

Evaluation of WFP's Programme Handover and Transition Strategies

Summary terms of reference



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Strategic evaluations focus on systemic issues of corporate relevance as defined in strategic documents, policies, and directives. The purpose of this, largely formative, evaluation is to meet both accountability and learning needs with a strong emphasis on learning.

Subject and focus of the evaluation

The WFP Strategic Plan 2026-2029 articulates a strengthened commitment to prioritize national ownership and facilitate the **handover of WFP programmes** to national and subnational institutions.

Adapted from WFP guidance, “**transition**” refers to the gradual process, of shifting responsibility for planning, managing, implementing, monitoring, and financing good quality programming from external support to national ownership and “**handover**” refers to the transition of ownership to national actors or partners, focusing on ensuring continuity of services and outcomes beyond WFP’s role.

Objectives

With the dual purpose of accountability and learning, the evaluation aims to:

- Assess WFP’s approach to programme transition and handover strategies over time;
- Assess progress toward programme handover across different operating contexts and types of programming;
- Take stock of changes for partners and affected populations where there has been programme handover;
- Determine the factors supporting or inhibiting programme transition and handover;
- Identify lessons to support WFP decision making on programme handover moving forward.

The evaluation will focus on drawing insights and lessons related to programme transition and handover specifically. It will not consider these issues in relation

to WFP country presence, or the modality of WFP’s presence in a given country.

Evaluation scope

Geographic scope: The evaluation has a global scope. To ensure global coverage, the evaluation will include visits to at least 5 country or regional offices and extensive remote engagement understand WFP’s approaches across a range of contexts.

Temporal scope: Given the longitudinal nature of the evaluation, the evaluation aims to capture WFP’s work from 2016, when the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) Policy was first approved, to 2026.

Unit of analysis: The evaluation will assess programme transition and handover strategies for specific areas of WFP programming including Emergency preparedness, Climate and Resilience; School Feeding; Social Protection. The evaluation will take stock of the results achieved for partners and affected populations where there has been transition and handover and consider the sustainability of interventions post-WFP support.

Evaluation users and stakeholders

Key intended users of the evaluation are WFP’s Executive Board, Senior Management, and Global HQ. Particularly, the evaluation will engage with the Programme Division (e.g. Emergency Preparedness and Response Service; Climate and Resilience Service; Nutrition, School Meals and Social Protection Service); the Gender and Protection Service; Analysis, Planning and Performance Division; the Supply Chain and Delivery Division; the Partnership Division, and Regional and Country Offices.

External stakeholders include the WFP Executive Board, member states and host governments, other

UN agencies, funds and programmes, donors, private sector partners, and international financial institutions.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following key questions:

QUESTION 1: How relevant and useful is WFP's normative framework for programme transition and handover? This will include an assessment of the clarity and comprehensiveness of WFP's normative framework for programme transition and handover and how this has evolved over time. It will assess the relevance and adaptability of WFP's guidance on programme transition and handover for different types of programming and operating contexts; and the appropriateness of programme design for transition and eventual handover.

QUESTION 2: What results has WFP achieved in terms of programme handover? Results will be assessed in terms of how consistently, how well, WFP has implemented transition and handover strategies in relevant programme areas in different contexts; Progress toward programme transition and handover (e.g. national system strengthening, quality of national programmes etc) in different programmatic areas; WFP's role post-handover; and the supporting and constraining factors for programme handover.

Methodology and ethical considerations

The evaluation will adopt a mixed approach combining qualitative and quantitative data. To assess whether, how and how well WFP has designed and implemented programme transition and handover strategies with the appropriate assumptions, priorities, and mechanisms, the assessment will consider the conduciveness of the operating environment (e.g. in terms of technical capacity, budgetary allocation, and policy enabling environment) for different areas of programming.

The evaluation conforms 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 in no harm to participants or their communities.

Roles and responsibilities

EVALUATION TEAM: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent consultants with proven capacity to conduct complex global evaluations and in-depth knowledge of WFP programme areas.

OEV EVALUATION MANAGEMENT: The evaluation will be managed by Judith Friedman, Senior Evaluation Officer in the WFP Office of Evaluation with the support of Lucia Landa Sotomayor in a Research Analyst capacity. They will be the main interlocutors between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process and adherence with OEV quality standards for process and content. Second level quality assurance will be provided by the Deputy Director of Evaluation, Julia Betts. Anne-Claire Luzot, Director of Evaluation, will approve the final versions of all evaluation products

An **INTERNAL REFERENCE GROUP** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant units and Divisions at different WFP levels will be consulted throughout the process to review and provide feedback on evaluation products. The group will include representatives from across WFP.

Communication

The emphasis on learning will require ongoing communication with stakeholders throughout the evaluation. Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in Headquarters, the Regional Bureaux and the Country Offices, during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase.

A stakeholder workshop will be held to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote understanding and ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations.

A Summary Evaluation Report (SER) will be presented to the Executive Board and findings will be actively disseminated. The final evaluation report will be publicly available WFP's website.

Timing and key milestones

Inception Phase: January-March 2026

Data collection: April-June 2026

Reporting: July-Sept 2026

Stakeholder Workshop: October 2026

Report finalization: October-December 2026

Executive Board Presentation: February 2027