

WFP CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY (2014–2017)



Informal Consultation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

No single organization can address today's complex food and nutrition security challenges. Partnership is more important than ever. The challenge now is to better define the role and value added of actors within the wider field, strategically select partnerships, strengthen mutual accountability and ensure collaboration delivers results.

WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017)

WFP is proud of its past achievements of working with others to reach the many millions of hungry children, women and men who have benefited from this collaboration and aims to be the “partner of choice” on food assistance.

WFP's ability to achieve its Strategic Objectives has always depended on establishing and maintaining sound relationships with governments and effective partnerships with United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector.

The Corporate Partnership Strategy seeks to promote excellence in partnering by building on the known strengths of WFP as a partner and addressing areas where improvements are required. The strategy:

- Establishes the principles and practices that will govern WFP's partnering arrangements and guides the selection and development of partnerships to maximize the impact of WFP's activities for the children, women and men it serves.
- Brings together important insights from past and current partnership work and sets out an overall context and guidance for the development of appropriate tools and processes.
- Provides an overarching vision for WFP's work in partnerships and creates a corporate platform that will underpin dedicated approaches developed for the entities with which WFP collaborates.

Building on its reputation as an organization that is people-centred, WFP will partner to pursue its strategic objectives in line with international humanitarian law and the core humanitarian principles. It will protect vulnerable people and promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The effectiveness of the Corporate Partnership Strategy will be measured by the impact of partnerships in meeting WFP's strategic objectives. WFP will develop performance indicators to track the effectiveness of partnering as part of its strategic and management results frameworks; these will include indicators to show including measures of how others view WFP as a partner.

All WFP units at Headquarters and in the field WFP will be responsible and accountable for the implementation of the Corporate Partnership Strategy and the new Partnership and Governance Services Department, will be responsible for facilitating and coordinating its full implementation across WFP.

Key features of WFP's partnership strategy

- *A single definition of Partnerships and a statement of WFP's unique value proposition;*
- *A partnering approach to all WFP relationships;*
- *A continuum of relationships from transactional to full partnership that promotes cost-effective collaboration with existing and potential partners;*
- *A partnership culture molded by partnering principles and reinforced by a clear understanding of WFP's Unique Value Proposition;*
- *A strategic approach to partner selection, maintenance and implementation through the corporate review of engagement strategies with key partners;*
- *A management structure, performance management and field support systems that promote effective partnering.*

Section I – Introduction

BACKGROUND

1. The Strategic Plan (2014–2017) identifies partnerships as one of WFP’s four key strengths that define WFP:

“WFP’s operational and knowledge partnerships with other United Nations Agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society and the private sector, including through the logistics, food security, emergency telecommunications and other clusters, bring complementary skills and capacities necessary to ensure access to nutritious food while contributing to durable solutions in diverse contexts”.
2. The Plan emphasizes that partnership permeates across all four strategic objectives and is seen as one of the main tools at WFP’s disposal. It committed WFP to *“establish a comprehensive framework and tools to select and facilitate partnerships that can deliver the greatest value.”*
3. WFP’s approach to partnering with others has been considered in a wide range of Board documents such as:
 - [“New Partnerships to Meet Rising Needs – Expanding the WFP Donor Base”](#) (WFP/EB.3/2004/4-C);
 - [“WFP Working with NGOs: A Framework for Partnership”](#) (WFP/EB.A/2001/4-B);
 - [“Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy \(2013–2017\)”](#) (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-B);
 - [“Directions for Collaboration among the Rome-Based Agencies”](#) (WFP/EB.2/2009/11-C);
 - [“Participatory Approaches”](#) (WFP/EB.3/2000/3-D);
 - [“WFP and the African Union”](#) (WFP/EB.A/2012/5-G); and
 - [“WFP Policy on Capacity Development”](#) (WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B).
4. Although these policies have provided guidance on partnership in key focus areas, a main finding of the 2011 strategic evaluation of the effectiveness of WFP’s partnerships in the transition from food aid to food assistance¹ was that: “there is a gap in the strategic framework of WFP with respect to understanding and communication of what constitutes partnership”. This Corporate Partnership Strategy (CPS) fills this gap in WFP’s policy architecture and provides the high level framework needed to identify and guide the development of effective partnerships and a consistent approach to meet the partnership challenges of the contemporary world.

¹ [“From Food Aid to Food Assistance – Working in Partnership: a Strategic Evaluation”](#) (OE/2012/003).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY AND EXPECTED RESULTS

5. The objective of the CPS is to establish a sound basis for excellence in partnering to guide the future development of WFP partnerships by building on the known strengths of WFP as a partner and addressing areas where improvements are required. Excellence in partnering will lead to increased cost-effectiveness and sustainability of WFP operations and a greater beneficial impact on the people we serve.
6. The CPS provides the overarching vision and corporate approach for WFP's work in partnership with NGOs, governments, the private sector, United Nations Agencies, international and regional organizations and academia and other knowledge generating institutions. It presents a common language and shared vision for all WFP staff working in partnership. The CPS should result in:
 - A common understanding across WFP of the benefits of working with others to achieve WFP's goals and the key principles of effective partnership needed to achieve this.
 - A strategic focus on partnerships at the global, regional and country level through the development of engagement strategies for all key partners. This should result in stronger partnerships in which the value proposition of each partner is clearly understood at the outset and in which the principles of partnership are agreed and adhered to by all parties.
 - A consistent approach to the selection, maintenance, monitoring evaluation and reporting of partnerships.
 - A range of best practice tools, guidance, training and support to help country offices select and manage partnerships effectively, including a broader set of formal agreements to facilitate the range of partnerships needed.
 - Cost-effective collaboration with other organizations by reducing overlap and duplication of activities and minimizing the transaction costs involved.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

