engagement with government donors are embedded in the country strategic planning approach. Against the backdrop of the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship and the World Humanitarian Summit, WFP will seek resources to operationalize its Strategic Plan (2017–2021) at the country level through CSPs. Increasing the alignment of aid with donor and host country priorities; promoting local resource mobilization through effective engagement with country-led processes; allocating humanitarian funding in proportion to needs; providing humanitarian assistance in ways that support the recovery of long-term development; and seeking flexible and predictable funding are principles that continue to drive resourcing efforts under the country strategic plan approach.<sup>27</sup>
88. WFP's partnerships with national and international NGOs have traditionally involved little substantive engagement. The country strategic planning process fosters strategic interactions and dialogue with NGOs and other civil society actors, whose roles and capacities are considered and utilized to varying degrees, depending on the context. For example, during national zero hunger strategic review processes, WFP may advocate for actions to strengthen the capacities of national civil society actors, and include these actions in its resulting CSP.

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<sup>25</sup> WFP/EB.A/2014/5-B.

<sup>26</sup> WFP/EB.A/2013/5-B.

<sup>27</sup> WFP/EB.1/2010/5-B/Rev.1.

89. While WFP's decentralized approach to engagement with NGOs has brought advantages – in allowing WFP country offices to determine which partnerships to pursue and how these partnerships should be managed – the country strategic planning process helps to ensure that partnerships with national and international NGOs are prioritized and managed in ways that build on partners' deep understanding of local contexts to enrich WFP programmes, facilitate increased access and support greater accountability to target populations.

### **Approval process**

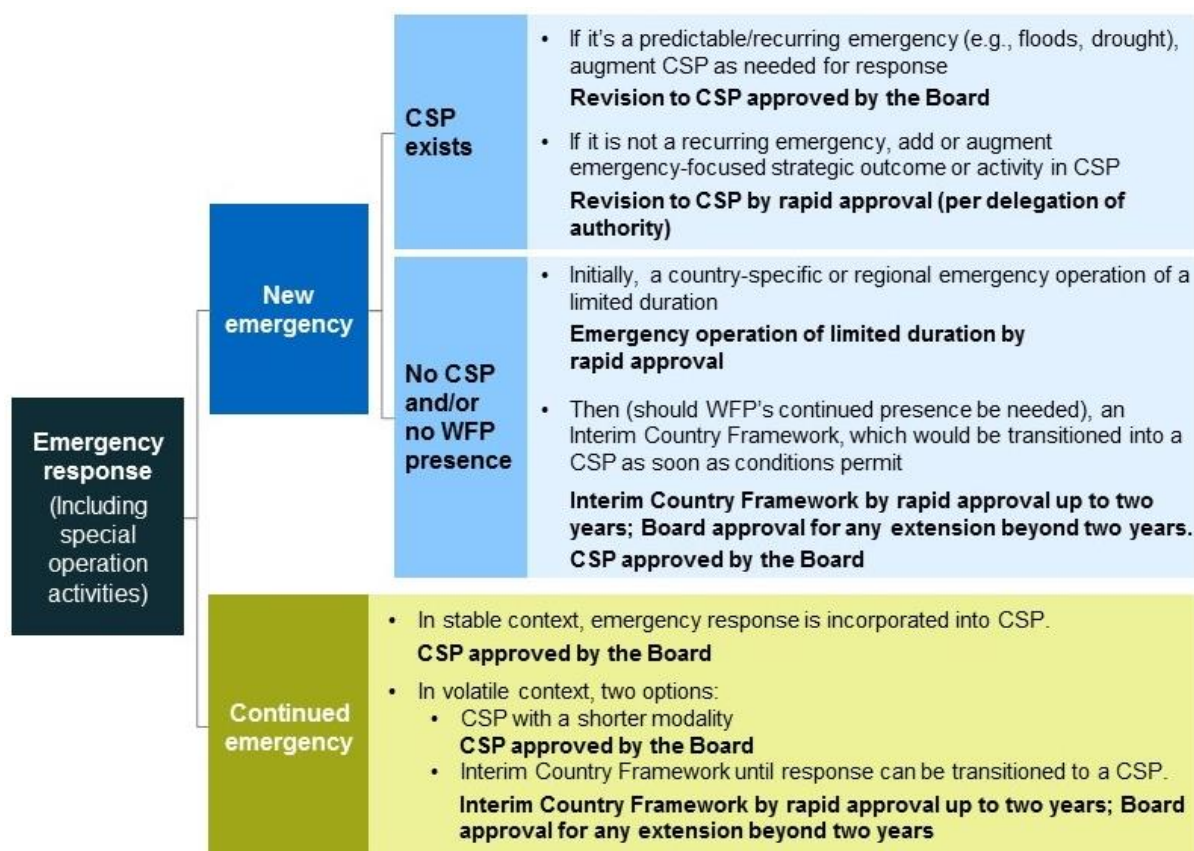
90. All CSPs will be submitted for Board approval at any of the sessions. In exercising its responsibilities, the Board will respect the spirit of the commitment expressed in the 2030 Agenda that: “All of us will work to implement the Agenda within our own countries and at the regional and global levels, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. We will respect national policy space for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, in particular for developing States, while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments.”<sup>28</sup>
91. In cases when a CSP or new strategic outcome not previously foreseen in a CSP is funded entirely by the host country, it will be subject to the provisions of Financial Regulations 5.1 and 5.2, which delegate approval of bilateral projects to the Executive Director, unless the host government elects to have the CSP or strategic outcome approved through the regular CSP approval process.
92. Interim Country Frameworks will be approved for up to two years by the Executive Director as a transition to a strategic review-informed CSP. After two years, and if the conditions for a national strategic review – and thus for CSP development – still do not exist, an extension to the Interim Country Framework will be submitted to the Executive Board for approval.
93. Where WFP has an approved CSP in place and must respond to sudden-onset and other unforeseen emergencies, the country office will seek approval of the new or revised strategic outcomes in line with the applicable General Regulations and Rules governing the delegation of authority. Where there is no approved CSP or an Interim Country Framework, the country office and/or regional bureau will seek approval and subsequent revision, wherever necessary, of the limited-duration emergency operation in line with the applicable General Regulations and Rules governing the delegation of authority.
94. All strategic outcomes that add special operations to complement the emergency response – whether added to an existing CSP or introduced separately when there is no CSP in place – are approved by the Executive Director, regardless of the size of the budget.

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<sup>28</sup> See United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1 (21 October 2015), document E/2015/L.16 (15 June 2015), paragraph 21.

95. Figure 3 illustrates the treatment of emergencies.

**Figure 3: Treatment of emergencies**



### Revision processes

96. CSPs may be revised to respond to contextual and operational changes. Except for revisions related to emergencies as described in paragraph 93 and special operations as described in paragraph 94, approval will be sought from the Board in the event of a fundamental change to the overall strategic focus of WFP in a country involving a substantive modification – i.e. an addition and/or deletion – of one or more WFP Strategic Outcomes in the CSP or Board-approved Interim Country Framework. All other revisions within the timeframe of Board-approved CSPs are dealt with in line with the applicable General Regulations and Rules governing the delegation of authority. The Secretariat will analyse data to determine objective measures for the delegation of authority to be proposed to the Board.
97. Any revision that introduces or augments activities defined as special operations will be approved by the Executive Director, in line with the applicable General Regulations and Rules governing the delegation of authority.

## Country-Level Financial Management and Operational Planning

### Country Portfolio Budget

98. Budget planning for CSPs follows the structure of the country portfolio budgets developed under the Financial Framework Review to be submitted to the Board in November 2016. In approving the CSP, the Board will also be approving the total budget and the budget for each strategic outcome for the duration of the CSP, as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Example of Country Portfolio Budget included in the CSP**

[Country X] Country Portfolio Budget (20xx–20xx)						
<i>(USD million)</i>						
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Strategic Outcome 1						
Strategic Outcome 2						
Strategic Outcome 3						
Strategic Outcome 4						
Total						

Basis of budgetary approval

99. The country portfolio budget will harmonize WFP’s strategies and operations at the country level with the Strategic Plan (2017–2021), the country strategic planning approach and the country results framework. The budget structure will: i) maximize WFP’s ability to respond efficiently and effectively to prioritized operational needs; ii) provide for disciplined financial management, reporting and analysis; and iii) facilitate fundraising.
100. Requirements for the country portfolio budget framework include an overview of all operations within a country office, in line with the CSP; a clear “line of sight” from strategy to planning to resourcing to results; a simplified and unified structure for implementing operations; clear demonstration of impact, cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency; and improved accountability.
101. CSPs will serve as the vehicle for resource mobilization and fund management, including the procedures for allocating multilateral contributions for development assistance to which WFP has committed. WFP will continue to recognize that policy work on humanitarian–development coherence is supported by relevant funding streams for both humanitarian and development activities and, through country operations management planning, available and forecasted resources will inform the implementation of activities.

### **Operations Management Planning**

102. WFP’s programme of work will consist of CSPs designed on the basis of needs assessed or identified in collaboration with government counterparts and partners through the national zero hunger strategic reviews and assessments, and resource availability. By presenting a country’s needs, CSPs appeal for the resources that are required to meet those needs.
103. Country operation management plans will support the internal management and implementation of CSPs and integrate updated assessments of needs carried out in collaboration with government counterparts and partners. Annual planning processes will reconcile the needs identified and the priorities set in the CSP with more accurate anticipation of resources.

### **Performance Management**

104. Each CSP will include a logical results framework. WFP will develop and budget for a country-level monitoring and evaluation plan – a component of its performance management system – as part of each CSP. Overall performance of the CSP will be assessed against targets set in the national zero hunger strategic review. Progress towards gender equity and other cross-cutting corporate objectives will also be assessed.

105. In line with international norms, the monitoring of SDG indicators and of selected national, sub-national and thematic indicators will be the responsibility of national authorities with the assistance of international organizations.<sup>29</sup> International organizations will also work to build the capacity of national monitoring efforts.
106. WFP's performance management will involve tracking outcome, process, output and activity indicators. Outcome and output achievement values will be reported on in annual performance reports at the country and global level. Key performance indicators for organizational effectiveness, efficiency and economies will also be established, capturing value-for-money considerations. These indicators will be monitored through various managerial systems and processes and will also be reported on in country and global level annual performance reports.<sup>30</sup>
107. All outcome, output and process indicators will be disaggregated by gender whenever relevant. The main purpose of monitoring will be to ensure that operational decision-making and revisions to the CSP are evidence-based. Monitoring, reviews and evaluations will support accountability, with findings and lessons being used to refine WFP's work and ensure that future assistance is informed by reliable evidence.
108. Under the management of the Office of Evaluation, all CSPs will undergo country portfolio evaluations towards the end of their implementation period, to assess progress and identify lessons for the design of subsequent country-level support. Lessons applicable beyond the country concerned will be disseminated across WFP. WFP will budget for and allocate the required resources to these evaluations.
109. Decentralized mid-term reviews of CSPs and decentralized evaluations of selected CSP components will be managed by WFP at the country level with support of the relevant regional bureau as needed. The findings of these reviews and decentralized evaluations will inform annual resource-based country operational planning exercises to ensure that timely mid-course improvements are made as necessary. Mid-term reviews and country portfolio evaluations will track progress towards planned outcomes and measure progress towards gender equity and other cross-cutting corporate objectives. Country portfolio evaluations will be included in CSP budgets and resourced accordingly.

### **Risk Management**

110. All CSPs will include analysis of the risks associated with their implementation and mitigation measures. The analyses will take into account the country context and will assess institutional, programmatic and security risks. The mitigating measures will seek to maintain WFP's strategic direction as set out in the CSP in the event that an anticipated risk transpires.

### **Transitional Arrangements**

111. All WFP country offices will be expected to have an approved CSP, informed by a national zero hunger strategic review, by 31 December 2018.<sup>31</sup> Country offices that are unable to submit a CSP for the Board's approval by February 2018 have to prepare and submit an Interim Country Framework by 31 December 2017. Interim Country Frameworks as defined in paragraphs 57–59 (rationale) and 92 (approval process) will serve as a bridge to full CSPs during the 2018 transition phase, and will help country offices to establish and implement uniform programmatic, financial and operational systems in line with the new Strategic Plan by the end of 2017.

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<sup>29</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) documents E/CN.32016/2 and E/CN.32016/3. 2016. *Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators* and the *Report of the High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building for Post-2015 Monitoring*.

<sup>30</sup> Reporting procedures and principles will be elaborated in the Corporate Results Framework (CRF).

<sup>31</sup> The first batch of CSPs will be submitted for approval at the Board's 2017 First Regular Session; the second batch will be submitted to the 2017 Annual Session.

112. During the transition, Interim Country Frameworks will combine all existing WFP activities in a country based on the CSP template and structured around strategic outcomes aligned with the WFP Strategic Plan. Interim Country Frameworks will be based on existing in-country evidence (i.e. analyses, multi-sector processes and common country assessments) and consultations when necessary. Interim Country Frameworks will also be aligned with the Country Portfolio Budget structure that forms part of the Financial Framework Review.
113. The Secretariat is committed to piloting, refining and validating the country portfolio budget model in 2017 to support the Country Strategic Plan approach. This period will enable close consultation with partners regarding system readiness and allow for the development of business solutions before WFP moves to broader implementation in 2018.
114. The first Board approvals of CSPs, and the piloting of their associated country portfolio budgets are expected to occur at EB.1/2017. The Secretariat will report back to the Board on implementation of the CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets, along with any recommendations for the further refinement of the underlying programmatic and financial framework based on their implementation.
115. The CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets would apply the new programmatic and financial framework; this would cause certain inconsistencies with provisions of WFP's current General Rules and Financial Regulations, which refer to the existing programme categories.<sup>32</sup> Thus, the Board will need to authorize, for the sole purpose of CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets approved during the transitional period between EB.1/2017 through 31 December 2017, certain derogations from WFP's General Rules and Financial Regulations;<sup>33</sup> in particular the Board would authorize the temporary application to pilot CSPs of provisions in the WFP General Rules and Financial Regulations referring to existing programme categories as if they referred to Country Strategic Plans.
116. In addition, the CSP approach and the new financial framework will require the Board to revisit the Executive Director's authorities in relation to programme approvals and revisions due to the fact that the existing delegation of authority to the Executive Director<sup>34</sup> is based on the current programme categories and budgetary thresholds and not on the CSP approach. A revised delegation of authority structure, which will be informed by the implementation of the CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets over the course of 2017, will accordingly be presented to the Board at EB.2/2017 as part of the Financial Framework Review process. The Financial Framework Review (WFP/EB.2/2016/xxx) sets forth arrangements for the interim application of the delegation of authority to the Executive Director for the implementation of CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets in 2017.
117. The technical adjustments necessary for the introduction, beyond the pilot phase, of the revised programmatic and financial framework throughout WFP will require revision to WFP's General Rules and Financial Regulations. The Secretariat will present proposals, which would be informed by the experience of the CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets, on these amendments at EB.2/2017 for the Board's approval in respect of amendments related to this Policy on Country Strategic Plans and more specifically the revised programmatic terminology, so that the WFP General Rules and Financial Regulations can accommodate the CSP approach.

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<sup>32</sup> For a preliminary indicative list, please see Annex VII of the Update on the Financial Framework Review 25 July 2016 Informal Consultation paper, and more particularly: General Rule II.2; General Rule X.2; General Rule X.7; General Rule X.8; General Rule XIII.2; Financial Regulation 1.1; Financial Regulation 4.2; Financial Regulation 8.1; Financial Regulation 9.3; Financial Regulation 10.1; Financial Regulation 10.2.

<sup>33</sup> The Board is authorized to address such inconsistencies and derogate from the General Rules and Financial Regulations further to General Regulation VI.2.(b)(vi) and General Regulation VI.2.(b)(vii).

<sup>34</sup> See the Delegation of Authority Appendix to the General Rules, reproduced at Annex VII of the Update on the Financial Framework Review 25 July 2016 informal consultation paper.



118. In 2017, the existing programmatic, financial and normative framework will continue to apply to WFP programmes, projects and activities that are not part of CSPs with pilot country portfolio budgets. Beyond 2017, the existing programmatic, financial and normative framework will apply until a CSP or ICF is approved, except in countries where WFP does not have operations, in which case any new programmes will be carried out under the new programmatic, financial and normative framework.

## **Ensuring Success**

119. *Transition management:* A roadmap will be prepared to ensure timely and successful transition from project documents to CSPs, taking into consideration country-specific project cycles and timelines. Progress and developments will be reported on through tailored communications for all stakeholders – Board membership, governments, donors, staff, partners and beneficiaries. Regional bureaux and country offices will have central roles in leading the transition.
120. *WFP-wide synergies:* Collaboration and synergies across WFP will be essential in ensuring that the redesigned system is fully functioning by 1 January 2018.
121. *Guidance and training for implementation:* In line with the People Strategy, guidance and training on the design and implementation of CSPs will be provided to staff. Gaps in human resources will be filled and the transition process will generate lessons for improving implementation.

## **Operationalization of WFP's Principles**

122. *Integration of WFP principles:* Recognizing that WFP must operate in accordance with certain principles as a public international civil organization of the United Nations, the formulation and implementation of CSPs will adhere to WFP's principles. Anti-fraud/anti-corruption, protection and "do-no-harm" and related measures will be considered during the joint design and implementation of programmes with governments and partners.
123. *WFP principles:* The WFP core values stated in Annex II of the Strategic Plan (2017–2021) reflect WFP's commitments to the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (2013) and the WFP Code of Conduct (2014). The core values also affirm WFP's commitments to humanitarian principles, the centrality of protection of and accountability to affected populations, and the ideals enshrined in the United Nations Charter.
124. *Implementation of cross-cutting and related measures:* Gender equality and women's empowerment as provided under WFP's Gender Policy (2015–2020)<sup>35</sup> will be incorporated into CSPs; impacts of climate, environmental and other cross-cutting issues will be considered as appropriate during their formulation and implementation.

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<sup>35</sup> WFP/EB.A/2015/5-A, as may be amended and updated from time to time.

## **Acronyms Used in the Document**

CP	country programme
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
DEV	development project
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SO	special operation
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework