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Executive Board documents are available on WFP's website (<https://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

Management response to the recommendations of the summary report on the evaluation of WFP's Gender Policy (2015–2020)

Background

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations set out in the summary report on the evaluation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020).¹
2. The evaluation covered the period from 2015 to 2019.
3. The evaluation resulted in eight recommendations.
4. Management appreciates the evaluation and agrees with all of the recommendations. WFP is committed to advancing gender equality, both as a stand-alone goal and as a necessary condition to realizing a world of zero hunger, along with broader implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The commitment to strengthening systemic changes will be put into action collaboratively within WFP and with partners (governments, other United Nations entities, international non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, private sector actors, academia, etc.). The Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, in her role of overseeing and supporting the Gender Office, will lead action on most of the actions outlined in this management response.² This will include ensuring enhanced integration of gender across WFP and leveraging the particular engagement of the Director of Human Resources and the regional and country directors, who will also assume applicable accountabilities.
5. The matrix below sets out the planned actions and implementation timelines.

¹ WFP/EB.A/2020/7-B.

² The WFP Gender Office is part of the Programme and Policy Development Department. The Gender Office will be a primary actor in operationalizing, and supporting the operationalization of, the eight recommendations.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF WFP'S GENDER POLICY (2015–2020)			
Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action to be taken	Priority/ implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 1 WFP should update the Gender Policy (2015–2020) to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and strengthen WFP's work on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition.</p> <p>a) The update should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain the overall structure, narrative and commitments of the WFP Gender Policy (2015-2020) and alignment with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and reaffirm the importance of accountability as described in the Gender Action Plan (2015–2020); review and reframe the governance, leadership, financial, partnership and employee (particularly gender advisor) benchmarks used in gender policy implementation; enhance the accountability of WFP regional bureaux and country offices for accelerating the fulfilment of corporate gender commitments; 	<p>Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, with the support of the leadership group and regional directors and in consultation with the Executive Board</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Through a consultative process involving all stakeholders, the Gender Policy (2015–2020) will be updated to accelerate progress towards the attainment of gender equality and ensure coherence with the forthcoming WFP policy on protection and accountability and thus contribute to food security and nutrition (and progress towards the attainment of all the Sustainable Development Goals).</p> <p>a) The updated gender policy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain the existing structure, commitments and accountability and be aligned with the second generation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0); include reframing of the benchmarks as applicable to the commitments and content; articulate gender equality accountability for WFP regional bureaux and country offices; 	<p><u>Priority: High</u> June 2021</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use progressive language that seeks to “leave no-one behind” while recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be possible across all contexts; and • include an intermediary objective for an enabling environment created by WFP’s areas of organizational change to support programme processes and humanitarian operations. <p>In updating the Gender Policy (2015–2020), WFP should further:</p> <p>b) revise the policy’s theory of change through a participatory and consultative process to articulate the interrelationships between the areas of organizational change, programme processes and the policy objectives, as well as the steps that should be taken to ensure that WFP programmes and operations contribute more to gender equality and women’s empowerment;</p> <p>c) ensure coordination and collaboration to incorporate a gender mainstreaming approach in the next strategic plan as a core part of WFP’s enabling role for zero hunger;</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use terminology consistently and language that is consistent with the purpose of the document; and • incorporate an objective (to be drafted) related to the WFP workplace and workforce to support programming and operations that contribute to gender equality. <p>b) The updated gender policy will incorporate an applicable theory of change that is developed through a participatory process and that supports WFP’s mandate for zero hunger and the next iteration of WFP’s strategic plan.</p> <p>c) A consultative process will engage diverse entities across all levels of the organization, such that gender mainstreaming is articulated as fundamental to WFP’s enabling role (for Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17) and is included in the next strategic plan.</p>	

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<p>d) ensure that all WFP programme technical guidance (e.g. for cash-based transfers and general food distribution, school feeding, nutrition, resilient livelihoods) is updated in relation to its contributions to gender equality or that a technical note is provided for guidelines not up for review, with specific examples to illustrate how gender equality and women's empowerment can be used to shape effective, efficient, equitable and empowering WFP programming; and</p> <p>e) develop and implement a communication and dissemination plan for promoting the updated policy that highlights and explains the importance of gender to WFP's mandate and to all its employees, thereby setting the "tone from the top".</p>		<p>d) WFP technical guidance for the various programme areas/functions will be reviewed by the respective WFP entities and revised by them as needed to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are systematically and sufficiently integrated into WFP programming.</p> <p>e) The updated gender policy will be accompanied by a communication and dissemination plan.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2 WFP should allocate sufficient programme support and administrative budget to implement its corporate commitments, including the work of the Gender Office and implementation of the regional gender strategies, and develop strategies to mobilize extrabudgetary and project funding, including through operational and strategic partnerships, in line with United Nations reform.</p>	<p>Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, with the support of the regional directors, the Assistant Executive Director of the Partnerships and Advocacy Department and the Assistant Executive Director of the Resource Management</p>	<p>Agreed The programme support and administrative budget will be reviewed to ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to architecture and activities supporting the implementation, at the headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels, of corporate commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. This will be followed by the development of a resource mobilization strategy.</p>	<p><u>Priority: High</u> June 2021, in line with the updated gender policy and regional gender strategies</p>

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<p>a) As WFP continues to mainstream gender into its work it should review the balance of extrabudgetary and programme support and administrative budget funding for securing crucial gender advisor positions and resources at all levels of the organization.</p> <p>b) WFP should expand its partnerships and funding for gender mainstreaming and targeted programming by building on existing good practices, in line with donor expectations and corporate priorities regarding the need for WFP to adapt to the changing global context and the evolving funding landscape.</p> <p>c) WFP should ensure that there is an effective corporate mechanism for tracking gender-related planning and expenditures.</p>	<p>Department and in consultation with the Executive Board</p>	<p>a) Funding will be reviewed to ensure that gender advisor positions and activities contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment across the organization are secured.</p> <p>b) The Partnerships and Advocacy Department will develop a strategy for expanding partnerships and funding gender mainstreaming across WFP's work and initiatives targeting gender equality and women's empowerment, at the global, regional and national levels.</p> <p>c) The gender equality expenditure tracking system successfully piloted in 2019 will be further developed and rolled out across WFP country offices. Corresponding revisions to the annual management plan and budget exercise for headquarters and regional bureaux will be made.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 3 The Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department should establish a cross-organizational steering group on gender equality and women's empowerment to provide distributed leadership, champion the gender policy and ensure accountability for gender policy implementation at all levels of the organization.</p>	<p>Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, with support from regional and country directors and in consultation with the Executive Board and functional divisions at the headquarters and regional bureau levels</p>	<p>Agreed An internal steering group that includes members with gender expertise will be established for the purposes of leading action on and ensuring accountability for gender equality results across the organization, including for the implementation of the eight recommendations arising from the evaluation of the Gender Policy (2015–2020).</p>	<p><u>Priority: High</u> November 2020</p>

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<p>a) The steering group should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include representatives from the organizational, humanitarian and programme divisions and not be assimilated into any other working group or task force; • have terms of reference defining its membership and rules of engagement that ensure effective participation and that it holds at least two meetings per year; and • have standing agenda items that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ continued integration of gender into WFP's work; ➤ progress towards gender equality outcomes, including through CSPs; and ➤ implementation of WFP's gender mainstreaming mechanisms: gender architecture, the Gender Transformation Programme, the IASC Gender with Age Marker and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. <p>b) Progress reports from WFP's headquarters divisions and regional bureaux should contribute to the discussions of the steering group and the annual updates to the Executive Board on WFP gender policy.</p>		<p>a) The steering group will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representatives of each WFP department, thus encompassing the organizational, humanitarian and programming functions, independent of other collective entities tasked with related issues; • agreed terms of reference that include procedures and membership requirements; and • standing agenda items for steering group meetings, including the three items specified in the recommendation. <p>b) Progress reports will be submitted to the steering group to support the fulfilment of its responsibilities and contribute to the annual updates to the Executive Board.</p>	

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<p>Recommendation 4 WFP should enhance regional- and country-level ownership of the gender policy and the Gender Action Plan through the revision of regional gender strategies and CSP-aligned gender action plans.</p> <p>a) WFP should review and revise existing regional gender strategies in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the key gender equality and women's empowerment challenges faced in each region and the balance of WFP's response in each region's humanitarian, development and "delivering to enabling" contexts; • prioritize the organizational changes needed to support gender mainstreaming in country offices and regional bureaux; • steer country offices in the preparation and implementation of CSPs that integrate gender and age, the Gender Transformation Programme and the Gender Action Plan to support delivery of gender equality results in the context of food security and nutrition across the humanitarian-peace-development nexus; and • define clear accountabilities tailored to the regional context. 	<p>Regional directors, with the support of the Chief of Staff, the Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, functional units at headquarters and regional bureaux, country directors and deputy country directors</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Once the updated gender policy is finalized (recommendation 1), regional bureau and country office ownership of the updated gender policy will be enhanced by revising the regional gender strategies and gender action plans aligned with country strategic plans (CSPs).</p> <p>a) In consultation with WFP country offices, the six regional gender strategies will be revised to support the mainstreaming of gender across humanitarian operations and development programming, framing actions and accountabilities that support gender equality results across the different contexts. Mindful of the triple nexus, the revisions will take into consideration context-specific challenges and prospective responses, corporate gender mainstreaming mechanisms and workplace and workforce commitments, as well as the financial resources required for their implementation.</p>	<p><u>Priority: Medium</u> December 2021</p>

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<p>b) Regional directors should review regional and country office resource mobilization opportunities for gender mainstreaming in line with WFP partnerships and funding priority commitments.</p> <p>c) Regional directors should create clear regional governance structures for overseeing the development and implementation of regional gender strategies.</p> <p>d) Regional reports to the gender equality steering group should provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of gender equality and women's empowerment changes in terms of organizational shifts and of programme results against gender policy objectives.</p>		<p>b) Regional bureau and country office mobilization of resources for activities that contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment will be reviewed and strengthened as applicable.</p> <p>c) Regional directors will lead the establishment of governance structures (prior to taking action on recommendation 4a)) for the development and implementation of the revised regional gender strategies.</p> <p>d) Regional reports submitted to the gender equality steering committee will incorporate quantitative and qualitative information pertaining to humanitarian, programmatic and organizational actions and results, with the regional gender strategies (per action 4a)) to include parameters for ensuring that such reporting by the regional bureaux is possible.</p>	

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<p>Recommendation 5 WFP should ensure that the development of the new human resources accountability framework – as agreed in response to one of the recommendations of the evaluation of the WFP People Strategy (2014–2017) – is informed by an analysis of gender, diversity and inclusion and ensures that senior managers are accountable for inclusive leadership practices and excellence in all areas of gender mainstreaming, including but not limited to gender parity.</p> <p>a) This should encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration of gender, diversity and inclusion analysis into the preparation of the accountability framework, led by the Human Resources Division (HRM) with the support of the Gender Office; • commitments to capacity strengthening of WFP employees in gender mainstreaming; and 	<p>Director of the Human Resources Division, in consultation with the Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department and with the support of the Assistant Executive Director of the Resource Management Department and the Gender Office</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>In alignment with the forthcoming policy that will replace the WFP People Strategy (2014-2017), a human resources accountability framework will be formulated to support leadership and excellence in gender mainstreaming across the organization, with attention to diversity and inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gender, diversity and inclusion analysis will be undertaken to inform the preparation of a human resources accountability framework focused on gender equality and women's empowerment. • Gender mainstreaming capacity-strengthening commitments will be developed and incorporated into the human resources accountability framework focused on gender equality and women's empowerment. 	<p><u>Priority: Medium</u> August 2021</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of specific approaches to strengthening the capacity of individual leaders (regional and deputy regional directors, country and deputy country directors) in gender mainstreaming at the regional and country levels. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on existing learning materials (such as the WFP e-learning course “Leading on Gender Equality”), additional approaches and opportunities for expanding the gender mainstreaming capacity of WFP managers will be developed and attention will be paid to obtaining adequate resources for a diverse and gender-competent workforce. 	
<p>Recommendation 6 WFP should invest in dedicated, professional gender advisors at headquarters and regional bureaux and build a cadre of experienced gender advisors to work in its country offices.</p> <p>a) WFP should undertake a workforce planning exercise for gender advisors and introduce a human resource plan to ensure that a consistent, funded and sustainable cadre of gender advisors is accessible at all levels of the organization. This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish mandatory, fixed-term professional regional gender advisor positions at the P-4 and P-5 levels with functional links to the Gender Office; and include standard outline terms of reference for regional and country office gender advisors to guide WFP regional bureaux and country offices in determining the roles and responsibilities of gender advisors, adapted to context. 	<p>Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, with the support of regional directors, the Assistant Executive Director of the Resource Management Department and the Director of the Human Resources Division, the Gender Office and a selection of regional and country directors, deputy country directors and regional gender advisors</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>WFP will invest in building a cadre of professional gender advisors at the headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels.</p> <p>a) A workforce planning exercise will be undertaken to formulate a funded plan for establishing a cadre of technically competent gender advisors at all levels of the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing generic terms of reference for regional and country office gender advisors will be updated. 	<p><u>Priority: High</u></p> <p>December 2021, in line with the preparation of regional gender strategies and the human resources accountability framework</p>

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<p>b) All organizational realignment exercises should include consideration of gender skills and capacity.</p> <p>c) Consideration should also be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establishing a career pathway and professional gender cadre for gender advisors from the country to the regional and global levels, in line with comparative WFP functions; and including a cadre of diverse gender advisors in the Future International Talent pool for deployment across the organization. 		<p>b) Organizational realignment exercises conducted from 2021 onwards will pay attention to gender capacity.</p> <p>c) Internal career pathways for gender advisors in WFP will be explored and established in line with comparative WFP functions and the Future International Talent pool will be expanded to include gender advisors.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 7</p> <p>WFP should ensure that the framework and guidance for mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation country strategic plans incorporate quantitative and qualitative analyses of WFP's gender equality-related activities.</p> <p>a) The Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, with the support of the Gender Office and the technical divisions, should develop and disseminate a framework that uses the IASC Gender with Age Marker process to guide the inclusion of contextually relevant, gender-integrated programming that aligns with the objectives of the Gender Policy (2015–2020) in the design and implementation of second-generation country strategic plans.</p>	<p>Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department with the support of the Director of Evaluation and the Director of the Corporate Planning and Performance Division, in collaboration with regional and country directors, Programme and Policy Development Department technical division leads and the Gender Office</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Analysis of gender-equality-related results will be incorporated into frameworks, processes and outcomes for mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation CSPs, which will inform the development and implementation of second generation CSPs.</p> <p>a) Drawing upon the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender with Age Marker, the existing guidance that supports the integration of gender into second-generation CSPs will be reviewed and revised as applicable.</p>	<p><u>Priority: Medium</u></p> <p>December 2020</p>

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<p>b) The Director of the Corporate Planning and Performance Division should oversee the finalization and roll-out of guidance materials and templates for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into mid-term reviews of country strategic plans by December 2020.</p> <p>c) The Director of Evaluation should update guidance materials and templates for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into country strategic plan evaluations by December 2020.</p>		<p>b) Under the leadership of the Director of the Corporate Planning and Performance Division, guidance and templates for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into CSP mid-term reviews will be disseminated across the organization.</p> <p>c) Under the direction of the Director of Evaluation, guidance materials and templates for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into CSP evaluations will be updated and disseminated.</p>	

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<p>Recommendation 8 Country offices should mainstream gender into the mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation country strategic plans and the design and implementation of second-generation country strategic plans.</p> <p>a) Each country office should use the mid-term review, evaluation and gender and age context analyses of its first-generation country strategic plan to integrate gender into its second-generation country strategic plan, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aligning the country strategic plan with the United Nation's common country analysis process to ensure that WFP responds to nationally identified gender equality and women's empowerment needs such that "no one is left behind"; and • ensuring that the planned activities of the second-generation country strategic plan deliver in a way aimed at achieving the objectives of the updated Gender Policy (2015–2020) and equitably address the food security and nutrition-related needs of all beneficiaries. 	<p>Country directors, with the support of regional directors, regional gender advisors, gender equality steering group members, the Gender Office and Programme and Policy Development Department technical division leads</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Given access to adequate resources, gender will be integrated into the mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation CSPs and the design and implementation of second-generation CSPs.</p> <p>a) As currently required by the IASC Gender with Age Marker, second-generation CSPs will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be informed by country- and context-specific gender and age analyses (including common country analyses) so as to respond to nationally identified gender equality and women's empowerment needs, with a clear focus on leaving no one behind; and • include activities that support equitable food assistance and contribute to achieving the gender policy objectives. 	<p><u>Priority: Medium</u></p> <p>Ongoing as of January 2021, in line with the ongoing preparation of second-generation CSPs.</p>