7. The growing number of organizations active in the field of humanitarian relief and development provides significant opportunities for innovative collaboration. There are many drivers and benefits for WFP to engage in more, and more impactful, partnerships:
 - increased effectiveness and impact: creating more appropriate and relevant programme interventions.
 - cost efficiency: reducing costs, resource use and time by avoiding duplicating activities and services.
 - increased access to people skills and knowledge: by drawing on a wider pool of technical expertise, experience and skills.
 - innovation: by drawing on different ways of solving problems.
 - generating long-term impact and sustainability: through enhanced capacity to make a difference.
 - enhanced reputation and credibility; which can be particularly motivating for private sector partners and important for maintaining key partnerships.

8. Over the last decade there has been a clear understanding within the United Nations System that closer cooperation is valuable for all agencies. For instance, the “Delivering as One” initiative can only work if agencies partner more strongly; partnerships are also essential for the success of the humanitarian reforms envisaged under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee transformative agenda. Improving collective approaches to addressing humanitarian needs is no longer optional but mandatory.
9. The rise of middle-income countries has blurred traditional lines between donor and recipient states and added to the need for creative responses to the demand for effective partnership. This has also given renewed impetus to South-South and triangular collaboration as an effective partnership modality.
10. However, there can be practical obstacles to effective partnerships. WFP’s voluntary funding model can result in relatively short planning cycles and short-term funding difficulties. This may impact the ability to form and resource longer-term partnerships and may cast doubt about WFP’s reliability as a partner. It may take longer to take action within a partnership, which can be problematic when dealing with quick-onset emergencies. And prospective partners in this increasingly crowded environment may also find themselves competing to fund their activities, impacting the willingness of organizations to work together.
11. There are also potential risks, including a loss of autonomy and visibility because of the need to build consensus with partners before action can be taken; potential conflicts of interest where a decision that is good for the partnership may not be in WFP’s interests; and higher transaction costs from the commitment of time and resources to partnership building.
12. Consequently more does not necessarily equal better. The priority for WFP is not just to extend its partnership networks but also to partner more strategically: to obtain (and provide) greater value from the partnerships in which it engages. As the Strategic Plan (2014–2017) makes clear, a failure to partner effectively constitutes a significant risk to its implementation.

Section II – WFP’s Partnering Approach

13. Central to WFP’s Partnership Strategy is the overarching message that WFP has a “partnering approach” to all its relationships. This reflects a commitment to the key partnering principles outlined below to all those people and institutions that have relationships with WFP. It applies to the way WFP seeks to work with its staff, with its governing bodies, with the media and with the children, women and men it serves, even those these might not be strictly regarded as partners.²
14. A partnering approach makes WFP more open and inclusive and requires the organization to differentiate between different forms of collaborative relationships. It also helps WFP to strategically define, select, and work with a range of partnerships across a continuum of relationships from purely contractual to more broader-based collaboration.

THE CONTINUUM OF COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN WFP

15. Because almost any collaboration can be referred to as a “partnership”, WFP needs criteria to inform strategic choices about collaborative relationships. Figure 1 presents a continuum of collaborative relationships, moving from the transactional (a purely contractual or quasi-contractual relationship) through to partnership. WFP has relationships that sit at many points along this continuum.

Figure 1: The Continuum of Collaborative Relationships in WFP

Transactional <<<<<<	↔	>>>>>> Partnership
One party decides on the programme based on their knowledge and experience	↔	Decision co-generation based on joint knowledge and experience
One party purchases a service from – or donates to the work of – another	↔	Partners bring together complementary resources
Fixed contractual arrangement, with clear activities and outputs decided at beginning	↔	Collaboration agreement, with agreed outcomes; flexibility over how to get there
Limited engagement with parties outside the contractual arrangement	↔	Engagement and commitment beyond the contractual arrangement
Partners stay in their comfort zones, – each doing what they normally do	↔	Partners create new ways of working
One-way accountability	↔	Mutual accountability
Significant trust and transparency not essential	↔	Requires mutual trust and transparency

² The CPS does not comment on relationships with staff as this is the focus of the human resources strategy.

16. The transactional to partnership continuum does not imply a value judgment. A partnership relationship is not automatically better than a transactional one. Rather, it is a matter of choice, of understanding the differences and establishing the form of collaborative relationship most appropriate to the circumstances. In the right context, moving towards a full partnership may bring additional benefits but it may also generate additional responsibilities and require more time and effort.
17. The benefits of different forms of collaboration are shown in Figure 2. Many of WFP’s relationships will be located somewhere between the two ends of the spectrum and will thus have characteristics of both. It is by understanding the choices and the benefits involved in collaborative relationships and making informed decisions about the most appropriate form of collaboration that WFP and its partners will generate the greatest added value.

Figure 2: Advantages of Different Forms of Collaboration

Transactional <<<<<<	>>>>>> Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-defined and manageable commitment Lower management and administration costs – requires significantly less investment in relationship building Clear decision-making authority and narrowly defined contractual relationship Predictable procedures and outcomes Clear lines of authority and accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger potential for innovative and transformational solutions Scope to identify improved approaches Decision-making is participatory and more fully informed Partners willing to commit additional resources Wider potential for influence and advocacy Potential for stronger overall accountability Greater potential for mutual learning

WFP’S DEFINITION OF PARTNERSHIP

18. The WFP definition of partnership below captures WFP’s view of what constitutes a “deep” partnership – one sitting at the “partnership” end of the continuum. This will help to guide discussions over which relationships offer more or less value to WFP.

Figure 3 – WFP Definition of Partnerships

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 (both the collective partnership’s objectives and individual partner goals) that could not be achieved as efficiently, effectively or innovatively alone, and where the value created is greater than the transaction costs involved.

19. The emphasis in this definition is on the achievement of outcomes. Partnerships are a means to an end, and should be assessed in terms of their contribution to specific goals. Collaboration offers access to resources, expertise, knowledge and networks that enhance WFP’s ability to achieve its objectives and those of its partners. However, the potential added value of a partnership must be greater than the transaction costs involved in developing and maintaining it.

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR WFP PARTNERSHIPS

20. The guiding principles for all WFP partnerships are of three types. Strategic principles – the framework within which all WFP partnerships have to operate; Precautionary principles – limit risk and exclude partnerships that may be detrimental to WFP; and prescriptive principles – establish the rules of good practice for all partnership work.

Strategic Principles

21. Strategic principles are the key elements that must be present for all partnerships if these are to further WFP's goals and realise the benefits outlined above. All WFP partnerships should:
- contribute to the achievement of WFP's Strategic Objectives;
 - be cost-effective. Over the lifetime of a programme, project or activity the "value" of the partnership gains must be greater than the transaction costs involved;
 - reflect international priorities in food security and nutrition;
 - confirm and enhance WFP's standing as an ethical operator; and
 - be properly resourced from all parties, particularly ensuring all resource commitments are kept.

Precautionary Principles

22. Precautionary principles are used to limit risk and to exclude partnerships that may be detrimental to WFP's reputation, status or operating efficiency. WFP will not engage in partnerships where there is:
- an absence of shared goals that are aligned to WFP's mandate;
 - non-compliance with key principles established by the United Nations in relation to engagement with the private sector;
 - the potential partner lacks the capacity to deliver against the objectives; or
 - there is a serious risk of negative impact on the reputation of WFP.
23. Concern over reputational risk has always been highest in partnerships with private sector bodies, but such risks can exist with all partnerships. WFP has in place due diligence processes that must be followed before entering into partnership agreements and will keep these under review.

Prescriptive Principles

24. WFP is a signatory to the 2007 Principles of Partnership defined in the United Nations Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP),³ whose five requirements are:
- equality;
 - transparency;
 - result-oriented approach;
 - responsibility; and
 - complementarity.
25. WFP will continue to use the GHP Principles of working in partnership. However, WFP prefers the term “equity” rather than “equality” because all partners contribute something to a collaborative relationship and must be respected regardless of size or status. This acknowledges that, despite differences between the resources contributed, all partners bring something to the table and therefore deserve a respected seat, regardless of size or status.
26. Table 1 lists the prescriptive principles and desired WFP good practice in meeting these. But a set of principles alone will achieve little: they must be understood and recognized as the basis for practical action. Detailed procedures will be developed for WFP staff and integrated into operational practice.

TABLE 1: WFP’S PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP AND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE	
PRINCIPLE	APPLICATION IN PRACTICE
<p>EQUITY Equity requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other’s mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other’s constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understand and value the resources that each partner brings, regardless of its size and status. ✓ Provide all partners with a voice in decision-making, consistent with the time available to take decisions. ✓ Respect differences in focus and methods but strive for a common vision around a shared objective. ✓ Agree on clear procedures for reconciling disagreement and resolving conflict.
<p>TRANSPARENCY Transparency is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Freely share information on resources, objectives and expectations at the outset ✓ Establish clear procedures and channels for communication between partners ✓ Use partnership agreements to record and clarify communication procedures ✓ Demonstrate reliability and consistency in adhering to these procedures.

³ See: www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org

TABLE 1: WFP'S PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP AND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

PRINCIPLE	APPLICATION IN PRACTICE
<p>RESULTS-ORIENTED APPROACH Effective development and humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires result-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Agree on achievable and measurable objectives and outcomes. ✓ Ensure that available resources from all parties are compatible with these outcomes. ✓ Use partnering agreements to establish procedures for measuring outcomes and responding to challenges. ✓ Put in place appropriate procedures for review and evaluation of both the partnership process and its outcomes. ✓ Agree on a clear exit strategy based on a mutual understanding of what will constitute completion (or abandonment) of the partnership.
<p>RESPONSIBILITY Organizations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide partners with an unambiguous statement of WFP's ethical standards and principles of partnership. ✓ Review human resources to ensure that WFP and its partners can supply and support individuals with appropriate skills. ✓ Provide strong leadership from Headquarters and regional bureaux to support those in field-level operations. ✓ Respect international and national standards on modes of working with local communities.
<p>COMPLEMENTARITY The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide potential partners with a clear statement of WFP's strengths and the value it contributes to partnership. ✓ Gather data on potential partners to provide insight into knowledge, skills and scope complementary to those of WFP. ✓ Recognize the need to balance WFP values and operational modalities with principles and procedures determined by local culture. ✓ Plan for the long-term need to develop local capacity and to empower national organizations to assume responsibility for food security.

WFP'S UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

27. Defining and communicating WFP's value proposition⁴ is increasingly important. Donors need to understand clearly what this entails and the distinctive resources, knowledge and skills WFP has to offer. Partner organizations need to understand why WFP should be a preferred partner in food security operations.

⁴ A unique value proposition is a clear statement of an organization's potential in a given sphere of activity that distinguishes it from others.

28. Feedback from WFP's partners is clear and consistent on the things they currently value about WFP as a partner:
- WFP's "can-do" attitude and practical focus on getting the job done;
 - the scope of WFP's operational footprint ("field reach");
 - the responsibility and integrity of WFP staff;
 - WFP's deep skills in logistics and telecommunications;
 - contextual knowledge and understanding of vulnerability.
29. WFP's unique value proposition needs to be simply stated and consistently communicated. It must include the strengths recognized and valued by partners, and the commitments and values that will continue to make WFP a preferred partner in the rapidly evolving food-security environment. A statement of WFP's unique value proposition is provided in the Annex.

WHAT WFP EXPECTS OF ITS PARTNERS

30. Partnerships will only be successful when the parties work together in a spirit of trust. WFP expects its partners to adhere to the same principles and ethical standards followed by WFP and to work towards establishing equitable, transparent and results oriented partnerships. It also:
- expects partners to be honest about their strengths, weaknesses and the reasons for, and benefits arising from, their collaborative work with WFP. There should be no hidden agendas and partners should help WFP understand their own value proposition(s);
 - wants its partners to maintain dialogue on problems and issues arising during collaboration so that they can be discussed and resolved speedily;
 - welcomes feedback from its partners on the effectiveness of WFP as a partner;
 - requires its partners to work in ways that protect vulnerable people and promote gender equality and women's empowerment;
 - wants its partners to be realistic about the resources they can commit to the partnership and open about the risks that may impact the ability of partners to contribute towards the common goals of the partnership.; and
 - expects the results flowing from collaborative work to be fairly attributed to all the organizations involved and not claimed by one partner alone.

Section III – WFP’s Main Partners

31. The CPS is a high-level strategy document that provides the broad elements of the way that WFP intends to work with others. If and when required, sector and in some cases partner specific strategies will be developed to reflect the distinct features of different partners. These will be presented to the Board where appropriate: examples include “[WFP Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy \(2013–2017\)](#)” (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-B) and “[WFP and the African Union](#)” (WFP/EB.A/2012/5-G).
32. WFP has collaborative relationships with host governments, donor governments, NGOs, the private sector, the United Nations system, international finance institutions, international and regional organizations, academia and think tanks. WFP adopts a partnering approach with the children, women and men its serves, the governments that sit on its governing bodies and the media.
33. WFP’s partnerships take three main forms:
 - bi-lateral partnerships: these are agreements between WFP and another actor such as a government, NGO or United Nations organization;
 - multi-stakeholder and catalytic partnerships: these include, for example, regional organizations triangular and South–South cooperation, where partners sign up to multi-party Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); and
 - open and Networked partnerships: collaborations which intentionally align around shared objectives not in a regulated, formalized way. And where WFP may have a convening role to anchor or moderate communities of practice but where the participants do not sign agreements with WFP.
34. These partnerships embrace five types of partner:
 - resource partners, which provide human, financial and technical resources;
 - knowledge partners, which contribute information, evaluation and analysis;
 - policy and governance partners, which work on WFP’s own policies and governance, as well as regional and country hunger and nutrition policies, and hunger and institutional governance;
 - advocacy partners, which support WFP’s work to advocate for food security and nutrition; and
 - capability partners, which support the design and implementation of programmes and operations.
35. WFP collaborates with others through a wide array of relationships of different forms and types as shown in Table 2. It is not practicable to comment on all aspects of these multi-dimensional relationships. The sections below therefore focuses on key elements of WFP’s interaction with different groups of partners.

TABLE 2: THE WIDE ARRAY OF WFP RELATIONSHIPS										
Legend: B – Bilateral partnerships; M – Multi-stakeholder and catalytic partnerships; O – Open and networked partnerships										
	Host governments	Donor governments	NGOs	Private sector	United Nations	IFIs	Academia think tanks	Governing bodies	Media	Affected populations
Resource partners <i>Human, financial, and technical resources</i>	B	B M	B	B	M	B M				
Knowledge partners <i>Information, evaluation and analysis</i>		B M O	B M O	B M	B M O	B M O	B M O	M		
Policy and governance partners <i>Policies, governance, regional and country hunger and nutrition policies, and hunger and institutional governance</i>	B M	M O	M O		M O	M O	O	M		
Advocacy partners <i>Support for publicity work</i>	B M	B M O	B M O	B M	B M O	B M O	B M O	M	O	O
Capability partners <i>Design and implementation of programmes and operations</i>	B		B M	B M	B M					O

WFP'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHILDREN, WOMEN AND MEN IT SERVES

36. The most fundamental relationship for WFP is with the children, women and men it serves. It is this relationship that drives all of WFP's programmes, policies and activities.
37. Under its partnership approach WFP seeks to involve affected populations in the design, monitoring and evaluation of its programme activities and to ensure that processes are in place to promote accountability to affected populations for the effectiveness of programme delivery.
- In the area of programme design, WFP seeks involvement of communities by listening to, consulting and engaging people at an early stage, feeding learning back into the organization on an ongoing basis and reporting on the results of the process.
 - In the area of accountability to affected populations, WFP is promoting concerted action in these areas as chair of the IASC task team on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. This, includes the development of clear accountability frameworks and the active deployment of experts and coordinators as a common service to the humanitarian community.

