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Management response to the recommendations deriving from the evaluation of WFP's policies on humanitarian principles and access in humanitarian contexts for the period 2004–2017

Background

1. This document presents management's response to the recommendations deriving from the evaluation of WFP's policies on humanitarian principles and on access in humanitarian contexts. The evaluation covers the period from the policies' approval by the Executive Board, in 2004 and 2006 respectively, and focuses on the period 2012–2017.
2. The evaluation assesses the quality of the policies, WFP's progress in adhering to the humanitarian principles and ensuring humanitarian access, and factors affecting the results observed. The evaluation finds that WFP's policies on humanitarian principles and access remain highly relevant at a time characterized by growth in the number of protracted emergencies and increasing politicization of the aid environment.
3. The eight recommendations call on WFP to pay greater attention to humanitarian principles and to significantly increase its investments in disseminating and implementing the two policies, including by strengthening staff competencies, designating responsibilities for humanitarian principles and access at the country level, prioritizing humanitarian principles when engaging with cooperating partners and commercial providers, investing in its use of needs assessment data and its security capacity and strengthening dialogue and advocacy with donors.
4. WFP will develop a corporate approach to ensuring access, building on best practices at the country level and incorporating all of its initiatives and partnerships at the global, regional and field levels into an integrated strategy.
5. The management response matrix below sets out the planned actions and implementation timelines.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS DERIVING FROM THE EVALUATION OF WFP'S POLICIES ON HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES AND ACCESS IN HUMANITARIAN CONTEXTS FOR THE PERIOD 2004–2017			
Recommendation	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 1: Policy dissemination</p> <p>Strengthen the dissemination and operationalization of the policies on access and humanitarian principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and compile short versions of the policies and ensure their integration in core institutional guidance; • share guidance and training materials more widely and adapt them to specific contexts where necessary; • increase the accountability of country directors for policy implementation; • strengthen communications on the humanitarian principles with host governments, <i>de facto</i> authorities and communities; and • clarify outstanding policy issues in new guidance and training. 	<p>Policy and Programme Division (OSZ); Human Resources Division (HRM)</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Short versions of the policy documents will be developed and integrated into other corporate guidance materials, including those for emergency field operations, the Integrated Road Map, enterprise risk management and emergency preparedness and response.</p> <p>Staff in regional bureaux and country offices will be made more aware of the guidance manual and training materials on access in humanitarian operations.</p> <p>Statements that reflect accountability for adherence to humanitarian principles and implementation of access policies will be incorporated into the annual assurance statements issued by country directors.</p> <p>The guidance and training disseminated will encourage country offices to strengthen their communications on humanitarian principles with various stakeholders.</p> <p>Outstanding issues with regard to the policies, such as engagement with non-state armed groups, will be clarified and incorporated into existing and new guidance and training materials.</p>	<p>Completion in 2019</p>

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<p>Recommendation 2: Prioritization of principles</p> <p>Put in place measures to increase the priority given to neutrality, impartiality and operational independence relative to access and humanity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that humanitarian principles are taken into account in the development of other policies and strategies; identify triggers for corporate decisions on complex trade-offs; and increase the coherence of efforts relating to cross-cutting issues such as gender, protection and accountability to affected populations. 	OSZ	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>Future policies and strategies will take humanitarian principles into account, thereby contributing to greater overall coherence among WFP's policies.</p> <p>Guidance materials and direct support to operations will include clearer advice to country offices on when and how to raise issues related to complex trade-offs with regional bureaux and headquarters. Corporate decisions on complex trade-offs are too context-specific to allow the establishment of triggers.</p> <p>Coherent actions to address cross-cutting issues will be ensured through enhanced coordination and consolidation at and among the central, regional and country levels.</p>	Completion in 2018
<p>Recommendation 3: Staff capacity</p> <p>Considerably strengthen staff competencies on humanitarian principles and access, particularly in complex emergency situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide standard, mandatory induction, including on access and humanitarian principles, to all WFP personnel; develop tailored training modules on humanitarian principles and access for existing trainings, including compulsory online courses; strengthen mentoring, continue supporting the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation and enable the deployment of experienced national staff; 	HRM; OSZ	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>E-learning modules on humanitarian access will be developed and included in WFP learning platforms. A training course on access, which includes adherence to humanitarian principles, has been finalized and is being offered to regional bureaux and country offices. Modules on humanitarian access and principles will be inserted into all relevant WFP training programmes.</p> <p>Training materials will target specific groups of staff but will be available to all staff members and their use will be encouraged throughout WFP. They will not however be made compulsory for all staff.</p> <p>WFP will strengthen peer exchanges and its overall cooperation with the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation through the secondment of a senior adviser to the centre and the participation of WFP staff in events, workshops and the Centre's fellowship programme.</p>	Completion in 2019

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assign operational responsibility for issues relating to humanitarian principles and access to a field management position reporting to the country director; • facilitate peer exchanges; • include humanitarian principles and access in the terms of reference of all regional humanitarian advisers; • ensure adequate field capacity for analysing and documenting principled access issues in L3 and L2 emergency responses; and • ensure compliance with programme criticality processes. 		<p>Adherence to humanitarian principles and implementation of access policies will be included in the terms of reference of regional humanitarian advisers. Mentoring on the principles and access will also be included in the terms of reference of staff members on temporary deployment.</p> <p>Responsibility for coordinating humanitarian access and principles already rests with country directors and/or emergency coordinators.</p> <p>While capacity for analysing and documenting issues concerning the principles and access in Level 3 and Level 2 emergencies could be improved, the current corporate structure for addressing such challenges – the director-level advisory group on access and its technical access cell – is deemed adequate for ensuring coordination and support throughout WFP. Guidance on programme criticality will be strengthened in order to promote compliance.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 4: Partnership – cooperating partners</p> <p>Give more priority to humanitarian principles in all elements of engagement with cooperating partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exchange with donors on good practices; • integrate humanitarian principles into standardized partner selection and due diligence, field-level agreements, assessment and training; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ strengthen WFP's monitoring capacity; • better define the standards for accountability to affected populations expected of partners; and • improve joint planning and communication with partners, including on risks. 	<p>Operations Services Department (OS); OSZ; Performance Management and Monitoring Division (RMP)</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Principled humanitarian action and accountability to affected populations are included in the due diligence process for selecting partners and will be further highlighted in field-level agreements and strengthened throughout the programme cycle, including through joint planning and communications.</p> <p>WFP's own monitoring capacity will be improved and increased in line with the new corporate results framework and performance indicators.</p>	<p>Completion in 2019</p>

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<p>Recommendation 5: Partnership – commercial partners</p> <p>Increase policy awareness, guidance and training opportunities for commercial partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide guidance and training on how to handle sensitive situations; • require reports on humanitarian principles and accept costs linked to compliance with humanitarian principles where necessary; and • where there are risks to compliance with humanitarian principles, rely more strongly on WFP transport assets and staff. 	Supply Chain Division (OSC)	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>Humanitarian principles will be fully integrated into the selection and due diligence processes for contractors, with guidance and training on how to handle sensitive situations provided as required.</p> <p>WFP accepts the costs associated with compliance with humanitarian principles.</p> <p>WFP pursues a policy of relying on the local economy and capacity for its transport operations wherever possible and appropriate, rather than importing its own assets or staff.</p>	Completion in 2019
<p>Recommendation 6: Needs assessment</p> <p>Continue investing in and further strengthen needs assessment and the use of needs assessment data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue investing in vulnerability analysis and mapping; • develop a coherent corporate position on how to react when host governments seek to significantly challenge or influence needs assessment data; • work more actively with the Food Security Cluster to track and document sector coverage of needs; and • use partner data more actively for triangulation. 	OS	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP recognizes the important role of vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) in assessing the needs of the most vulnerable people in order to inform selection of the most appropriate response. By leveraging innovative technologies such as mobile VAM, web-based surveys, innovative two-way communication tools and high-resolution spatial analysis, WFP is well positioned to reach affected populations in areas where humanitarian access is constrained.</p> <p>The Private Sector Partnerships Division (PGP) is working with existing and prospective private sector partners such as Tableau, Facebook, Cisco and Google on WFP's priority actions to strengthen its capacity in managing big data challenges. This work includes strengthening the digital identification of beneficiaries, mapping and data collection, connectivity and communications solutions.</p>	Completion in 2019

