

Evaluation of South Sudan WFP Country Strategic Plan 2023-2026

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 South Sudan CSP (2023-2026) supports the achievement of zero hunger objectives while contributing to peace and climate resilience through five strategic outcomes (SOs) that focus on crisis response and resilience building. The CSP aims to respond to crises by providing assistance to crisis-affected people and on-demand services to humanitarian partners. The CSP seeks to enhance resilience to shocks and stressors through nutrition and health support, provision of school meals, asset creation, market support activities, climate adaptation activities, and technical assistance to the Government.

The CSP was approved with an original budget of USD 3.7 billion which was scaled back to USD 3.1 billion in the August 2024 revision, despite the increased number of people in need from the population affected by the Sudan crisis. The budget revision resulted in an increase in planned beneficiaries from 7.2 million in 2023 to 7.7 million by 2026.

The CSP budget is allocated disparately across the five SOs with 55 percent dedicated to crisis response activities under SO1; 24 percent for nutrition and health support and school meals activities under SO2; 14 percent for resilience building and livelihoods support activities under SO 3 activities; 7 percent for service delivery under SO 5; and less than 1 percent for capacity strengthening SO 4 activities.

The evaluation will assess WFP contributions to 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, protection and gender issues and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC), namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability as well as, coherence as applicable.

Evaluation objectives

WFP CSP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a broad range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and presents an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Country Office and its stakeholders. It presents an opportunity for the Country Office to benefit from an independent assessment of its operations and to use the evaluation evidence to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan. The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in November 2027.

Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

Question 1: To what extent and in what ways is the CSP strategically positioned to address food and nutrition insecurity in South Sudan? The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP analyzed or used existing evidence on hunger challenges, food security and nutrition issues in the country to develop the CSP; how WFP's strategy in South Sudan appropriately balanced the response to immediate food and nutrition needs of the most vulnerable with the transition to early recovery and more sustainable solutions, and if these were feasible? Whether WFP's strategic positioning has remained relevant throughout the implementation of the CSP considering the changing context, national capacities and needs.

Question 2: What is the extent and quality of WFP's specific contribution to CSP strategic outcomes in South Sudan? The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP contributed to intended or unintended outcomes; what enabled or constrained WFPs emergency preparedness and whether WFP was able to seize opportunities to address root causes during implementation; and how extensive and comprehensive was the coverage of WFP assistance in comparison to the needs and the broader humanitarian response.

Question 3: To what extent did the CSP achieve its cross-cutting aims and how has this impacted programme quality? The evaluation will assess WFPs contribution to the achievement of cross-cutting aims (protection and accountability to affected people, Gender and Inclusion, nutrition integration, and environment; the extent to which conflict sensitivity considerations were mainstreamed into the response; and how well WFP managed challenges or trade-offs in adhering to humanitarian principles.

Question 4: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently? The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP has been able to deliver the CSP outputs and related budget within the intended timeframe; and whether the CSP delivered in a cost-efficient manner and were limited resources optimized including through selection of intervention modalities, programme integration and innovation.

Question 5: What are the critical factors, internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP has been able to mobilize adequate, predictable and flexible resources; WFP has been able to leverage operational partnerships; the CSP leads to partnerships and collaborations with other actors that positively influenced performance and results; the CSP provides greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts and how did it affect results; other factors influencing WFP performance and the strategic shift expected by the CSP.

Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The unit of analysis is the South Sudan Country Strategic Plan (2023-2026) approved by the WFP Executive Board in November 2022, as well as any subsequent approved budget revisions.

The evaluation will cover all of WFP's work since the cut-off date of the data collection of the previous iCSPE (December 2021) with a primary focus on WFP's work under the current CSP 2023-2026.

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach and data will be collected through a mix of primary and secondary sources with different techniques including: desk review, semi-structured or open-ended interviews, closed answer questionnaires, focus groups and direct observation. Systematic data triangulation across different sources and methods should be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluation Team: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent evaluators and thematic experts with relevant expertise for the South Sudan CSP.

Evaluation Manager: The evaluation will be managed by Mr. Wilson Kaikai, Evaluation Officer in the WFP Office of Evaluation. He will be the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process. The OEV Research Analyst will be Ms. Sanelia Muharemovic. Second level quality assurance will be provided by Ms. Judith Friedman, Senior Evaluation Officer.

An **Internal Reference Group** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant business areas in the Country Office 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 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.

Communications

Preliminary evaluation findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office, the Regional Office and Global Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase. A country stakeholder workshop will be held ~November 2026 to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

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

Timing and Key Milestones

Inception Phase: February – March 2026

Fieldwork Dates: May 2026

Fieldwork Debrief: late-May 2026

Draft Report August 2026

Final Report December 2026

Stakeholder Workshop: November - December 2026

Executive Board: November 2027