WFP'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENTS

38. WFP's relationships with governments fall into three categories, which are not mutually exclusive:
- relations with host governments, including governments of middle-income countries, whom WFP supports through assistance programmes. WFP has long been a trusted partner of more than 70 recipient countries;
 - relations with donor governments that actively support WFP. Governments remain WFP's single most important group of financial supporters. WFP's relations with this group are guided by the "[Resourcing for a Changing Environment](#)" (WFP/EB.1/2010/5-B/Rev.1) On average, governments have directly contributed about 90 percent of WFP's annual resources over the last five years; and
 - relations with member states of WFP's governing bodies, such as the Board.
39. The nature of the relationships with governments is changing. In the post-Paris, Accra and Busan environment WFP – in common with other major actors – has had to address the need for decentralization, greater accountability to governments, and more innovative local partnerships. This is already reflected in initiatives such as the African Risk Capacity Partnership.

Host Governments

40. WFP seeks to strengthen its partnerships with host governments by systematically exploring opportunities that allow both partners to combine and leverage complementary resources, while sharing risks, responsibilities and accountability. These include the need for longer-term partnership in which WFP is better prepared to deal with issues of transition and handover to local government and community actors. In middle-income countries, WFP is increasingly shifting to an enabling role by enhancing technical capacity strengthening government systems for monitoring, analysis and mapping of food insecurity, disaster risk reduction, programming and nutrition mainstreaming in social safety nets.

Donor Governments

41. The strengthening of partnerships between WFP and donor governments requires both sides to create opportunities for transparent dialogue, shared experiences and joint knowledge as well as more complementarity in their approaches. WFP will strive to deepen partnerships with donor governments for instance, through open dialogue and regular consultations. Based on the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles and in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), WFP will consult with donor Governments on how to ensure increased flexibility and predictability of resources. WFP will also strive to broaden its donor base.

WFP's Governing Bodies

42. WFP recognizes that the relationship with its governing bodies cannot be classified as a partnership because of the governance role and responsibilities of the governing bodies. The relationship is however one which benefits from a "partnering approach". There is a proven causal relationship between the effectiveness of an organization's governance arrangements in setting the "*tone at the top*" and the effectiveness of the organization itself. Moreover, the quality of the Secretariats' relationship with its governing bodies is key to addressing the three pillars of effective governance: transparency, trust, and understanding. WFP will continue to take action to provide effective support to its governing bodies.

WFP'S PARTNERSHIPS WITH REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

43. Regional organizations play an increasingly important role in the fight to eliminate hunger and restore food security. Collaboration between WFP and regional organizations is crucial to ensure regional priorities are addressed in WFP's mission, and vice versa. WFP will continue to support and collaborate on regional initiatives, providing expert technical and policy advice in the fields of emergency preparedness, needs assessment, social safety nets (e.g. school feeding), strategic food reserves, logistic, food security and nutrition with specific emphasis on reaching goals that promote gender equality. It will strengthen relationships with key regional organizations in line with its strategic partnership principles.

WFP'S PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

44. WFP has established a sound track record of working with the private sector both through fund-raising and to access the unique knowledge and skills available in commercial businesses. WFP's private partners benefit from engaging with WFP through corporate and staff satisfaction from playing an active role in improving the lives of the world's poor. WFP is highly selective in choosing its private-sector partners and seeks partnerships with the greatest reach and impact that provide longer-term development solutions to the poorest. The Board approved the "Private-Sector Partnerships and Fund-Raising Strategy (2013–2017)" at its 2013 Annual Session.

WFP'S PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

45. Each year WFP works with 1,500 to 2,000 civil-society organizations, the majority of which are local, community-based NGOs. Most of these relationships are quasi-contractual, where WFP is outsourcing local delivery to national or international NGOs. WFP's annual NGO Partnership consultations, held each year since 1995, have undergone a major transformation over the last two years. The meeting now takes place at Chief Executive Officer level, with over 100 participating NGOs. This successful annual consultation will continue to be a key feature of WFP engagement with NGO partners.
46. Because of the huge number of NGOs with which WFP works, clearer distinctions need to be made between relations with the larger, and in many cases international NGOs, and smaller and often national organizations. Larger NGOs have greater capacity to commit resources and share risks as part of partnership working with WFP providing opportunities for a different level of partnership. However smaller NGOs may also offer an untapped opportunity for greater attention and resourcing to build local capacity. The strengthening of the role of WFP's regional bureaux presents an opportunity for WFP to better define roles and responsibilities at each level to ensure that country offices have the information and support required to partner better.

WFP'S PARTNERSHIPS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

System-Wide Coherence

47. There has been a major shift to greater system-wide coherence in the United Nations, which will impact levels of authority for decision-making and approval, particularly of “One UN” activities. The shift also involves new procedures for accountability such as the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). WFP will maximize the benefits of implementation of the QCPR by partnering and coordinating with other funds and programmes (including the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], the United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], the United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF] and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [UN-Women]) on key aspects of QCPR implementation. In WFP’s view, this must be supported by defining a clearer division of labour between these institutions in collaborative activities.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee

48. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee is a key humanitarian forum for defining inter-agency humanitarian policy and giving direction to inter-agency responses to crises. As one of the largest operational organizations represented and a cluster leader, WFP will continue to play an important role in shaping the agenda of the committee and facilitating discussions that impact on how WFP partners and engages with the broader humanitarian community.

Cluster Lead

49. Recent evaluations confirm the value of WFP’s participation and leadership in global partnerships such as the logistics, emergency telecommunications and food security clusters. The improved co-ordination and resource allocation provided by these partnerships increases the impact of humanitarian efforts and enhances benefits to those most in need of support. WFP has demonstrated that it can bring not just technical skills but also high-quality leadership to global partnerships of this kind.

50. WFP will build on the standing it has as a common service provider to the humanitarian community in two further areas where there is a high level of WFP expertise and scope for a system wide approach:

- developing a common United Nations-wide platform for the delivery of cash and vouchers; and
- the creation and management of administrative support facilities, such as office space, in emergency situations.

Bilateral Partnerships with other Humanitarian and Development Agencies

51. Expanding bilateral partnerships with other humanitarian and development actors remains an essential element of WFP’s partnership strategy. An example of best practice is the strong operational partnership formed by WFP and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. One of the key features of this partnership is the strong engagement between the organizations at all levels fostered by regular high-level meetings. This is supported by a detailed MOU and nominated individuals in both organizations responsible for managing the relationship, keeping the MOU up to date and resolving issues and tensions that arise.

52. Building on this best-practice model, WFP will promote better partnership with United Nations organisations through:
- the nomination of key staff within WFP with the responsibility for acting as an overall relationship manager for each agency;
 - developing and agreeing “engagement strategies” for all major partners that help WFP to define and agree corporately the areas of potential added value from working with a particular partner;
 - concerted action to develop effective MOUs with each organization to clarify areas of joint work and the means of resolving any disagreements arising; and
 - a clear, and where possible joint, communication strategy on the key features of the partnership.

Working with the Rome-Based Agencies

53. WFP’s work with the other Rome-based agencies (RBAs) is governed by “[Directions for Collaboration among the Rome-Based Agencies](#)” (WFP/EB.2/2009/11-C). The RBAs share a common vision of promoting world food security through the twin-track approach of alleviating hunger with food assistance, nutrition support measures and social protection instruments, while eliminating the root causes of hunger and poverty. They follow a four pillar framework for collaboration focusing on: policy advice, knowledge and monitoring; operations; advocacy and communication; and administrative collaboration.
54. The three agencies have undertaken – and continue to develop – a wide range of common activities in the policy, advocacy, operational and administrative areas. A number of new coordination processes and tools have been implemented to strengthen RBA collaboration including, in WFP, the establishment of a dedicated unit responsible for overall RBA coordination. Progress has been made through closer collaboration between the Executive Heads and the Deputies of WFP, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and through the planned shift of the Committee on World Food Security to equal tripartite funding.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

55. In its engagement with the International Financial Institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Regional Banks etc.) WFP seeks to share and expand global knowledge on new development approaches and to promote increased investments in new and fundamental programmatic opportunities. The World Bank has set two new specific goals for the development community: ending extreme poverty by shrinking the share of people living on less than USD 1.25 a day to 3 percent by 2030; and promoting the shared prosperity by raising the incomes of the poorest 40 percent of the population in every developing country. WFP’s partnership is particularly relevant given the focus on fragile states that such new goals entail. It is precisely in such states that the operational and capacity-building ability of WFP is most needed by the World Bank.

ACADEMIA AND THINK TANKS

56. WFP has long-standing partnerships with Universities, research institutes and academia involved in food security and nutrition, public health, emergency preparedness, agricultural development and safety nets as well as food safety and control issues. Such specialist partners provide the expertise and capacity to carry out research that keep hunger and nutrition issues on the global agenda as well as to inform policy making at global, regional and national level. Research results allow for evidence-based policy-making and programming throughout WFP's project cycle. In addition, WFP's strong field presence and access to communities provides an entry point for researchers to carry out in-depth research with a bridge to operations on the ground.
57. WFP intends to build on its collaborations with academic institutions and think tanks by combining advocacy, operational research and capacity-development to address specific issues and to contribute to further research into food security and nutrition issues.

THE MEDIA

58. Editorial independence requires media organizations to maintain a distance and precludes opportunities for genuine partnership. However, the quality of the relationships WFP builds with media organisations can significantly improve WFP's ability to generate support and mobilize resources. WFP actively engages with traditional and digital media organisations through dedicated staff in its offices and public information officers in donor capitals and the field. Media engagement brings value by raising awareness about WFP's work, giving visibility to our strategic priorities, and supporting our efforts to mobilise funds by raising the profile of shortfalls and resource requirements, particularly in response to sudden onset emergencies.

Section IV – Key Actions Needed to Increase the Effectiveness of Partnering in WFP

59. WFP has a distinctive organizational culture based on its global expertise in food assistance. The organization is highly task-oriented and focused on the delivery of clearly defined outputs. This strong internal culture has helped WFP to build a solid reputation as an organization that delivers on its commitments.
60. However, expectations of WFP from its partners are changing. WFP’s original core competence of emergency food relief, while crucially important and highly valued, is now only part of what member states and communities expect from WFP. In terms of organizational culture, this means a greater focus on listening to and understanding long-term needs; identifying partners who can deliver complementary skills to those of WFP; and being prepared to contribute to partnerships and programmes without assuming a directive role.
61. The challenge for WFP is to maintain the quality of its core traditional operations while creating sufficient flexibility in the way it works to support better long-term partnerships. WFP’s dominant culture needs to evolve further from “We deliver” to “We deliver together”. This will not happen overnight. It will emerge from an accumulation of actions taken in support of WFP’s heightened focus on partnerships. Critical elements to support this change of culture include:
- high-level leadership of WFP’s commitment to partnership;
 - clarity in the communication of WFP’s vision and objectives and its unique value proposition;
 - working in an open, transparent and collaborative way;
 - sharing knowledge and expertise freely (internally and externally);
 - developing staff skills and capacity to partner effectively;
 - understanding better the various costs of developing and managing partnerships; and,
 - supporting staff with adequate resources to build long-term partnerships.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

62. The new Partnership and Governance Services Department (PG) provides the strategic focus for partnerships across WFP. While all Headquarters (HQ) departments, regional bureaux and country offices in WFP will be responsible and accountable for the implementation of the CPS, PG has a leadership role in implementing the CPS and promoting a shift of culture within WFP, with the support HQ departments and regional bureaux.

63. Key elements in the implementation of the CPS include:

- strategy – identify and define actual, potential and desirable partners;
- advocacy – promote, position and advocate for WFP as an effective partner;
- engagement – determine WFP’s objectives in working with one or a number of partners through formal *engagement strategies*;
- agreement – determine what can actually be negotiated and agreed with partners and what form of agreement best suits the relationship;
- relationship management – determine how best to manage the overall relationship with large partnerships which may affect many units across the organisation;
- partnership management – day-to-day management of specific partnerships; and
- implementation support to offices and staff on partnerships – tools guidance and advice.

Strategy and Advocacy

64. The CPS, supported as necessary by lower level strategies for particular partner groups and regions, provides the basis for strategic engagement with partners. WFP will continue to advocate for WFP as an effective partner based on a clear understanding of what WFP has to offer and gain from collaboration.

Engagement Strategies

65. WFP will establish a process for the development and internal consideration of “engagement strategies” with major partners or groups of partners at all levels. The engagement strategies will help WFP to define and agree corporately the areas of potential added value added value from working with a particular partner or group of partners. Engagement strategies will encompass:

- an inventory of the relationship to date;
- the areas of potential added value to WFP;
- the key actions needed to build a stronger relationship, including senior management engagement and time;
- the resource implications of building and maintaining the relationship; and
- the risks involved and how these will be managed.

Partnership Agreements

66. WFP’s collaborative relationships are governed by various forms of agreement ranging from field-level agreements signed with cooperating partners at the country office level to high-level MOUs signed with other United Nations agencies, private sector actors, governments or international and regional institutions.

67. Different types of partnership require different forms of agreement to reflect varying levels of commitment and accountability (for example, a mutual knowledge-exchange arrangement compared with a funding arrangement). Ultimately, agreements need to serve a clear strategic purpose. However, at present some global MOU are too general to have any value beyond a broad commitment to co-operate, while others were signed many years ago.

68. WFP will carry out a systematic inventory of existing partnership agreements with the goal of developing a clear typology of agreements and their optimum use; identifying good practice and commonalities in the development and use of such agreements, and issuing stronger guiding templates for each type of agreement required.

Relationship Management

69. WFP will nominate ‘relationship managers’ for each major global and regional partner. Relationship managers will be responsible for:
- developing and maintaining effective agreements that capture the essence of the partnership;
 - liaising with and collecting information from those WFP colleagues implementing the partnership in-country or regionally; and
 - troubleshooting any challenges to ensure the health and greatest added value of the partnership.

Partnership Management

70. The management, monitoring and evaluation of partnerships will continue to be delegated to WFP staff most directly involved in such collaborative work.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Support to Country Offices

71. The primary responsibility for supporting country offices work on partnership rests at the regional level. The regional bureaux will develop their own partnership strategies to help contextualize the engagement with partners at the regional and country level.
72. WFP will create a partnership resource centre to provide advise and support all offices on how to identify, build, nurture and review effective partnerships. This centre will be created initially centrally but then decentralized to the regional level. Support from specialist staff will provide the platform of knowledge and expertise for those at regional and country level where the main responsibility for taking decisions on partnership selection and management is located.

Training and Development

73. The training and development of WFP staff is critical to developing an effective and strategic approach to partnering across WFP. The review and evaluation of WFP’s partnership work shows that WFP staff are highly valued by partners for their integrity, quality and commitment⁵. Nevertheless, there is a need for improvement in the preparation of staff to handle the complexity of multi-stakeholder relationships, and training to that effect will be designed and implemented at HQ and field level. The main developmental areas include technical expertise in new sectors; partnering expertise (e.g. skills and principles); skills in policy making, advocacy and capacity development (enabling rather than doing); and monitoring expertise.

⁵ *Evaluation Top 10 Lessons: Working in Partnership*, Lesson 7, p. 15. WFP Office of Evaluation, July 2013 (available at <http://docustore.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/reports/wfp258943.pdf>).

Knowledge Management

74. Managing a very wide range of complex partnerships across a global organization creates significant challenges in terms of handling information and knowledge about these relationships. WFP will identify the key knowledge and skills required by staff (at all levels) to deliver on WFP's partnership commitments. The lead department, PG, will provide support, materials and guidance on appropriate training and development for staff in critical partnering skills such as communication, negotiation and brokering.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

75. Partnerships are not static: operational circumstances change and successful partnerships evolve in response to that change. Effective monitoring of the partnership relationship is therefore critical.
76. WFP's strategic and management results frameworks include partnership results statements and indicators to measure various aspects of partnering at the project and institutional level. There is also a new management dimension dedicated to partnership to provide a clear focus on partnership across the organisation. These frameworks have a range of results statements and key performance indicators for monitoring the effectiveness of partnerships, which will be refined in the light of experience.