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		<p>WFP will continue to invest in its own VAM capacities and those of its partners through the development of new guidance – on the 72-hour assessment approach, targeting, needs assessment in urban contexts, basic needs analysis, etc. – and a new VAM learning programme, if funding becomes available. A talent pool of staff members and consultants with expertise in VAM has been established to attract new talent and thus boost WFP's VAM capacity.</p> <p>WFP's VAM Unit works closely with food security clusters at the global and country levels on assessing food and other basic needs. Examples of this work include the joint urban assessment project, dialogue on the intersectoral needs framework and joint assessments at the country level, such as the Rohingya emergency vulnerability assessment in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.</p> <p>WFP's corporate approach is to foster independent, transparent and methodologically sound needs assessments, use existing secondary data to avoid duplication of data collection and work with partners at all levels. All efforts and plans will be incorporated into a document laying out WFP corporate approach to access in order to establish a consistent approach in all functions and at all levels.</p>	

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<p>Recommendation 7: Security Strengthen WFP's security capacity in complex emergencies and improve security officers' focus on humanitarian principles and access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to prioritize filling security positions in complex emergencies, including by providing sufficient resources, and improve contractual conditions to strengthen retention of security staff; adapt terms of reference for field security officers; and engage WFP's security capacity on operations and programme design. 	Security Division (RMQ)	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP gives very high priority to filling security positions, and there are fewer vacant posts in security than in any other functional area. When posts are vacant, temporary solutions and staff are put in place.</p> <p>Terms of reference for security officers will be adapted to encourage and support the officers' engagement in the design and planning of programmes and the implementation of operations.</p>	Completion in 2019
<p>Recommendation 8: Donor relations and funding 8a) Increase and regularize the dialogue with donors on humanitarian principles and access and strengthen principled financing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the overview of global and country-level coverage of needs for advocacy with donors; hold regular high-level dialogue with donors on their support for principled response; establish criteria for rejecting funding when conditions conflict with humanitarian principles; use flexible funding strategically in high-risk settings where coverage is low; and strengthen non-government funding sources. 	Government Partnerships Division; OS; Budget and Programming Division; PGP	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>In high-profile emergency responses and other humanitarian situations WFP country offices will engage with the donor community on issues related to humanitarian principles and access. WFP's current approach to partnerships includes increasing the visibility of needs, diversifying its funding sources and entering into dialogue with a range of partners in order to increase flexible and predictable funding to support operations in all situations.</p> <p>WFP's updated programmatic and financial architecture provides opportunities for securing more predictable funding – especially in the form of multi-year contributions – enabling the long-term, consistent and continuous investments that are necessary in order to reduce humanitarian losses and strengthen community resilience over time. Unearmarked funds are allocated by the Strategic Resources Allocation Committee on the basis of corporate priorities and established processes. Through its new private sector partnership and</p>	Completion in 2019 and 2020

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<p>8b) Advocate for stronger support for all the facets of WFP operations that are critical for principled access, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application of the Good Humanitarian Donorship commitments and funding according to need; • more unconditional funding; and • engagement with WFP on programme criticality, acceptable risk and resources needed to mitigate risks. 		<p>fundraising strategy WFP is actively engaged in efforts to strengthen funding from non-government sources.</p> <p>Every partner must provide WFP with a written guarantee – based on the partnership contract template developed by WFP's Legal Office – that it will adhere to humanitarian principles in conducting its business. Increasing unconditional or flexible funding is the focus of PGP's new strategy.</p>	

Acronyms used in the document

HRM	Human Resources Division
OS	Operations Services Department
OSZ	Policy and Programme Division
PGP	Private Sector Partnerships Division
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping