

# Evaluation of Mauritania WFP Country Strategic Plan 2019-2022

## Summary Terms of Reference

*Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs) encompass the entirety of WFP activities during a specific period. Their purpose is twofold: 1) to provide evaluation evidence and learning on WFP's performance for country-level strategic decisions, specifically for developing the next Country Strategic Plan and 2) to provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders*

### Subject and focus of the evaluation

The WFP Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for Mauritania (2019-2022) centres around six Strategic Outcomes focusing on crisis response, an integrated resilience approach, institutional capacity strengthening, and humanitarian common services. Under the CSP, WFP planned to take a lead role in strengthening the institutional capacities required for the adaptive social protection system, focusing on building resilience at the national and community levels.

The overall budget of the Mauritania CSP approved by the Executive Board in November 2018 was USD 132.4 million for a total of approximately 445,000 beneficiaries over four years (2019-2020). A budget revision approved in June 2020 brought the overall budget to USD 164.6 million and the planned number of beneficiaries to approximately 680,000.

The unit of analysis of the evaluation are the CSP approved in November 2018 and the preceding transitional interim CSP (T-ICSP, January-December 2018), as well as any subsequent approved budget revisions.

The evaluation will cover all WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) from 2018, as well as the year 2017 in relation to the development of the T-ICSP and current CSP, to better assess the extent to which the strategic shifts envisaged with the introduction of the CSP have taken place.

The evaluation will assess WFP contributions to T-ICSP and CSP strategic outcomes, establishing plausible causal relations between the outputs of WFP activities, the implementation process, the operational environment and changes observed at the outcome level, including any unintended consequences. It will also focus on adherence to humanitarian principles, gender equality, protection and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt standard UNEG and OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as connectedness and coverage.

### Objectives and stakeholders of the evaluation

WFP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and presents an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary users of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Country Office and its stakeholders to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan. The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in November 2022.

### Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

**QUESTION 1: To what extent is WFP's strategic position, role and specific contribution in Mauritania based on country priorities and people's needs as well as WFP's strengths?**

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the T-ICSP and the CSP were relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals, including achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals. It will further assess the extent to which the T-ICSP and the CSP addressed the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country (including refugees) to ensure that no one is left behind; whether WFP's strategic positioning has remained relevant throughout the implementation of the T-ICSP and the CSP in light of changing context, national capacities and needs, in particular in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and to what extent the T-ICSP and the CSP were coherent and aligned with the wider UN cooperation framework and includes appropriate strategic partnerships based on the comparative advantage of WFP in the country.

**QUESTION 2: What is the extent and quality of WFP's specific contribution to T-ICSP and CSP strategic outcomes in Mauritania?**

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP delivered the expected outputs and contributed to the expected strategic outcomes of the T-ICSP and the CSP, including the achievement of cross-cutting aims (humanitarian principles, protection, accountability to affected populations, gender equality and other equity considerations). It will also assess the extent to which the achievements of the T-ICSP and the CSP are likely to be sustainable; and whether they facilitated more strategic linkages between humanitarian, development and, where appropriate, peace work.

**QUESTION 3: To what extent has WFP's used its resources efficiently in contributing to T-ICSP and CSP outputs and strategic outcomes?**

The evaluation will assess whether outputs were delivered within the intended timeframe; the appropriateness of coverage and targeting of interventions; cost-efficient delivery of assistance; and whether alternative, more cost-effective measures were considered.

**QUESTION 4: What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the T-ICSP and the CSP?**

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP analyzed and used existing evidence on hunger challenges, food security and nutrition issues in the country to develop the T-ICSP and the CSP. It will also assess the extent to which these led to the mobilization of adequate, predictable and flexible resources; the development of appropriate partnerships and collaboration with other actors; greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts, in particular as regards adaptation and response to the COVID-19 and other unexpected crises and challenges; and how these factors affected results. Finally, the evaluation will seek to identify any other organizational and contextual factors influencing WFP performance and the strategic shift expected by the T-ICSP and the CSP.

## Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach using a variety of primary and secondary sources, including desk review, key informant interviews, surveys, and focus groups discussions. Systematic triangulation across different sources and methods will be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

In light of recent developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the inception phase will be conducted remotely. Depending on how the country and global contexts evolve, the data collection phase will be conducted through either remote or fully/partially in-country fieldwork. A final learning workshop will be held either remotely or in Mauritania.

The evaluation will conform to WFP and 2020 UNEG ethical guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results do no harm to participants or their communities.

## Roles and responsibilities

**EVALUATION TEAM:** The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent consultants with a mix of relevant expertise related to the Mauritania CSP (i.e. humanitarian assistance, food and nutrition security, school-based programmes, nutrition-specific interventions, social protection, smallholder farmers support, institutional capacity strengthening, gender equality, humanitarian protection and accountability to affected populations).

**OEV EVALUATION MANAGER:** The evaluation will be managed by Filippo Pompili, Evaluation Officer in the WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV). He will be the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process and compliance with OEV quality standards for process and content. Second level quality assurance will be provided by Michael Carbon, Senior Evaluation Officer.

An **Internal Reference Group** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant business areas at different WFP levels will be consulted throughout the evaluation process to review and provide feedback on evaluation products.

The Deputy Director of Evaluation will approve the final versions of all evaluation products.

**STAKEHOLDERS:** WFP stakeholders at country, regional and HQ level are expected to engage throughout the evaluation process to ensure a high degree of utility and transparency. External stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, government, donors, implementing partners and other UN agencies will be consulted during the evaluation process.

## Communication

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office, the Regional Bureau and Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase. A more in-depth debrief will be organized in October 2021 to inform the new CSP design process. A country learning workshop will be held in January 2022 to promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

Evaluation findings will be actively disseminated, and the final evaluation report will be made publicly available on WFP's website.

## Timing and key milestones

**Inception Phase:** April-July 2021

**Data collection:** September 2021

**Remote Debriefing:** October 2021

**Reports:** October 2021 – March 2022

**Learning Workshop:** January 2022

**Executive Board:** November 2022