RESOURCES

77. The resources required to develop the strategy and guide its initial implementation were included as part of the strategic developments included in the Management Plan (2014–2016). The need for further investment will be assessed and presented in future Management Plans. WFP's intention is to seek to offset the cost of better partnering through savings generated from more cost-effective internal partnership processes.

WFP'S UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION TO PARTNERS

1. WFP is the frontline United Nations humanitarian agency reaching millions of people with tangible, innovative and practical solutions to food insecurity.
2. WFP delivers a range of tailored food security responses to support government initiatives, build the resilience of vulnerable populations, and represent a global safety net of last resort for people affected by humanitarian emergencies.
3. Building on its four core strengths – people, presence, partnerships and performance – WFP generates results by leveraging its expertise, scale of operations, agility and responsiveness; delivery-focus as well as transparency and accountability.

Expertise

4. People: WFP's dedicated individuals draw on an unparalleled range of expertise in providing nutritious foods, logistics, telecommunications, food security, needs assessment, post-emergency rehabilitation and longer-term capacity building.
5. Effective targeting: for WFP is to determine where the hungry are, how many there are, their degree of hunger, and where they might be in future. This provides the basis for the right programmatic response and targeting of assistance. WFP's unique vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) systems uses advanced technology to target food assistance to the most vulnerable people, factoring in gender and age considerations and how they affect people's vulnerability. VAM is carried out by over 150 analysts around the world.
6. A proven track record of working with others: WFP seeks to maximize value for its beneficiaries by engaging in operational and knowledge partnerships with organizations offering complementary skills and resources, including United Nations agencies, NGOs, private business, international foundations and research institutions. At a global level, WFP is a major contributor to the United Nations international cluster system and leading on Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications and as a joint leader with FAO on Food Security. At a local level, WFP works with host Governments and over 2,000 non-governmental and community-based organizations for the delivery of food assistance to beneficiaries.

Scale of Operations

7. Global capacity. WFP has the largest global capacity to scale up/deliver food assistance in challenging and often unsafe environments. WFP has 13,500 employees located in 75 countries worldwide. Nine out of ten staff work in the field, often in the world's poorest and most fragile countries.
8. Front line presence: WFP prides itself on its deep field presence where staff maintain close contact with the children, women and men it serves as well as other local stakeholders. Taking advantage of its 350 field offices and its wide range of local NGO partners, WFP systematically monitors the distribution of food assistance, and closely tracks the nutrition status of beneficiaries.
9. Scope of operations: WFP's unique scope and capability enables it to provide food for some 100 million people in 80 countries. Last year (3.5 million) metric tons of food were delivered, funded by cash and in-kind donations from WFP's donors and partners; (USD 844) million was spent buying food in (75) developing countries, reinforcing WFP's

commitment to link food aid to local development; and (24.7) million children received food through schools meals projects, illustrating WFP's engagement with long-term nutrition and reconstruction programmes. WFP seeks to ensure that its food and nutritional support is provided in a way that acknowledges gender gaps and seeks to close them.

Agility and Responsiveness

10. Scaling up operations to meet emerging needs. WFP has a proven capacity to scale up and scale down operations quickly to meet changing needs. High levels of emergency preparedness are backed by rosters of staff able to deploy at the onset of major emergencies.
11. Global readiness: WFP manages six United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots located strategically around the world. When emergencies strike, relief items can be efficiently delivered to affected areas worldwide within 24 to 48 hours.
12. Reaching those in need: WFP's United Nations leadership in logistics enables it to provide access for the international humanitarian community to remote areas in emergency situations where roads are insecure or infrastructure is destroyed. WFP also leads the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), providing vital IT and telecommunication connectivity to humanitarian actors in the field within 48 hours of the onset of a disaster.

Delivery – Focus

13. A strong delivery culture: WFP is globally regarded as an organization that delivers on its commitments, often in exceptional circumstances.
14. A focus on impact: WFP's collaboration with its funding partners actively contributes to the achievement of the donor's foreign policy and international aid objectives. WFP's efforts to help end global hunger directly contribute to commitments such as poverty reduction, sustainable growth and peace building from the perspective of human security. WFP's unique reach and capability ensures high visibility for the donor's assistance and its strict financial operations guarantees value for the funding partner and maximum benefit to beneficiaries.

Accountability and Transparency

15. A strong commitment to sound financial management, internal control and accounting: WFP was the first United Nations organization to implement International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), provides an annual statement of assurance on the effectiveness of internal control and has a wide range of oversight bodies which ensure that all aspects of its Headquarters and field operations are subject to regular independent audit and evaluation. To support global operations in the most effective way, WFP runs a lean and efficient administrative infrastructure characterized by a high degree of transparency and accountability.
16. Value for Money: WFP seeks to continuously demonstrate that it provides "value for money" for the people it serves.
17. Integrity: WFP staff are seen by partner organizations as trustworthy, responsible and valued for their integrity.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CPS	Corporate Partnership Strategy
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GHP	Global Humanitarian Platform
HQ	Headquarters
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	non-governmental organization
PG	Partnership and Governance Services Department
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RBAs	Rome-based agencies
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping