



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
11 February 2022

Original: English

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## 2022 session

23 July 2021–22 July 2022

Agenda item 7 (b)

**Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the World Food Programme**

## **Annual performance report of the World Food Programme for 2020**

### **Note by the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Economic and Social Council the annual performance report of the World Food Programme for 2020, as approved by the Board of the Programme in its decision 2021/EB.A/4, which is also attached.



**Decision 2021/EB.A/4 adopted by the Executive Board of the World Food Programme at its annual session of 2021 (21–25 June 2021)**

**Annual performance report for 2020**

The Board approved the annual performance report for 2020 (WFP/EB.A/2021/4-A), noting that it provided a comprehensive record of WFP performance for the year. In accordance with general regulation VI.3, and pursuant to its decisions 2000/EB.A/2 and 2004/EB.A/11, to resolution [E/2013/L.17](#) of the United Nations Economic and Social Council and to the decision adopted by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations at its 148th Session in 2013, the Board requested that the annual performance report for 2020 be forwarded to the Economic and Social Council and the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization, along with the present decision and the Board's decisions and recommendations for 2020.

*22 June 2021*

## Foreword by the Executive Director

In April 2020, the World Food Programme raised the alarm to warn that the unprecedented global turmoil unleashed by COVID-19 threatened to set off a second pandemic – a hunger pandemic. Across the world, countless millions of people lost their jobs. Education and livelihoods suffered as nations were forced to close their borders, businesses and schools to halt the spread of the virus. This global economic crisis added to the legions of children, women and men already condemned to hunger due to conflict and climate extremes. In 2020, an estimated 270 million people were acutely food-insecure – double the grim record reached in 2019.

In response, WFP called for urgent action to assist the most vulnerable communities, including those devastated by enduring conflicts in countries such as South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen; by catastrophes such as the Beirut port blasts; and others affected by major climate-related shocks such as drought in Zimbabwe and hurricanes in Latin America and the Caribbean. Thanks to the global community's swift, coordinated response, we managed to avert famine in 2020. However, our concerns of 2020 have become a reality in 2021. As of mid-March 2021, 34 million people in 41 countries were existing right on the brink of starvation.

This annual performance report describes how WFP acted swiftly and effectively in the most challenging year of the organization's history by adapting its programmes, systems and partnerships to the rapidly evolving situation. In 2020, we directly assisted over 115 million people, our highest annual total ever: 61.6 million women and girls and 53.9 million men and boys. Our ability to support 40 percent more people than in 2016 was made possible by continued support from loyal donors, large increases in funding from private individuals and agreements with international financial institutions. In 2020, WFP received record revenues of USD 8.9 billion.

WFP launched its first ever global Level 3 emergency response in March 2020 to meet the unparalleled need for food and nutrition assistance resulting from COVID-19 while also responding to 16 Level 2 and Level 3 emergencies and sustaining support for existing beneficiaries in 84 countries. While achieving this level of sustained operations, WFP also provided vital common services to governments and partners worldwide, transporting health and humanitarian workers while moving life-saving cargo to remote locations along with shipping test samples and critical medical supplies.

Last year WFP was deeply humbled to be named as the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, in recognition of our decades-long work to break the vicious cycle of conflict and hunger. This immense honour has galvanized our efforts to mobilize further support to combat hunger and work more strategically across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus so vulnerable communities can “build back better” after the pandemic.

Even as we work to save lives by feeding families and children during crises, we also help families invest in their future by laying a path towards new educational and employment opportunities.

Across the world, the closure of schools highlighted the importance of school feeding as the world's largest safety net for hungry children. In response, WFP nimbly switched from providing food for school meals to providing families with take-home rations, cash transfers and vouchers, thus allowing governments to adapt their school health and nutrition programmes in response to COVID-19. Compared with 2019, cash-based transfers to support schoolchildren's families increased by 46 percent, showing WFP's commitment to maintaining the immediate well-being of vulnerable girls and boys and increasing their chances of re-enrolling when schools reopened.

In the wake of the pandemic, global shortages of nutritious products raised the risks of malnutrition, particularly among children under 5. In response, WFP adapted its delivery mechanisms and redirected

available products to the most vulnerable individuals, ensuring that they received continuous treatment despite COVID-19. During the year, new strategies and partnerships to improve the scale and efficiency of nutrition programmes were finalized, including an ambitious agreement with the United Nations Children's Fund on combatting child wasting.

But WFP also recognizes that no single organization can meet the needs of the world's 690 million chronically food-insecure people alone. We ultimately aim to enable governments, partners and people to work towards a hunger-free world. For this reason, WFP supported many governments with food and cash, as well as technical support, as they scaled up their national social protection schemes to act as the first line of defence against the pandemic's economic impacts.

Overall, WFP supported 65 governments in introducing new measures, scaling up or adapting existing social protection measures, and assisted nearly three-quarters of these countries in delivering their cash-based responses. In 2020, more people than ever before benefitted from WFP's cash-based support, empowering families to improve their food security while strengthening their local economies and markets by helping governments to build national capacities.

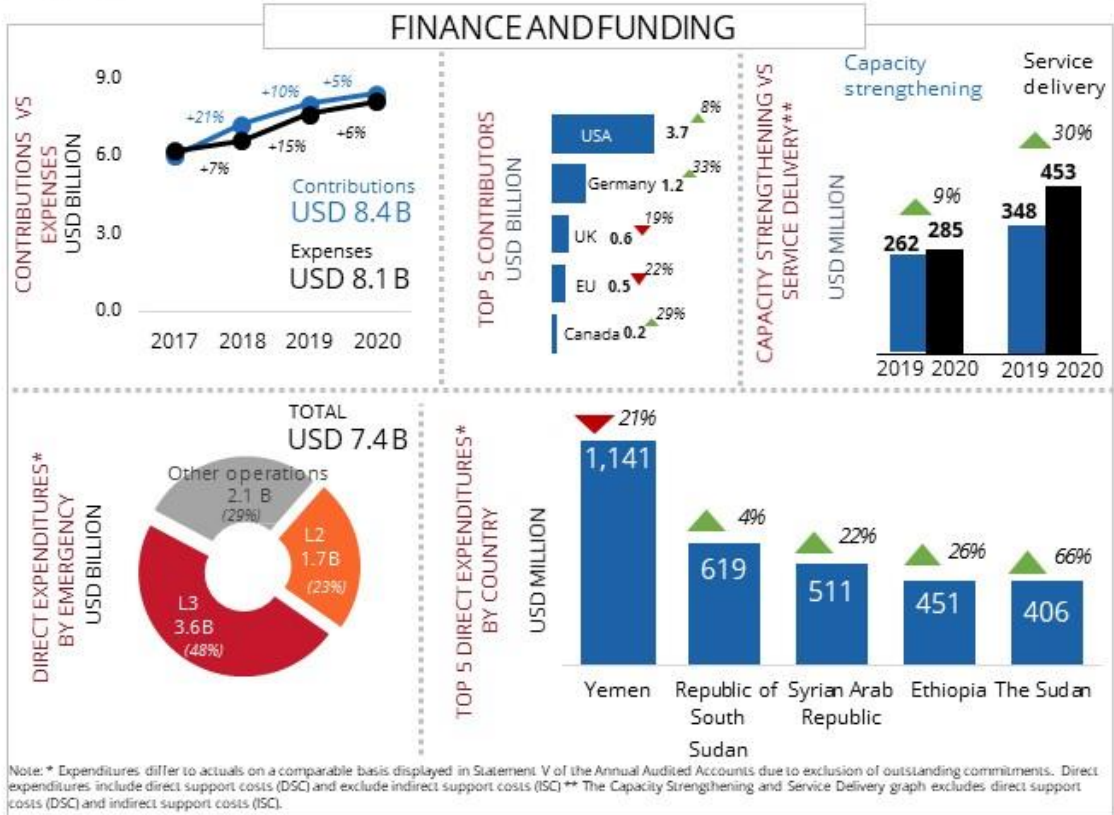
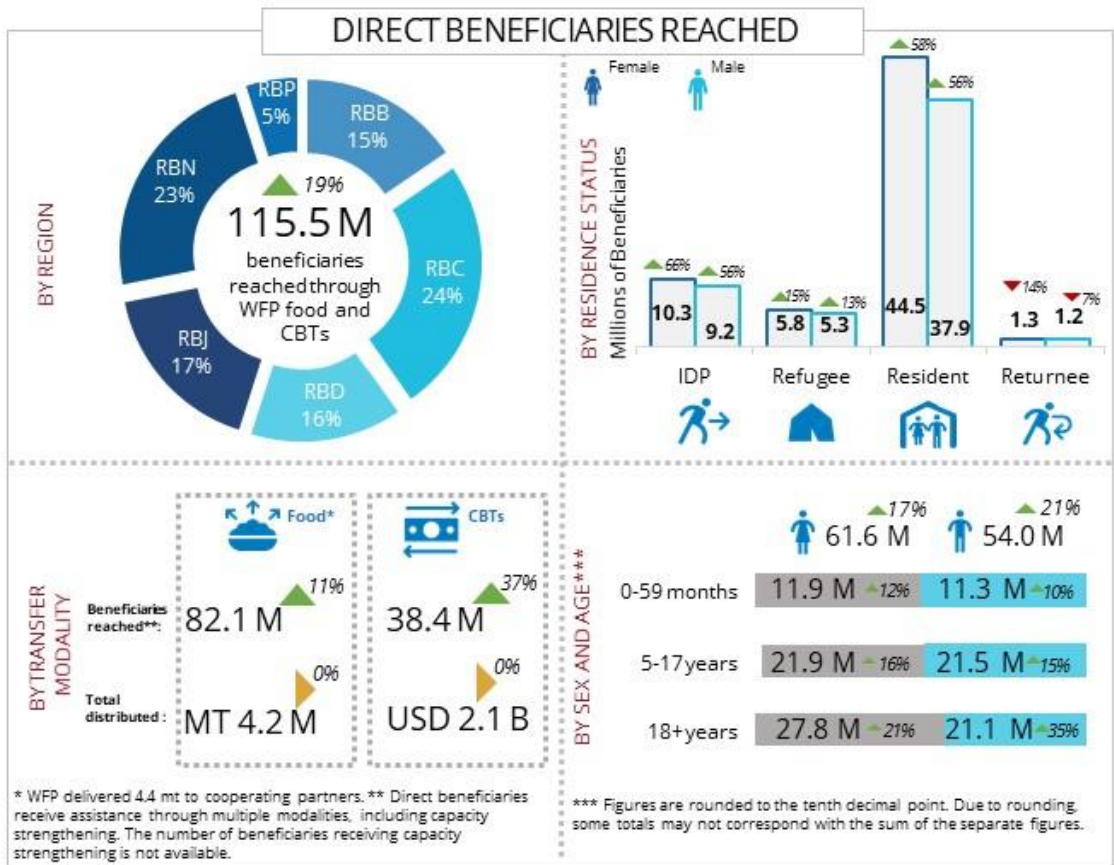
Our success was underpinned by WFP's continued investment in priority areas influencing organizational performance: leadership in emergencies, funding and partnerships, programme excellence, digital transformation, simplification and efficiency and people management. These investments have contributed to efficiency gains in terms of time and money saved, enabling WFP to maximize the number of hungry people reached with every dollar received. Just as important, we continually reviewed our risk and control frameworks to ensure that they were fully robust, including actions for managing third-party risks during emergencies.

None of WFP's achievements in 2020 would have been possible without the dedication and courage of our employees, who stepped up to the challenges of staying and delivering despite extraordinary personal health and safety concerns, movement restrictions and difficult working conditions. As many employees volunteered to serve on the frontline, 20 of them tragically paid the ultimate price with their lives. These losses make us even more determined to support the well-being, health and safety of every single employee. In early 2020, WFP established a department for workplace culture to reaffirm the organization's strong workplace values while taking action to ensure that all employees feel safe and respected and enjoy a workplace free from harassment and discrimination.

All around the world, WFP's frontline teams are working day and night with our partners to get help where it is needed most, bringing a sense of hope to families and communities who are suffering so badly right now. The economic fallout from COVID-19 threatens to rob the next generation of its future, but the global community has the resources, knowledge and expertise to vaccinate every vulnerable person against hunger and help them prosper, now and over the long term.

Amid all the challenges and hardships unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have an opportunity to rebuild our social, economic and environmental systems so they are stronger, more resilient and more just. This is our chance to create the better world we all want to see. Let us work together in partnership to achieve it.

# WFP 2020 REACH AT A GLANCE



# Annual performance report of the World Food Programme for 2020

## Executive summary

### Part I: Introduction

In 2020, the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) unleashed the worst global health emergency of the past century and caused the deepest global recession in generations, reversing decades of progress against poverty, inequality and hunger. WFP responded swiftly to the pandemic by scaling up emergency response and providing its field offices with surge capacity to ensure the continuity of existing humanitarian operations and increased support for national safety net systems.

System-wide advances as part of United Nations reform facilitated holistic pandemic support for governments. WFP expanded its provision of common services to support the entire humanitarian and health community by transporting essential supplies and personnel to the frontlines of the pandemic and conducting medical evacuations (medevacs).<sup>1</sup>

WFP was named the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate in 2020, indicating due recognition of the inexorable link between peace and food security. The prize provided a humbling but energizing boost to WFP's employees as they stayed and delivered in a frequently shifting field of operations affected by COVID-19, conflict and climate change. The naming of WFP as Nobel Peace Prize Laureate has led to a redoubling of its efforts to continue providing principled and high-quality assistance to affected communities and their governments.

### Part II: Programme performance

WFP and its partners provided direct assistance to a record 115.5 million beneficiaries in 2020 – of whom 61.6 million were women and girls and 53.9 million were men and boys. Distributing 4.2 million mt of food and USD 2.1 billion in cash-based transfers (CBTs), WFP reached 11 percent more beneficiaries through food assistance and 37 percent more through CBTs than in 2019. The increase in the number of beneficiaries was not matched by an increase in the total amount of food or CBT distributed in 2020 compared with 2019, because of a variety of reasons: reduction in ration sizes in some countries related to insufficient funding; problems with access or pipeline breaks; changes in modalities from food to CBT as COVID-19-related restrictions made it more difficult to distribute in-kind food; and the impact of fluctuations in exchange rates.

By 2020, all WFP country offices were operating through a Board-approved country strategic plan (CSP) or interim country strategic plan (ICSP). Through these CSPs, WFP ensured the continuity of ongoing humanitarian operations and swiftly adapted in response to COVID-19. Leveraging its extensive field presence and proven leadership in supply chains and digital technologies, WFP pre-positioned food stocks and increased local purchases to sustain ongoing operations, while scaling up assistance to reach new beneficiaries affected by the pandemic, particularly in urban areas. Governments and humanitarian partners were provided with vital technical assistance and logistics support, which enabled effective local responses to COVID-19. The following paragraphs give a synopsis of achievements towards each strategic objective.

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information can be found in part III of this document.

**Strategic Objective 1 – End hunger by protecting access to food:** Most of WFP’s operations – representing 78 percent of total expenditures – were implemented under Strategic Objective 1, which accounted for 95 percent of food delivered and 87 percent of CBTs distributed. While responding to the first global Level 3 emergency (COVID-19), WFP also covered 16 other Level 3 and Level 2 emergencies, working to ensure that beneficiaries had access to food despite the challenges created by COVID-19, conflict and climate-related crises. Food and CBT distributions increased substantially in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso and the Sudan, while in Yemen, in contrast, they were reduced owing to access and funding constraints. Important challenges remain, such as the need to improve people’s consumption of iron, protein and vitamin A.

**Strategic Objective 2 – Improve nutrition:** WFP’s contributions to improving the nutrition of targeted people yielded strong results, especially through programmes for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition. The significant results can be partly attributed to WFP prioritizing distribution of scarce specialized nutritious food for malnutrition programming for the people most at risk.

**Strategic Objective 3 – Achieve food security and Strategic Objective 4 – Support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation:** Results under these two objectives are strong. Success in improving farmers’ access to markets and strengthening food systems is partly reflected in the value and volume of smallholders’ sales through WFP-supported aggregation systems. Similarly, support for national governments, particularly in strengthening capacities, shows strong results in the national nutrition and other policies and programmes that have been enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening activities, including through South–South and triangular cooperation.

**Strategic Objective 5 – Partner for SDG results:** WFP was successful in partnering for SDG results. Strong performance in the indicator measuring partners’ satisfaction with WFP’s coordination and supply chain support reflected the organization’s ability to leverage its extensive operational footprint and expertise to support the health and humanitarian community in responding to COVID-19. Nevertheless, CBT distributions under this strategic objective saw an important reduction of 72 percent compared with 2019, due primarily to the handover of the large-scale emergency social safety net (ESSN) programme implemented through the Turkey country office.

WFP deepens this review of performance by analysing results in its main programmes areas:

- **Unconditional resource transfers:** 83 million beneficiaries were reached, an increase of 36 percent compared with 2019, reflecting a scale-up of operations in response to increasing needs exacerbated by COVID-19. Food and CBTs distributed remained similar to their 2019 levels; CBT levels through unconditional resource transfers show an increase of 22 percent when the handover of the ESSN is omitted from the 2020 analysis.
- **Nutrition:** 17.3 million beneficiaries were assisted, primarily children and pregnant and lactating women and girls. Owing to a global reduction in the production of specialized nutritious foods, WFP delivered 1 percent less of these commodities than in 2019, prioritizing their use for the treatment and prevention of malnutrition in the most vulnerable people.
- **School-based programmes:** 15 million children were assisted with nutritious meals, school snacks or take-home rations, a reduction of 13 percent compared with 2019. The pandemic’s impact on school closures severely affected on-site distribution, but country offices were able to quickly switch delivery modality to take-home rations, cash transfers or vouchers. While WFP did not reach the number of schoolchildren targeted for 2020, the rations distributed during the pandemic helped more members of the schoolchildren’s households.

- **Smallholders, livelihoods, food systems and climate risk management:** WFP provided food assistance for 7.7 million people through its asset creation and livelihood activities, 2.5 million people through climate insurance or anticipatory actions and more than 48,000 people through its smallholder agricultural market support programmes. In addition, it helped host governments to plan and undertake a range of asset creation, livelihoods, food systems and climate risk management activities.

WFP tracks progress in the areas of **service provision and country capacity strengthening (CCS)**. Service provision capacity proved fundamental from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling governments, United Nations agencies and other partners to reach beneficiaries and respond to the pandemic efficiently and effectively. WFP launched a global common services platform that supports the health and humanitarian communities in responding to the pandemic, ensuring the continued movement of critical cargo and staff. More than 100 CSP activities across countries reported progress towards long-term institutional capacity outcomes in 2020, through additional investments in WFP's CCS activities focused on national response. Progress has been made in engaging with national governments and other stakeholders, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, although challenges remain on how to measure WFP's contributions to national policy development and capacity strengthening, including how to link relief efforts to recovery and development results.

### Part III: Management performance

**Key performance indicators (KPIs):** In 2020 all KPIs, their components and their targets were rigorously reviewed. Overall progress was mixed in **KPI 1**, which measures implementation of CSPs. Despite increasing needs and funding gaps throughout the year, 96 percent of outputs and 96 percent of outcomes were under implementation in 2020. Instead of reducing the number of activities implemented, country offices prioritized the maintenance of at least partial coverage for most planned operations, albeit at reduced scale in many cases. Achievements fell short of targets with fewer than 60 percent of all outputs and 66 percent of outcomes on track or achieved. **KPI 2**, assessing emergency preparedness and response, showed overall positive results with targets met in 100 percent of training areas. Advance financing was provided to 88 percent of countries in the corporate alert system, slightly below the target of 90 percent. **KPI 3**, measuring the achievement of management performance standards in functional areas, shows the programme functional area being on track to meet targets, while all other functional areas achieved their targets.

**Result pillars:** While the management services provided by country offices contribute directly to CSP implementation, the contributions of services from regional bureaux and headquarters units are broken down into five pillars. Under **pillar A** (strategy and direction), WFP's senior management adapted and prioritized field operations, providing additional capacity to support regional and country offices. Under **pillar B** (business services for operations), results included the deployment of 500 staff members to 71 countries in response to COVID-19 priorities and exigencies. Global coordination structures were scaled up to provide governments with technical supply chain support, infrastructure and services. WFP implemented two years' worth of digital transformation in two months, as staff moved from working in offices to full remote working. Under **pillar C** (policy, guidance and policy assurance), WFP systematically replenished its pool of qualified staff for deployment in emergencies. WFP's assurance exercise was simplified, resulting in a 25 percent reduction in the time required to complete the exercise. Results under **pillar D** (advocacy, partnerships, fundraising and United Nations coordination) showed that all targets for private sector fundraising were met and individual giving donations increased threefold. WFP made progress in implementation of the United Nations reform, increased coordination with other United



Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations and strengthened partnerships through tripartite agreements with international financial institutions and governments in all regional bureaux. Under **pillar E** (governance and independent oversight), WFP shifted to virtual processes to allow governance continuity. As of 31 December 2020, there were 156 outstanding internal audit recommendations. Eight centrally managed evaluations were completed in 2020 and presented to the Executive Board for consideration.

**Performance against senior management priorities:** Mixed progress was made in senior management priorities in 2020, largely owing to the challenges of COVID-19 and changes in the methodologies used to assess indicators. WFP's performance against United Nations system and coordination indicators was very positive, demonstrating user satisfaction with all cluster services and improving on results against the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0) indicators. Reductions were noted in the number of employees completing mandatory training on the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination and on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, and in the number of country offices with a functioning community feedback mechanism. While WFP increased its provision of digital CBTs in many countries, the relatively consistent KPI values between 2019 and 2020 are primarily due to the ESSN handover. A 2020 stocktaking exercise on initiatives and activities included in the comprehensive action plan (CAP) on addressing harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination showed progress, despite the restrictions imposed by the global pandemic.

WFP approved USD 40 million for **critical corporate initiatives** in 2020, along with resources carried over from 2019. An external audit of critical corporate initiatives at the end of 2020 recommended that WFP revisit the governance and selection criteria for future projects. In 2020 WFP measured **efficiency gains and value for money** through cost and time savings along its value chain, realizing more than USD 138 million in cost savings from the top ten efficiency gain initiatives, including through time savings. These robust results can be attributed to strategic innovation, digital transformation, operational optimization and simplification and inter-agency collaboration. A review of **cost per beneficiary** metrics provided the average cost of serving WFP's direct beneficiaries, comprising the transfer value and the transfer costs. In 2020, the average costs were USD 0.35 per day and USD 52 for the year.

## Part IV: Financial resources and funding

In 2020, WFP received record contributions of USD 8.4 billion – 5 percent more than in 2019 – meeting 61 percent of its funding needs of USD 13.7 billion. WFP's top five donors accounted for 74 percent of total contribution revenue, slightly less than in 2019. Contributions from the private sector increased significantly, with fundraising targets for individual giving being surpassed. WFP received increased funding from national governments, which leveraged financing from international financial institutions. WFP broadened its donor base through innovative mechanisms such as debt swaps, increased South–South and triangular cooperation, and access to pooled funds for addressing persistent funding gaps in longer-term programmes. Flexible funds represented 5.7 percent of total 2020 contribution revenue, despite an appeal for increased use of unearmarked contributions for the COVID-19 response.

Total direct expenditures, excluding indirect support costs, were USD 7.4 billion, an increase of 3 percent from 2019. Seven of the ten countries with the highest expenditures were facing Level 3 or Level 2 emergencies. Needs in the remaining three, Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan, continued to be high owing to protracted conflict and climate shocks. Yemen remained the largest operation,

although it experienced one of the highest reductions in expenditures, with a decrease of 21 percent compared with 2019.

## Part V: Looking forward

The pandemic has extended into 2021, causing the numbers of people and countries at risk of famine to reach historic levels, with 34 million people globally on the brink of famine, many of them living in countries affected by intractable conflict.<sup>2</sup> In 2021, WFP is developing a new strategic plan and corporate results framework for 2022–2026. Implementation of second-generation CSPs continues, with emphasis on WFP's contributions to national hunger reduction goals and articulation of the parameters of its contributions to peace.

Management's priority activities include diversification and innovation of funding streams, monitoring and management of financial risks, and expansion of WFP's digital assistance platform for cash and in-kind distributions. Other priorities include the development of a new emergency response framework, an evaluation of WFP's 2013 policy on peacebuilding in transition settings, revision of the 2015 South–South and triangular cooperation policy and the development of a new WFP people policy, guided by the newly established Workplace Culture Department. WFP will continue to scale up initiatives that help communities to respond to the pandemic by expanding support for national social protection systems and delivering services such as school-based and nutrition programmes.

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<sup>2</sup> See: WFP and FAO. 2021. Hunger Hotspots. FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity: March to July 2021 outlook. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/hunger-hotspots-fao-wfp-early-warnings-acute-food-insecurity-march-july-2021-outlook>.

## Part I: Introduction

*The 2020 annual performance report analyses WFP's achievements against the plans presented in the WFP Management Plan (2020–2022) in a setting of unparalleled increases in food insecurity and socioeconomic, educational and gender inequalities caused by the cumulative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and climate.*

### Global context: The state of the world in 2020 – COVID-19, conflict and climate change

1. In 2020, people around the world experienced the worst global health emergency of the past century and the deepest global recession in generations, triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. These shocks have reversed decades of progress against poverty, inequality and food insecurity, and threaten the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the 2030 Agenda, represent the global community's first universal performance framework for addressing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
2. For the first time since 1999, the estimated number of people living in extreme poverty increased by up to 124 million in 2020<sup>3</sup> as restrictions on movement and economic activity hindered employment and cut global working hours by nearly 9 percent over the year.<sup>4</sup> Remittances sent home by migrant workers – on which many poor families rely – were projected to fall by up to 14 percent globally in 2020 and by 7 percent in low- and middle-income countries, compared with 2019.<sup>5</sup>
3. The COVID-19 pandemic compounded the adverse effects of economic shocks, conflict and climate extremes on people's access to adequate diets, giving rise to unprecedented levels of food insecurity. In 20 countries, the cost of a basic food basket increased by more than 10 percent between the first and second quarters of 2020. WFP estimated that at the end of 2020 the massive income losses triggered by the pandemic, combined with high food prices, had left 270 million people acutely food-insecure in 79 countries where WFP has operations.<sup>6</sup> Similar alarming levels were reported in 55 countries where in 2020 around 21 percent of the analysed population faced crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity, the highest level in five years.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Extreme poverty is measured as the proportion of people earning less than USD 1.90 per day. World Bank. 2021. *Updated estimates of the impact of COVID-19 on global poverty: Looking back at 2020 and the outlook for 2021*. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/updated-estimates-impact-covid-19-global-poverty-looking-back-2020-and-outlook-2021>.

<sup>4</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO). *COVID-19: ILO Monitor – 7th edition: ILO: Uncertain and uneven recovery expected following unprecedented labour market crisis*. [https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_766949/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_766949/lang-en/index.htm).

<sup>5</sup> World Bank. 2020. *COVID-19: Remittance Flows to Shrink 14% by 2021*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/10/29/covid-19-remittance-flows-to-shrink-14-by-2021>.

<sup>6</sup> WFP/EB.1/2021/5-B/1. *Update on operational requirements and funding forecast for 2021 (wfp.org)*.

<sup>7</sup> Food Security Information Network (FSIN) and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2021. *Global Report on Food Crises 2021*. Rome. Acute food insecurity is defined as phase 3 or above using the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)/cadre harmonisé analysis.

4. Alarming, as the pandemic has extended into 2021, the risk of famine has reached historic levels, affecting 34 million people.<sup>8</sup> The rising tide of hunger was fuelled in part by intractable wars, conflict and violence, as indicated by the Global Peace Index, which deteriorated in 2020 for the fourth time in the past five years.<sup>9</sup>

#### **WFP awarded 2020 Nobel Peace Prize**

In October 2020, WFP was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize “for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict”. The award recognizes WFP’s operational achievements over past years in contributing to improving the prospects for peace around the world. This recognition enabled WFP to raise awareness of the role of food security in achieving and sustaining peace and consolidated the organization’s role in contributing to conflict-sensitive programming and advocacy for peace through food security.

5. Conflict threatens people’s food security directly and indirectly by disrupting the entire food system from production to consumption. In 2020, of the 270 million acutely food-insecure people worldwide, 158 million lived in conflict-affected areas and 35 percent lived in 25 countries in Asia and the Middle East.<sup>10</sup> People living in conflict-affected and fragile countries suffered from higher rates of hunger, malnutrition and poverty compared with those living in stable settings, and accounted for nearly half of the world’s poor and 60 percent of its chronically hungry people.
6. According to the latest available estimates, the number of international migrants reached 272 million globally, including a record number of nearly 80 million people forcibly displaced by war, conflict or persecution.<sup>11</sup> Displaced people are more vulnerable to food insecurity and protection risks; for example, at the end of 2019, 80 percent of forcibly displaced people resided in states or territories affected by acute food insecurity or malnutrition.<sup>12</sup> Girls and boys under 18 years of age accounted for 40 percent of the world’s displaced people and nearly 50 percent of refugees.<sup>13</sup> These children, particularly adolescent girls living in conflict zones, were more likely to be out of school and to experience protection risks than those living in stable settings.
7. Globally, women and young people bore the brunt of the impacts of the pandemic, which multiplied protection risks by causing migrants and families dependent on remittances to adopt negative coping mechanisms, including child marriage and transactional sex.<sup>14</sup> Women have a 27 percent higher

<sup>8</sup> WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2021 *Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity. March to July 2021 outlook*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/hunger-hotspots-fao-wfp-early-warnings-acute-food-insecurity-march-july-2021-outlook>.

<sup>9</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace. 2020. *Global Peace Index 2020: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*. [https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/GPI\\_2020\\_web.pdf](https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/GPI_2020_web.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> WFP Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division.

<sup>11</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) and WFP. 2020. *Populations at risk: Implications of COVID-19 for hunger, migration and displacement*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/populations-risk-implications-covid-19-hunger-migration-displacement-2020>.

<sup>12</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *Figures at a Glance, 18 June 2020*. <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> IOM and WFP. 2020. *Populations at risk: Implications of COVID-19 for hunger, migration and displacement*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/populations-risk-implications-covid-19-hunger-migration-displacement-2020>.

chance than men of being severely food-insecure.<sup>15</sup> In addition, women and girls also experienced increased levels of gender-based violence and reduced access to health and reproductive services, while girls had higher risks than boys of dropping out of school and taking on more chores at home following school closures.<sup>16</sup> Prior to the pandemic, more girls (almost 44 percent) than boys (34 percent) from the poorest families worldwide did not complete primary school.<sup>17</sup> Other people identified as being at greatest risk of the pandemic's socioeconomic impacts include older persons, persons with disabilities, people living in slums, migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons.<sup>18</sup>

8. Rates of chronic hunger have risen over the past five years; currently an estimated 690 million people or nearly 9 percent of the world's population are affected.<sup>19</sup> Almost all forms of malnutrition have continued to increase, with estimates indicating that COVID-19 contributed to an additional 2 million deaths and up to 7 million more cases of wasting or acute malnutrition of children under 5 globally in 2020 alone.
9. The damage to people's human capital development resulting from reduced access to basic health and nutrition services and schooling risks leaving a generation of children and young people behind. WFP's 2020 publication on the status of school feeding programmes around the world reported that COVID-19 reversed a decade-long growth in school feeding programmes.<sup>20</sup> At the beginning of 2020, a record 388 million children benefited from school feeding activities worldwide; by April 2020, 370 million girls and boys were missing school meals in 161 countries. The report noted the difficulties of ensuring children's vital health and wellbeing amid school closures, and the importance of building stronger school systems. The loss of learning opportunities could cause the current school-age generation to lose approximately USD 10 trillion in earnings over the coming years, equivalent to one-tenth of global gross domestic product.<sup>21</sup>
10. The planet's long-term warming trend continued in 2020, multiplying the risks of conflict, displacement and social and gender inequalities. There is evidence that declines of 10 to 25 percent in crop yields may be widespread by 2050 owing to climate change.<sup>22</sup> More frequent and intense extreme weather events such as floods and droughts increase food insecurity and malnutrition and threaten the sustainability of food systems by destroying land, livestock, crops and food supplies. These effects disproportionately fall on the 75 percent of the world's food-insecure people who rely

<sup>15</sup> WFP. 2020. *Background Paper: Context Analysis to inform WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2026)*. <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/239e24c739d54a43b9723e1ec03d7d3e/download/>.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations. 2020. *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women*. [policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/en/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women.pdf) (unwomen.org).

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2020. *Addressing the learning crisis: An urgent need to better finance education for the poorest children*. [Addressing-the-learning-crisis-advocacy-brief-2020.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/2020/06/23/addressing-the-learning-crisis-advocacy-brief-2020.pdf) (unicef.org).

<sup>18</sup> United Nations. 2020. *A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19*. [UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-COVID-19.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pubs/2020/04/a-un-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-covid-19.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UNICEF, WFP and World Health Organization (WHO). 2020. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020: Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/state-food-security-and-nutrition-world-sofi-report-2020>.

<sup>20</sup> WFP. 2020. *State of School Feeding Worldwide 2020*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2020>.

<sup>21</sup> WFP. 2020. *Background Paper: Context Analysis to inform WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2026)*. <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/239e24c739d54a43b9723e1ec03d7d3e/download/>.

<sup>22</sup> FAO. Climate change and your food: Ten facts. <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/356770/icode/>.

on natural resources for their livelihoods, such as women and men subsistence farmers and pastoralists.<sup>23</sup>

11. Every year, approximately 23 million people are displaced as a result of climate-related disasters.<sup>24</sup> Climate change may indirectly increase the risk of conflict by creating frictions between groups that compete for scarce resources. At the same time, conflict-affected people are often less able to adapt to the effects of climate change because they have fewer coping strategies, reduced access to safety nets and inadequate systems for resolving tensions and sustainably managing resources.

## WFP's response to COVID-19

12. The pandemic's unprecedented global impacts drastically shifted WFP's operational environment and that of its local, national and international partners. Almost overnight, staff working conditions, global supply chains and commercial transport markets were severely strained by measures introduced to contain the spread of COVID-19. To ensure the continuity of existing humanitarian operations and provide additional capacity to its field offices, WFP activated a Level 3 corporate surge emergency.<sup>25</sup> As described in parts II and III of the present report, WFP maintained exceptionally strong levels of programme and management performance, while demonstrating tremendous agility and speed in responding to the unparalleled situation.
13. Leveraging its experience in responding to Ebola outbreaks and its extensive supply chain capacity, WFP reacted swiftly to address the severe impacts caused by COVID-19 on global supply chains and commercial transport markets by establishing common services for enabling health and humanitarian workers to continue their critical work. WFP transported nearly 27,000 essential personnel from 415 organizations, and more than 135,000 m<sup>3</sup> of cargo, while also providing COVID-19 medevac support for humanitarian staff and their dependants.
14. From May 2020, WFP's interventions to assist affected communities, national governments and partners to build back better from COVID-19 were guided by the organization's medium-term programme framework. Informed by the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations framework for the socioeconomic response to COVID-19, this document outlined the approach for WFP and partners to provide tailored support in three areas: national social protection systems and the delivery of basic services; school-based programmes and nutrition; and food systems.
15. WFP adapted and scaled up its operations in three primary ways. First, it sustained ongoing operations and assistance for existing beneficiaries by rapidly deploying staff to fill critical gaps in the field, pre-positioning food stocks and increasing local purchases. Second, assistance was scaled up to reach new beneficiaries on the brink of food insecurity owing to the pandemic, including by expanding direct assistance into urban areas, which accounted for 90 percent of COVID-19 cases. Near real-time remote monitoring methods were used to assess needs. Third, governments and humanitarian partners were supported and enabled in responding effectively to COVID-19 through the provision of technical assistance and logistics support. In particular, WFP expanded support for national social protection systems.
16. These actions were underpinned by reliance on management assurance reviews, internal control and risk management processes and flexible funding arrangements that responded to the unpredictable environment. WFP's long-standing investments in digital transformation, telecommunications, global

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> IOM and WFP. 2020. *Populations at risk: Implications of COVID-19 for hunger, migration and displacement*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/populations-risk-implications-covid-19-hunger-migration-displacement-2020>.

<sup>25</sup> The corporate Level 3 designation was in effect from 30 March to 30 September 2020.

service centres such as the humanitarian booking hub, the online emergency service marketplace and surge staffing arrangements ensured the adaptive continuity of operations. Moreover, as employees worldwide faced personal or family challenges caused by COVID-19-related restrictions, WFP rapidly adapted its workforce rules, procedures and services, balancing the duty of care for its staff with the need for business continuity. Extended benefits were provided to all employees worldwide, including medevacs and field clinics and flexible working arrangements, where appropriate.

17. WFP rapidly launched a global programme for improving connectivity in the field, including further improvements in the capacity and reliability of its digital beneficiary and transfer management platform. These initiatives allowed staff to stay and deliver, while addressing the pandemic's increased risks to their personal health, safety and security as they moved from working in offices to working remotely. In 2020, the creation of the Workplace Culture Department and the appointment of an Assistant Executive Director to lead the new department reaffirmed the importance placed on WFP's duty of care to its employees, with the aim of establishing a more strategic and holistic approach to human resources and people management.<sup>26</sup> Early efforts focused on the design and implementation of a comprehensive action plan (CAP) based on six core areas: reaffirming values, leadership, employee engagement, policy and systems, discipline, and communications. The renewed focus on people management as a corporate priority proved valuable in shaping the organization's response to COVID-19.
18. WFP also contributed to the Secretary-General's initiatives for guiding the United Nations system's health, socioeconomic and humanitarian response to the pandemic. The Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 (GHRP) was launched to help the 63 worst-hit countries contain the spread of the virus and address the immediate humanitarian consequences. Nearly one-third of the USD 10.3 billion received through this appeal was devoted to addressing the expected surge in global food insecurity. Two of the GHRP's key areas are overseen by WFP: famine prevention (USD 500 million) and provision of common services for the health and humanitarian community (USD 965 million).
19. As part of its contribution to the formulation of the United Nations development system's socioeconomic response framework for helping countries to recover from COVID-19, WFP co-drafted the social protection pillar. The framework calls on global and regional experts and United Nations country teams to "work as one" throughout the response in supporting health services, social protection, jobs, fiscal and financial stimulus, social cohesion and community resilience. Through its participation in the advisory committee of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund and involvement in drafting the Secretary-General's policy brief on the impacts of COVID-19 on food security and nutrition, WFP also helped to ensure an effective and consistent approach to addressing food security issues within the wider response.

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<sup>26</sup> Following recommendations from the Report of the joint Board/management working group on harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination (WFP/EB.2/2019/9-A).

## WFP and United Nations development system reform

20. With the United Nations marking its 75th anniversary and the beginning of the Decade of Action on delivery of the 2030 Agenda, the emergence of COVID-19 in 2020 emphasized the importance of United Nations reform. WFP engaged substantively in the reform workstreams aimed at enhancing the system's efficiency and effectiveness in helping governments to achieve the SDGs and implement the 2030 Agenda at the country level, operationalized components of the United Nations development system reform, and updated internal guidance material.<sup>27</sup>
21. As described above, WFP provided supply chain services as part of the system-wide pandemic response. Advances in operationalizing mutual recognition of each other's policies and procedures facilitated WFP's ability to provide services and procure supplies for other agencies. As part of this initiative, policies and contracts for fleet and engineering services and the humanitarian booking hub were updated to meet evolving needs. Legal support in negotiating agreements with partners was key to enabling WFP's global response to the pandemic.
22. WFP participated in implementation of the reform's regional review through newly established regional collaborative platforms. In coordination with the United Nations sustainable development group, WFP contributed to a review of the cost-sharing formula for the resident coordinator system. Leadership in common fleet and digital solutions such as the humanitarian booking hub was also provided by WFP through its involvement in the business operations group.

## Advances in the humanitarian–development–peace nexus

23. WFP is committed to implementing actions through the humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach to addressing people's vulnerability before, during and after crises by improving coordination between project-based development and humanitarian interventions. In 2020, WFP adhered to the Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which provides a framework for strengthening collaboration and complementarity among Member States and United Nations entities in designing, implementing, monitoring and reporting on humanitarian, development and peace outcomes through individual and collective actions.<sup>28</sup>
24. In 2020, WFP conducted the first in a series of case studies to identify good practices, opportunities and challenges in applying the nexus approach to addressing the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition.<sup>29</sup> Initial findings highlighted WFP's contributions to the conditions for development and peacebuilding through its humanitarian and resilience work, the importance of joint inter-agency assessments, analysis and coordination across the nexus and the challenges presented by "siloes" humanitarian and development funding. WFP increased support for country offices in advancing conflict sensitivity and peace programming, such as by developing the WFP minimum standards for conflict-sensitive programming and the rapid operational conflict risk and prevention tool for COVID-19 and conflict sensitivity.

<sup>27</sup> WFP submitted three updates on the United Nations reform to the Executive Board in 2020; the most recent report issued in February 2021 (WFP/EB.1/2021/4-B) is available at: [https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document\\_download/WFP-0000122750](https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document_download/WFP-0000122750).

<sup>28</sup> The recommendation is available at: <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/643/643.en.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> This was the first in a series of case studies that will cover various topics.



**UNHCR/WFP Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub**

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and WFP Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub was established in 2020 following a decade of collaboration on the development of joint principles and guidance on targeting and prioritization, a joint self-reliance strategy, and agreements on cash assistance and data-sharing. The hub represents the first joint global initiative working towards common outcomes that address the essential needs of vulnerable refugee populations over time and reflects current best practice in the nexus approach. The initiative supports the implementation of needs assessment, targeting and data sharing activities, strengthened accountability to affected populations, and the development of joint strategies for promoting gender- and age- appropriate livelihood opportunities for refugees. In 2020, hub experts supported eight countries in efficiently using resources to reach vulnerable people, including through the development of a joint targeting approach in Rwanda and a joint self-reliance strategy in Cameroon. The targeting of assistance based on needs, rather than refugee status, aims to ensure the efficient and effective use of available resources. While continued assistance is provided to the most vulnerable refugees, less vulnerable refugees are included in livelihood support activities with the aim of increasing their self-reliance and reducing their need for food assistance.

25. The unprecedented increases in people's poverty and hunger due to COVID-19, conflict and climate change during 2020 emphasized the need for urgent life-saving actions and operational flexibility in meeting the humanitarian needs of people. At the same time, the interaction among these social, economic and environmental factors underscored the need to address all elements of sustainable development holistically. Without strategic approaches to saving people's lives and efforts to change lives by supporting people's resilience and prospects, universal achievement of the SDGs will not be reached.

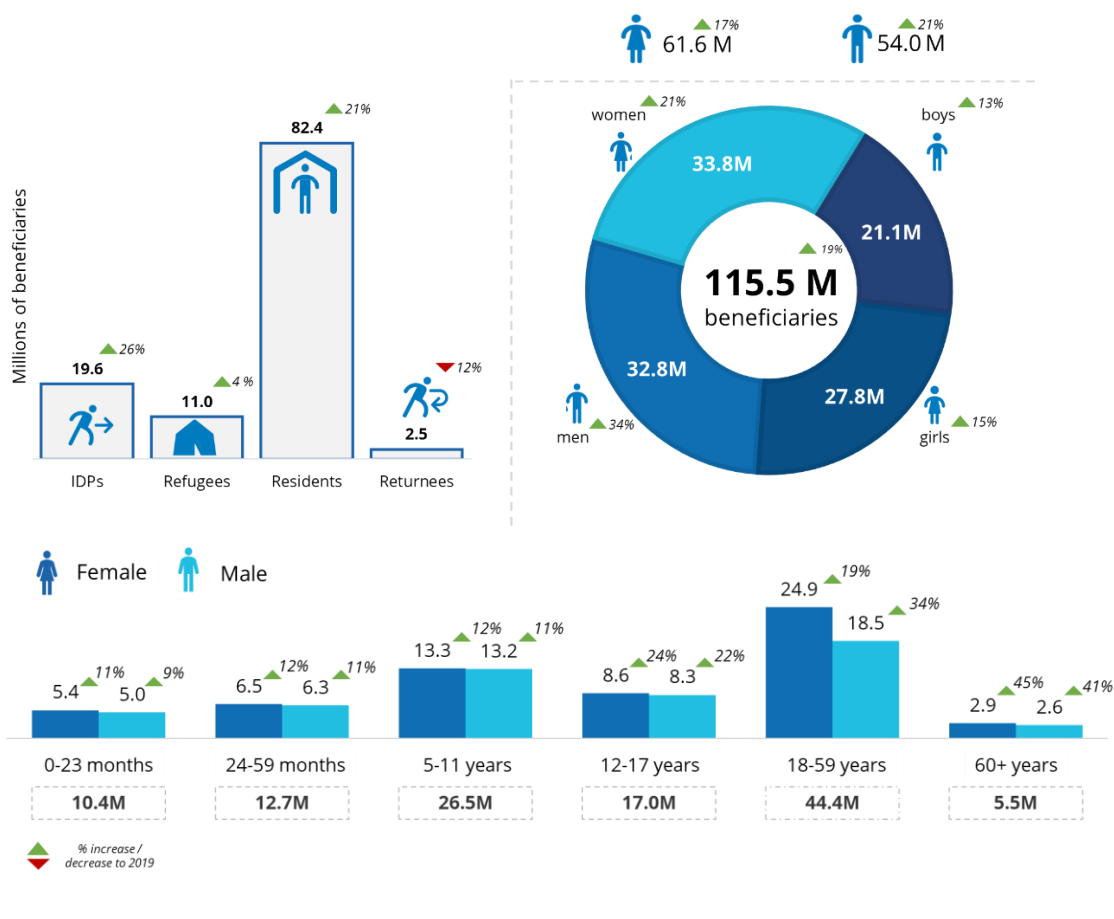
## Part II: Programme performance

*WFP's corporate results framework outlines two dimensions that should be analysed together to assess the organization's overall performance: programme performance, which measures the organization's contributions against its strategic goals and strategic objectives along the results chain, and management performance, which measures how well management functions in supporting WFP's programme performance. These two performance dimensions are measured by programme output and outcome indicators for programme results and key performance indicators (KPIs) for management results. This section examines programme performance against WFP's five strategic objectives and uses in-depth analysis of performance by programme and cross-cutting area to describe how WFP was able to assist a record number of women, girls, boys and men in 2020.*

### WFP's reach in 2020: beneficiaries and transfers

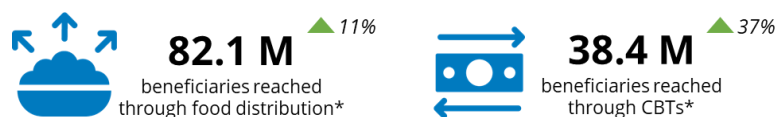
26. In 2020, WFP provided direct assistance to a record number of 115.5 million beneficiaries in 84 countries through in-kind food delivery and cash-based transfers, almost 20 percent more than in 2019. This achievement was extraordinary considering the compounded effects of COVID-19 on the global rise in food insecurity and poverty and the limitations that the pandemic imposed on the response, including lockdowns, school closures, reduced access to vulnerable populations and staff members testing positive for the coronavirus. In total, the organization and its partners served 61.6 million women and girls and 53.9 million men and boys. Children represented 58 percent of the people reached with assistance.
27. While most of WFP's direct beneficiaries were residents in their own countries, in 2020 WFP reached 26 percent more internally displaced persons, bringing the total to 19.6 million. The organization also assisted 11 million refugees and 2.5 million returnees. The increase in the number of residents being assisted may reflect greater reach in the urban areas that were most affected by the pandemic, while changes in the numbers of internally displaced persons and returnees assisted may reflect the greater difficulties faced by these groups in finding solutions to their situation because of movement restrictions imposed by governments.

**Figure 1: People assisted through operations, by residence status, sex and age group, 2020**



## Transfers to beneficiaries

28. To meet the specific needs of people targeted for assistance in diverse settings, WFP delivered 4.2 million mt of food, including fortified food and specialized nutritious foods, and transferred USD 2.1 billion in cash and vouchers. It also worked with governments, local partners, communities and the private sector by providing capacity strengthening and supply chain services. Of the total number of beneficiaries assisted, 82.1 million were reached through food assistance, 11 percent more than in 2019. A further 38.4 million people, almost 20 million of whom were women and girls were reached through cash-based transfers (CBTs), demonstrating a scale-up in the use of cash assistance of 37 percent over 2019.<sup>30</sup>



\* Beneficiaries assisted by food and CBT transfer modalities will not add up to 115.5 million reached, because some beneficiaries received a combination of transfers in 2020.

<sup>30</sup> Additional sex- and age-disaggregated data on food and cash-based transfers will be available through the WFP annual performance report dashboard in June 2021.

29. WFP's CBT programmes help empower beneficiaries to decide how they will meet their food and other essential needs using local markets. The increase in the numbers of food-insecure and malnourished urban residents accelerated WFP's application of essential needs analysis and use of multi-purpose cash for food and non-food items.
30. In 2020, 67 country offices provided CBTs to beneficiaries, three more than in 2019; of these, 50 scaled up or added new CBT interventions during the year. To ensure the safe, effective delivery of CBTs to targeted women and men, WFP expanded the quality and variety of CBT mechanisms by partnering with 218 financial service providers, compared with 171 at the end of 2019. Fifty-five percent of transfers were made in the form of cash, 33 percent through value vouchers and 12 percent through commodity vouchers.

### **Progress against the strategic plan – WFP's 2020 reach in context**

31. In addition to presenting the results of WFP's programme performance throughout the year, it is essential to analyse how these results contributed to the achievement of the organization's strategic plan in the fourth year of the plan's five-year implementation period. To measure progress adequately against the strategic plan, in 2019 WFP introduced a set of targets for specific output indicators that direct, track and measure programmatic performance until the end of 2021. Table 1 summarizes the level of achievement against these indicators, based on their 2020 needs-based targets.

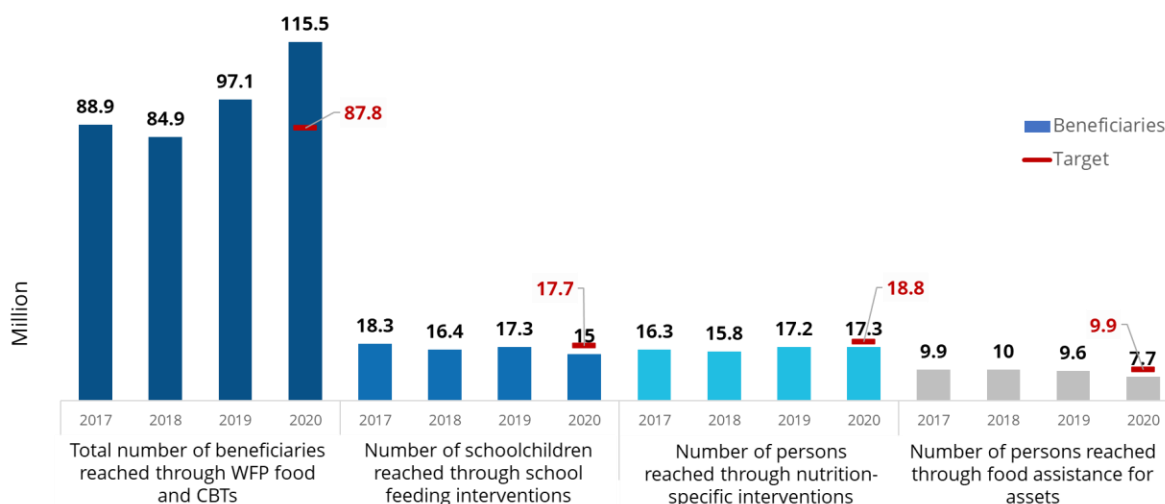
**Table 1: Results against programme outputs\***

Category A: Targets for transfer modalities						
Indicators	2020 Target	2020 Actual	% Achieved	Change from 2019		
Total quantity of food provided to targeted beneficiaries (mt)	4.6 million	4.2 million	91%		0%	
Total value of food provided (USD) to targeted beneficiaries	2.37 billion	2.4 billion	102%		5%	
Quantity of fortified food provided (mt)	264,000	1.3 million	492%		252%	
Quantity of specialized nutritious food provided (mt)	607,000	287,200	47%		0%	
Total amount of value transferred (USD) through CBTs and commodity vouchers to targeted beneficiaries	3.8 billion	2.1 billion	56%		0%	
Unrestricted cash (USD)	2.6 billion	1.2 billion	45%		-11%	
Vouchers (USD)	889 million	704 million	77%		10%	
Commodity vouchers (USD)	366 million	263 million	72%		12%	
Total value of capacity strengthening transfers (USD)	562 million	285 million	51%		9%	
Percentage of UNHAS passengers served against number requested	95%	89%	93%		-4%	
Category B*: Targets for beneficiaries						
Indicators	2020 Target	2020 Actual	% Achieved	Change from 2019		
Total number of beneficiaries targeted through WFP food and CBTs	87.8 million	115.5 million	132%		19%	
Number of schoolchildren targeted through school feeding interventions	17.7 million	15.0 million	85%		-13%	
Number of persons targeted through nutrition-specific interventions	18.8 million	17.3 million	92%		1%	
Number of persons targeted through food assistance for assets	9.9 million	7.7 million	77%		-20%	

\* 2020 targets are based on needs and were set prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. The 2020 target for the quantity of fortified food provided was based on the 2019 actual distribution which did not include 950,000 mt of fortified food distributed in Yemen.

32. *Beneficiaries reached:* As reflected in figure 2, WFP has amplified its reach to beneficiaries in the face of rising hunger and increasingly complex crises during the four years of implementation of the strategic plan. COVID-19 hindered the achievement of all beneficiary targets in 2020, particularly those focused on reaching people through specific programme activities such as school feeding, nutrition and food assistance for assets programmes that require proximity among beneficiaries or rely on institutions (schools, health centres) for delivery. However, consistent with its responses to life-threatening emergencies, WFP was able to increase the number of people reached, mostly through unconditional resource transfers.

**Figure 2: Trend in beneficiaries reached from 2017 to 2020 compared with corporate targets for 2020**

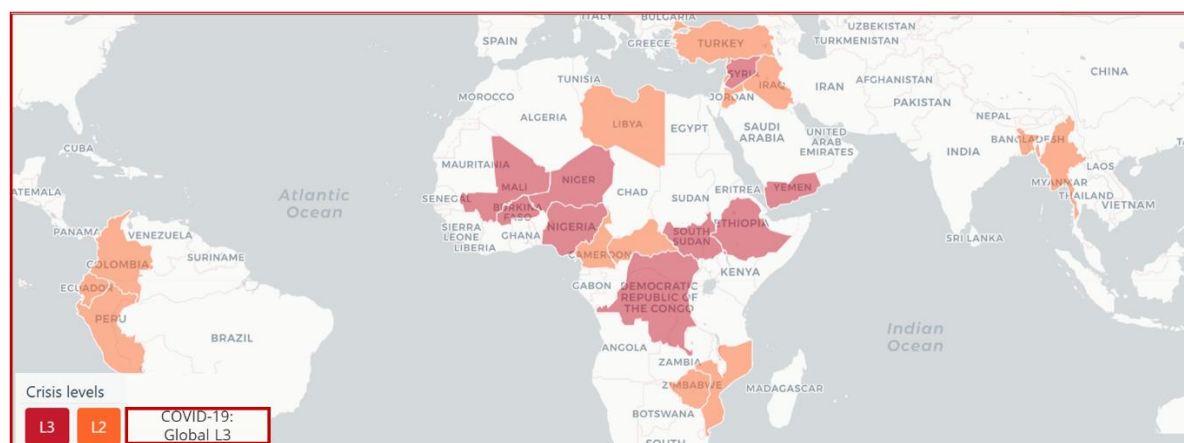


33. While WFP was close to meeting the 2020 target for the quantity of food delivered, there was an important shortfall in meeting the specific target for delivery of specialized nutritious foods. The impact of COVID-19 on supply chains, coupled with a global production shortfall in one of the main commodities (fortified blended flour), contributed to the gap in achieving that target for the second year in a row. To ensure the continuity of the nutrition programme, WFP replaced most of the metric tonnage of fortified blended flour with the less bulky lipid nutrient supplement. Further, WFP distributed more fortified food than originally planned.
34. Provision of CBTs fell short of the 2020 planned target and remained at a similar level as in 2019. This was largely because of WFP's handover at the end of March of the large-scale emergency social safety net (ESSN) established in Turkey as part of the Syrian Regional Refugee Response, which accounted for nearly USD 490 million in CBTs in 2019. The reduction was partially offset by an overall increase of 21 percent in CBTs in the rest of WFP's portfolio.
35. There are several potential reasons for the increase in beneficiaries not being matched by an increase in the total amount of food or CBTs distributed in 2020 compared with 2019. Major among these was the reduction in ration sizes in some countries related to insufficient funding, problems with access or pipeline breaks, most notably in Yemen, where rations were distributed only every second month. Other reasons included changes in modality from food to CBTs as COVID-19-related restrictions made it more difficult to distribute in-kind food, as occurred in Bangladesh, where food distributions for refugees in Cox's Bazar were replaced with e-vouchers. In addition, the provision of one-off distributions to new beneficiaries of the COVID-19 response resulted in a higher number of beneficiaries but not necessarily a proportional increase in the overall resources distributed. Other influencing factors were the transfer of the ESSN to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Turkey and the impact of fluctuations in exchange rates.

## WFP's Level 3 and Level 2 emergency responses

36. As reflected in the Management Plan (2020–2022), WFP planned to reach 87.8 million beneficiaries in 2020. The robust response to WFP's COVID-19 appeal and the organization's ability to reorient its assistance to the changing environment enabled it to reach 19 percent more people than in 2019.
37. In addition to COVID-19 – the first global Level 3 emergency experienced by WFP headquarters – WFP responded to six Level 3 emergencies in the central Sahel, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, northeastern Nigeria, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and ten Level 2 emergencies. The pandemic worsened already precarious vulnerabilities and acted as a compounding factor in conflicts, economic downturns and extreme weather events, while increasing the complexity of responding to such crises. Excluding the COVID-19 Level 3 response, the 16 emergencies accounted for 61.1 million beneficiaries or 52 percent of the total in 2020. Of these beneficiaries, 25 percent were women, 20 percent were men, 28 percent were girls and 27 percent were boys; these people benefited from 2.7 million mt of direct food assistance and USD 1.5 billion in CBTs.

**Figure 3: WFP's Level 3 and Level 2 emergency responses, 2020**



## COVID-19 – global Level 3 emergency: Sustained and scaled up response

38. The year 2020 presented unparalleled challenges to humanitarian and development actors in providing timely, safe, efficient and effective assistance to a continuously rising number of beneficiaries. This section provides a global and regional snapshot of how WFP and its partners demonstrated adaptive continuity across all programmes in mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives and livelihoods of women, girls, boys and men most vulnerable to poverty, hunger and disease in 2020.
39. In all regions, the pandemic caused WFP to expand operations into urban areas, shift to remote working modalities, adapt school feeding, nutrition and asset creation programmes and accelerate its use of mobile food security monitoring to track real-time evolving needs. Globally, WFP provided 15 million schoolchildren with nutritious meals, school snacks or take-home rations in the form of food or CBTs and 7 million schoolchildren affected by school closures related to COVID-19 were reached with dry take-home rations or CBTs as alternatives to on-site school meals. Seventeen million women, girls and boys received assistance for malnutrition prevention and treatment.

Concurrently, WFP helped communities to invest in asset creation and livelihood activities, contributing to changing the lives of almost 8 million women and men globally.

### Mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping tracked needs in real time

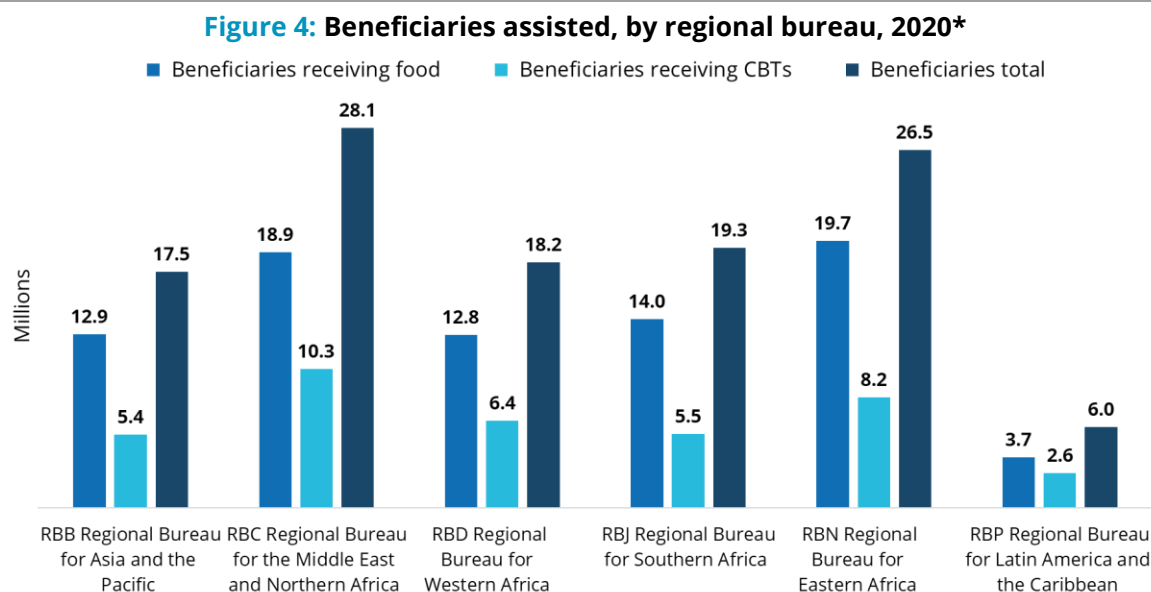
To complement face-to-face data collection for needs assessment and monitoring purposes, the use of mobile technology and remote monitoring tools was quickly expanded after the onset of COVID-19. WFP increased the collection of near-real-time food security data from 15 countries in 2019 to 38 in 2020. Remote, near-real-time food security monitoring systems tracked the impacts of the outbreak on household food security, livelihoods, coping strategies, markets and other metrics, with results visualized in near-real-time on WFP's HungerMap LIVE.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, web surveys were expanded to more than 45 countries, helping country offices to collect data rapidly and cost-effectively and to capture a variety of often hidden population groups, including young women and men, and mobile and displaced people. Many country offices also developed dashboards to improve data visualization for supporting decision making, enabling the provision of timely life-saving assistance and advocacy on operational needs.

<sup>1</sup> <https://hungermap.wfp.org>.

### Staying and delivering through regional and country engagement

40. WFP's country offices were supported by regional bureaux and partners in assisting record numbers of people in need and adapting to rapid changes in access, transport and health, safety and security conditions. Pre-existing access constraints remained a key challenge in responding to humanitarian needs in 2020. In countries where conflict, sanctions, counterterrorism measures, administrative hurdles or insecurity were already undermining humanitarian operations, access challenges were frequently worsened or amplified by the pandemic, for example in Afghanistan, Myanmar, the State of Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Selected examples by regional bureau are described in the following subsections.



\* Beneficiaries assisted by food and CBT transfer modalities will not add up to 115.5 million reached, because some beneficiaries received a combination of transfers in 2020.



### **Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific**

41. WFP delivered food assistance to 17.5 million people in 2020. Throughout the region,<sup>31</sup> school feeding programmes were adapted by providing take-home rations instead of school meals and integrating health messages in programming so as to raise awareness of the virus. WFP provided regional air services connecting various locations in the region. By the end of 2020, these services had transported nearly 6,000 medical and humanitarian personnel and 1,725 mt of vital medical supplies.
42. In March 2020, WFP launched Building Blocks – an online transfer management system that uses blockchain technology to expand refugees' choices in access to cash assistance and in the ways they spend it – in Bangladesh's Rohingya refugee camps. By using the application for user authentication and direct connection to local retailers, refugees were able to collect assistance from multiple organizations while stimulating the economy of their local communities. A data sharing agreement between UNHCR and WFP enabled 83 percent of the refugees to be served through this technology by the end of the year. To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, the application switched from using fingerprints to QR codes for the authentication of transactions. After a successful pilot in Cox's Bazar, blockchain technology was also rolled out in the urban food security programme in Dhaka.

### **Regional Bureau for the Middle East and Northern Africa**

43. The regional bureau developed a region-wide operational framework to guide response to immediate and mid-term needs related to COVID-19. In addition, it developed and shared the first draft of the regional social protection strategy based on consultations with country offices and management and analysis of CSPs.
44. In the Syrian Arab Republic, WFP met the needs of an additional 1.4 million people affected by the pandemic and enabled the Government and partners to provide 140,500 beneficiaries with access to hygiene items through WFP's CBT delivery mechanism. In Yemen, a strategy was developed for facilitating advocacy and fundraising in support of the expansion of government social protection schemes.<sup>32</sup> Actions such as staggering and increasing the number of distribution points, reinforcing crowd control measures and providing handwashing facilities at all distribution points were taken in Yemen to mitigate the pandemic's potential risks to beneficiaries.
45. To support vulnerable Lebanese households affected by the COVID-19 and economic crises, WFP provided unconditional in-kind food assistance consisting of a monthly household food parcel. Immediately after the Beirut explosion, WFP provided food parcels and supported hot meal initiatives before shifting to cash-based assistance for meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable people affected by the explosion. WFP successfully adapted its CBT approaches to reduce crowding at automated teller machines (ATMs) and increased access points for beneficiaries.
46. Six regional updates and nine country-specific analyses of the impact of COVID-19 on food security, the macroeconomy, nutrition, gender issues and livelihoods were conducted to inform government and WFP interventions.

<sup>31</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country reports for Afghanistan: [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=AF01&year=2020#/20258](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=AF01&year=2020#/20258); and Myanmar: [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=MM01&year=2020#/21188](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=MM01&year=2020#/21188).

<sup>32</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country reports for the Syrian Arab Republic: [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=SY02&year=2020#/21169](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=SY02&year=2020#/21169); and Yemen: [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=YE01&year=2020#/21587](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=YE01&year=2020#/21587).

### **Regional Bureau for Western Africa**

47. Compared with 2019, the number of people assisted in the region in 2020 increased by more than 70 percent, rising to 18.2 million owing to substantial increases in needs in the central Sahel and Liberia. WFP, the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the Economic Community of West African States jointly formulated regional response plans for addressing COVID-19 and food insecurity and conducted a web survey of the micro-level impacts of the pandemic on prices, markets and food security in 15 countries. The survey affirmed past findings that female-headed households had substantially lower rates of employment and slightly higher occurrences of going hungry or skipping meals than male-headed households.
48. WFP partnered with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on joint implementation of social protection and resilience activities in three countries,<sup>33</sup> and with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) on a study of urban food security and nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa aimed at assisting the targeting of vulnerable families, particularly in major urban centres.

### **Regional Bureau for Southern Africa**

49. WFP enabled national governments in the region to scale up their COVID-19 responses by providing technical assistance and support for national social safety nets programmes. An increased focus on analysing and responding to urban needs<sup>34</sup> in the region led to new operational approaches, such as the use of remote beneficiary identity management, targeting, registration and verification methods. In Zambia and Zimbabwe,<sup>35</sup> for example, WFP reached people residing in high-density and low-income urban areas through urban social assistance programmes; these activities improved the proportion of assisted households that had acceptable food consumption, and reduced negative coping strategies. In Malawi, WFP established a United Nations primary care clinic to expand medical capacity.<sup>36</sup>

### **Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa**

50. WFP and the Government of Ethiopia established the Addis Ababa humanitarian air hub in March 2020 to enable humanitarian workers, personal protective equipment and medical supplies to reach countries in need. Through the air hub, passengers were transported to more than ten destinations and cargo to more than 50 countries, in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia, Ethiopian Airlines, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization (WHO). To prevent pipeline breaks, WFP accelerated the pre-positioning of stocks and the activation of regional supply chain coordination as part of the COVID-19 response. New or adapted programme interventions were used to minimize the spread of COVID-19,<sup>37</sup> including

<sup>33</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country reports for the [Niger](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=NE02&year=2020#/21283): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=NE02&year=2020#/21283](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=NE02&year=2020#/21283); [Mali](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ML02&year=2020#/21169): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=ML02&year=2020#/21169](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ML02&year=2020#/21169); and [Cameroon](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=CM01&year=2020#/20508/20513): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=CM01&year=2020#/20508/20513](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=CM01&year=2020#/20508/20513).

<sup>34</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country report for the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=CD01&year=2020#/20429): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=CD01&year=2020#/20429](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=CD01&year=2020#/20429).

<sup>35</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country reports for [Zambia](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ZM02&year=2020#/21854): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=ZM02&year=2020#/21854](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ZM02&year=2020#/21854); and [Zimbabwe](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ZW01&year=2020#/21873): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=ZW01&year=2020#/21873](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ZW01&year=2020#/21873).

<sup>36</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country report for [Malawi](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=MW01&year=2020#/21227): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=MW01&year=2020#/21227](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=MW01&year=2020#/21227).

<sup>37</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country reports for [Rwanda](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=RW01&year=2020#/21435): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=RW01&year=2020#/21435](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=RW01&year=2020#/21435); and [South Sudan](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=SS01&year=2020#/21531): [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=SS01&year=2020#/21531](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=SS01&year=2020#/21531).

procedures for transferring food or cash, revised conditions for food assistance for assets and livelihood activities, new screening procedures for nutrition treatment programmes for women, girls, and children 6–59 months of age, and alternative methods of targeting and distributing assistance for school girls and boys.

51. WFP developed an e-shop application in Somalia, through which food-insecure households could redeem their cash-based food assistance by ordering food commodities online. To minimize the unnecessary exposure of beneficiaries to COVID-19, the application was modified to allow home delivery of entitlements to households. By the end of 2020, an estimated 108,000 users, including 140 WFP-assisted schools and 1,200 retailers, were registered to use the application. Cumulative sales of more than USD 12 million were conducted through the application, and more than 139,000 home deliveries were made to 830,000 beneficiaries.

### **Regional Bureau for Latin America and Caribbean**

52. In early 2020, Latin America became the epicentre of the pandemic. The convergence of the pandemic with the regional Venezuelan migration crisis required immediate support from governments' emergency response plans. In Peru,<sup>38</sup> one of the region's worst affected countries, WFP adapted its CSP by resuming direct assistance through the provision of CBTs, primarily to Venezuelan refugees and migrants, and contributed logistics support to the national humanitarian supply chain.
53. A record number of hurricanes hit the Latin America and Caribbean region in 2020, compounding the already fragile economic conditions brought about by the pandemic. Using internal advance funding mechanisms for pre-positioning of food and equipment at the Barbados country office and in the Dominican Republic and Honduras, WFP swiftly reached people with assistance. After two back-to-back hurricanes caused severe damage in Central America, WFP provided food assistance to the most affected indigenous people in response to requests from the governments of Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Service provision activities were also expanded and are now embedded in the programmes of several countries.

### **Evidence from the first country strategic plan evaluations**

54. When responding to emergencies, the scale, speed and coverage of WFP's response was commended in relation to the Rohingya refugee crisis and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with considerable expansion in response to a growing number of crises in extremely challenging physical, social and institutional environments. WFP was also actively involved in the inter-agency response to Cyclone Idai, which included a scale-up activation that helped to save lives and mitigate suffering for many of the estimated 1.85 million people who needed assistance.

### **Cross-cutting results**

55. Achieving zero hunger is contingent on achieving all the SDG targets while ensuring that gender, disability, age, protection and accountability measures are in place to protect the rights and agency of the women and men assisted by WFP. As articulated in several WFP policies and frameworks, commitments and expected results in these cross-cutting areas have been formulated with the aim of ensuring that no one is left behind; the results achieved in 2020 are described in the following subsections.

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<sup>38</sup> See the section on Context and operations & COVID-19 response in the WFP 2020 annual country report for [Peru: \[https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\\_id=PE01&year=2020#/21359\]\(https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\_id=PE01&year=2020#/21359\)](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=PE01&year=2020#/21359).

## Protection and accountability to affected populations

56. In November 2020, the Executive Board approved the updated WFP protection and accountability policy,<sup>39</sup> the normative framework through which WFP seeks to more effectively integrate protection considerations into its programming. The policy requires WFP to identify and assist the individuals or groups most at risk of deprivation and abuse in humanitarian, protracted and development settings, and to mitigate those risks.
57. WFP continued to operationalize its accountability to affected populations commitments during 2020, despite the challenges arising from the pandemic. WFP communicated with individuals and groups through innovative methods, including third-party monitoring, remote monitoring through call centres, and toll-free hotlines. Forty-one out of 64 countries met their annual targets by informing a high proportion of assisted people about WFP operations. In addition, 90 percent of WFP's operations documented and analysed beneficiary feedback and integrated it into programme improvements, meeting the annual target.
58. An interdepartmental working group was established to operationalize the WFP disability inclusion road map (2020–2021),<sup>40</sup> which commits WFP to supporting the Secretary-General's 2019 United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy and fulfilling its obligations regarding disability inclusion more broadly.
59. In line with its zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse, WFP has invested significant resources in efforts in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). Recognizing the importance of having dedicated PSEA capacity and promoting inter-agency coordination in key locations, WFP was one of the first United Nations agencies to commit to designating employees to the newly established PSEA coordinator role. Such inter-agency coordinators were deployed in Afghanistan, Colombia, Mozambique, Nigeria and the Sudan by the end of 2020. WFP also appointed designated PSEA coordinators in country offices and – in some operations – a PSEA focal point in each WFP field office. In the Syrian Arab Republic, for example, this comprehensive approach ensured that WFP and its cooperating partners took responsive PSEA measures in all country operations. However, as noted in part III, the number of WFP employees completing mandatory PSEA training decreased, primarily owing to system and compliance changes that had negative effects on compliance levels. These issues have since been corrected, and WFP expects to meet mandatory PSEA training targets in full in 2021.
60. WFP's cooperating partners established physical protection measures at food distribution points and increased the number of distribution points and the frequency of distributions so as to mitigate the risks posed to beneficiaries by the pandemic. Monitoring observations, including beneficiary perception surveys, indicated that almost all distribution points were deemed safe and easily accessible. This positive result reflected the efforts of WFP and its partners in promptly adopting mitigation measures when needed, such as site relocation or temporary suspension of operations. In 2020, all 59 country offices that reported on the proportion of people receiving assistance without safety challenges met their annual targets.<sup>41</sup> In addition, 51 country offices met their targets in ensuring that the dignity of beneficiaries was safeguarded by the behaviour and approaches adopted by WFP and its partners.

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<sup>39</sup> WFP/EB.2/2020/4-A/1/Rev.2.

<sup>40</sup> WFP/EB.2/2020/4-B.

<sup>41</sup> It should be noted that results can assess only reported safety challenges; additional challenges may have occurred in 2020 but not been reported on and captured in these results.

61. To maintain and adapt protection and access measures at the operational level, WFP ensured the adoption of standard operating procedures for implementing programmes in the context of COVID-19, such as the use of face masks, handwashing, health screening and physical distancing measures at all distribution sites. Ninety-four percent of the country offices reporting on the proportion of targeted people with unhindered access to WFP programmes reported guaranteed access to distribution points.

### Evidence on protection and accountability from evaluations

62. Despite improvements, addressing protection issues still presents challenges for WFP. In Cameroon, beneficiary protection concerns in refugee camps were systematically reported to UNHCR. However, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, feedback and complaints were not systematically followed up on or addressed in a timely manner. In Bangladesh, the extent to which affected populations, especially women, felt empowered to use the feedback mechanisms was unclear. The inter-agency humanitarian evaluation (IAHE) on Cyclone Idai reported that the vast majority of people in affected communities thought they had been treated with respect by humanitarian agencies, although only a small portion knew what assistance would be provided or how to use the complaints and feedback system.

### Gender

63. Zero hunger can be achieved only when everyone has equal opportunities, equal access to resources and equal voice in the decisions that affect their households, communities and societies. For WFP, gender equality and women's empowerment are central to ending global hunger and saving lives.
64. During 2020, gender equality measures were integrated into the first round of five second-generation CSPs, based on Gender with Age Marker (GaM) ratings. In addition, 437 activities across 83 operational CSPs were assessed against the GaM to measure the extent to which gender equality and women's empowerment were promoted and measures implemented. More than 70 percent of activities in the following categories integrated gender systematically:<sup>42</sup> nutrition, asset creation and livelihoods, smallholder market support and unconditional resource transfer. However, more needs to be done to integrate gender considerations into country capacity strengthening (CCS), assessment, analysis and monitoring, emergency preparedness and service provision. Following successful completion of the WFP gender-transformative programme in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cameroon, Jordan, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen in 2020, 13 country offices had graduated from the programme by the end of 2020, enabling them to mainstream gender throughout their programme, human resources, communications and partnership activities.
65. At the country level, WFP effectively promoted gender equality and women's empowerment through targeted interventions and joint programmes. In 2020, 55 out of 60 countries that tracked results on improved decision making at the household level regarding the use of food, cash and vouchers showed strong performance by meeting their output targets. In Pakistan, the share of households in which men and women jointly make decisions increased from 41 percent in 2019 to 75 percent in 2020 because of strong social mobilization efforts. Country-level programming also contributed to ensuring that girls had access to education. In Afghanistan, WFP's provision of take-home rations (THRs) for girls resulted in a 33 percent increase in school enrolment compared with 2019. In Somalia, engaging men along with women in gender-transformative nutrition and health messaging was linked to improvements in dietary indicators and outcomes in 2020.

<sup>42</sup> As evidenced by GaM scores of 3 (fully integrates gender) and 4 (fully integrates gender and age).

66. WFP specifically targeted and reached many women through livelihood and resilience building activities. In Lao People's Democratic Republic, WFP supported farmer nutrition schools in enhancing women's knowledge of, and access to, nutrient-rich food by providing learning programmes for 21,217 participants, 85 percent of whom were women. Subsequently, 96 percent of the women participants perceived that their nutrition status had improved. In Egypt, WFP's livelihood support activities yielded strong results, enhancing the capabilities and incomes of 10,000 women in 2020 while also reducing social inequalities amplified by the pandemic's negative socioeconomic impacts.
67. Research and gender analysis conducted by WFP also helped inform government policies on improving gender equity in food distribution within households. In India, a WFP study on intrahousehold food access and distribution among poor households in Uttar Pradesh showed that men were given preference in food distribution over women, and that discriminatory food taboos also restricted the consumption of certain nutritious foods by women and girls. With technical support from WFP, the Government of Indonesia incorporated a gender-sensitive indicator – the number of years of schooling completed by women and girls aged 15 years and over – as one of the indicators used in producing the country's food security and vulnerability atlas. This work provided insights into the linkages between maternal education and household food utilization.

#### Evidence on gender equality and women's empowerment from evaluations<sup>43</sup>

68. The evaluation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) concluded that the policy requires an update to ensure that gender is firmly embedded in WFP's work at the country level and that the policy contributes to United Nations system efforts to accelerate support for government partners in their efforts to achieve the SDGs by 2030. This requires continued attention from leadership, the building of effective country programmes and the creation of a positive enabling environment for gender mainstreaming, underpinned by increased financial and human resources for work on gender equality and women's empowerment and improved gender mainstreaming at all levels of WFP.
69. More specifically, the evaluation of the gender policy found that WFP was missing opportunities to ground the design and development of programmes in a comprehensive contextual analysis of the needs and interests of women, men, girls and boys. This finding was corroborated by CSP evaluations: the Bangladesh CSP evaluation noted a high level of awareness of and commitment to gender equality, but the lack of a more nuanced understanding of women's access to and engagement with WFP interventions and how these relate to intrahousehold and social roles. The country office in Indonesia had integrated gender considerations into its country capacity strengthening activities but not into the CSP as a whole. While addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence is fundamental to addressing food insecurity and malnutrition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the country office's ICSP was not grounded in comprehensive gender analysis. In Cameroon, there were scattered efforts to better understand the context and implications of gender issues on WFP programming. The IAHE on gender found that gender equality is often deprioritized in the first phase of a response as it is not considered a "life-saving issue", with the exception of responses to sexual exploitation and abuse or cases of gender-based violence.

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<sup>43</sup> Details of the evidence from evaluations are provided in annex VIII.

## Environment

70. WFP's environmental and social sustainability framework is consistent with its risk management framework and strengthens the organization's three lines of defence against the risk of harming beneficiaries or the environment. The framework addresses issues of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, waste and pollution management, climate change, protection of and accountability to populations, gender equality, and community health, safety and security.<sup>44</sup>
71. The framework's standards and safeguards follow the Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming of the United Nations Environment Management Group and reflect best practices used by other agencies. Regional advisors were recruited in 2020 to strengthen WFP's capacities in applying environmental and social safeguards.
72. The risk screening tool – initially developed for asset creation activities – was made applicable to all CSP activities in 2020, and a new indicator was developed for measuring the results. Thirteen country offices reported through the new indicator that in 2020 they screened some or all of their CSP activities for environmental and social risks before implementation. During the year, training sessions on environmental and social risks were provided to cooperating partners, helping to ensure compliance with the requirement for environmental risk screening. Through its food assistance for assets activities, WFP worked with local communities on the creation of healthier natural environments and the absorption of excess carbon dioxide – a major contributor to global warming – through land rehabilitation and tree planting.
73. To address immediate climate-related risks and promote resilient food systems in the aftermath of COVID-19, the Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa implemented a climate risk management strategy. Other measures implemented in 2020 included forecast-based financing in Djibouti, Kenya and Uganda, risk transfer activities that insure pastoralists and smallholders against droughts in Ethiopia and Kenya, and development of gender-sensitive country and regional climate risk profiles for floods and drought.

### Climate change funding

WFP facilitated the access of vulnerable countries to multilateral financing for climate change adaptation in food systems. Increased access to climate financing strengthened WFP's engagement in global policy discussions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In 2020, WFP received multi-year funding of USD 21 million from the Green Climate Fund and USD 30 million from the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund to initiate activities in the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Senegal and Tajikistan.

## Performance by strategic objective

74. WFP's work is directed towards achieving the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. Reflecting its organizational history and mandate and the interconnections among the 17 SDGs, WFP's strategic plan and CRF prioritize two SDGs – SDG 2 on achieving zero hunger and SDG 17 on partnering to support implementation of the SDGs – while contributing to other SDGs based on national priorities and the country's situation. This section presents an overview of the results and performance against outcomes towards WFP's five strategic objectives, which are anchored in SDGs 2 and 17.

<sup>44</sup> In 2020, environmental risks such as biodiversity loss and natural resource and climate crises were ranked as four of the top five risks most likely to occur in the next five to ten years, along with infectious diseases (ranked fourth). World Economic Forum. 2021. *The Global Risks Report 2021*. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-risks-report-2021>.

## Measuring results<sup>1</sup>

To assess whether or not its interventions are achieving their intended results, WFP uses the results chain that links the strategic goals (SDG 2 and SDG 17) to strategic objectives, outcomes and outputs. For outcome performance, progress is assessed by comparing year-end values against specific targets set at the beginning of the reporting year. In line with other United Nations agencies, WFP uses a traffic light approach to illustrate its outcome achievements. For WFP, average achievement rates of more than 80 percent are ranked as strong performance (green), those between 50 and 80 percent as moderate performance (yellow) and those of less than 50 percent as weak performance or exhibiting no progress (red).

Target setting is a critical component of WFP's results-based reporting. Targets may be established at the corporate level for selected output indicators, or at the country level (at the output and outcome levels) according to the specific setting. WFP's review of its CRF in 2021 provides an opportunity to assess and standardize its indicator weighting and target setting practices.

**Methodology limitations:**<sup>2</sup> In 2020, the calculation methodology applied in outcome analysis is consistent with the approach used in previous years and has the same limitations. The first limitation is that indicators are averaged and weighted equally, which means that performance under one indicator might substantially affect the results for a strategic objective. Further details on the performance rating of each indicator and the number of country offices using the indicator is provided in annex II-C. The second limitation relates to data availability: only country offices that have reported with sufficient data are included in the performance analysis. While this helps WFP to avoid drawing conclusions from incomplete data, it means that the performance rating might not be indicative of the organization's entire operations and may reflect performance in only a subset of countries with relevant operations. To reflect these nuances, the performance rating included under each strategic objective includes a reference to the number of countries included in the analysis. Ratings should be read in conjunction with the narrative to provide a better overview of performance.

<sup>1</sup> For more details, please refer to annex II-B: Methodology for assessing corporate programme performance and cross-cutting results.

<sup>2</sup> The same limitations are applicable to the analysis and methodology by Programme Area. In addition, the analysis by Programme Area has a third limitation which is that it does not consider capacity strengthening activities because there has not been a consistent reporting of outcome measurement across programmes areas.

75. WFP achieves results by implementing activities in eight programme areas: unconditional resource transfers, nutrition treatment, nutrition prevention, school-based programmes, asset creation and livelihoods, smallholder agricultural market support, climate risk management, and emergency preparedness. As results across programme areas fall under more than one strategic objective, this section presents performance analysis at a high level and is complemented by a subsequent section on performance by programme area, which provides the bulk of the contextual narrative and programmatic results.<sup>45</sup>

## Linking strategic objectives to programme areas

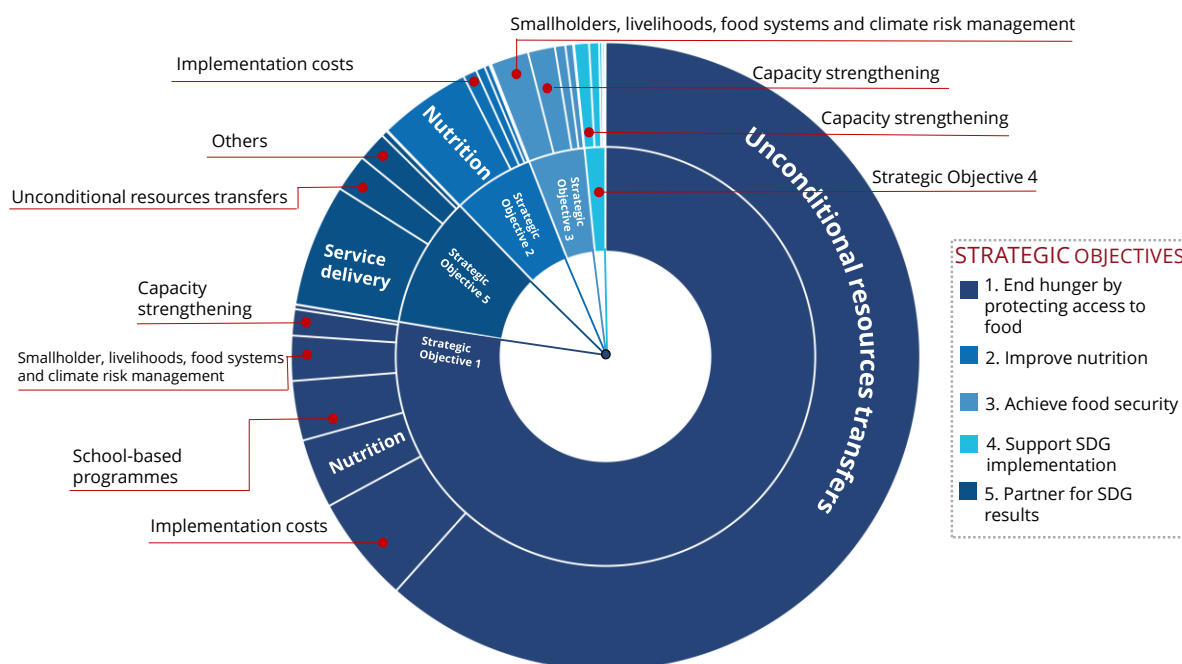
76. Analysis by strategic objective is central to understanding WFP's results towards zero hunger and partnering to achieve the SDGs. It is also important in reflecting the main programme areas

<sup>45</sup> To complement the assessment of strategic objectives, refer to the analysis of performance against KPI 1 in part III, which reflects WFP's CSP implementation.



encompassed under each strategic objective. For instance, as shown in Figure 5, expenditures on nutrition programming contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 2 as well as Strategic Objective 1; and capacity strengthening activities, which are most clearly associated with Strategic Objective 4, are implemented through programmes under multiple strategic objectives.





**Figure 5: 2020 Distribution of expenditures by strategic objective and programme area**



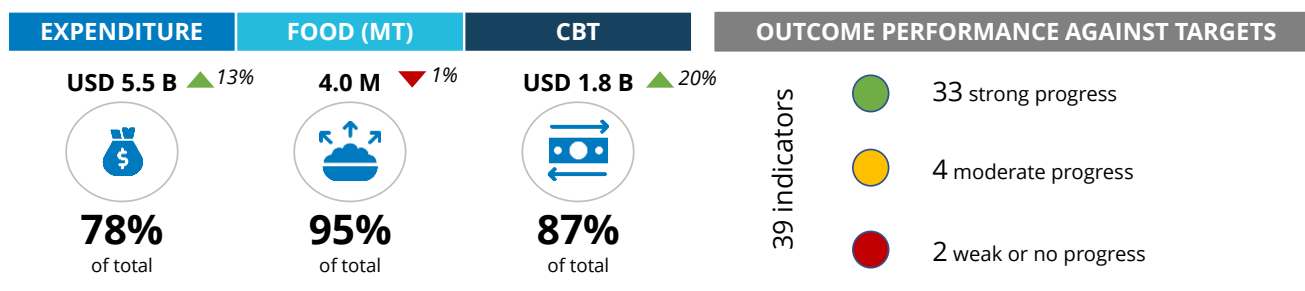
77. WFP's corporate programme performance gradually improved between 2019 and 2020, as illustrated in table 2. In 2020, strong performance was observed under all five strategic objectives, demonstrating WFP's ability to stay and deliver, especially in the context of COVID-19. These strong results provide WFP with the basis for conducting a thorough review of its targets in order to ensure that they are sufficiently ambitious for the future.

**Table 2: Overall performance by strategic objective, 2019–2020**

Strategic Objective	2019	2020	Countries with strong average achievement across targets in 2020
1 – End hunger by protecting access to food			45 out of 72
2 – Improve nutrition			39 out of 50
3 – Achieve food security			29 out of 47

4 – Support SDG implementation	 	37 out of 48
5 – Partner for SDG results	 	31 out of 32

### Strategic Objective 1 – End hunger by protecting access to food



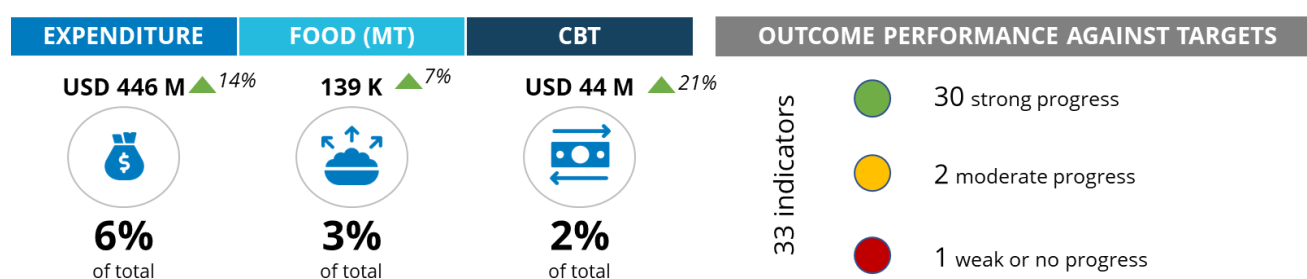
78. WFP operations under Strategic Objective 1 support collective efforts to protect access for all people, especially the most vulnerable, to the sufficient, nutritious and safe food they need to survive and to live healthy and productive lives, while strengthening national systems wherever possible. This strategic objective is linked to Strategic Result 1 – Everyone has access to food, aligned with SDG target 2.1. This strategic result covers most operations that are part of safety nets and emergency response, and includes capacity strengthening and emergency preparedness activities. Strategic Objective 1 accounts for the majority of WFP operations, representing 78 percent of total expenditures.
79. In 2020, 4 million mt of food and USD 1.8 billion in CBTs were distributed under this strategic objective, mainly through unconditional resource transfers. While food distributions remained similar to 2019 levels, a 20 percent increase in CBTs was partly influenced by a large scale-up of operations in Bangladesh, where WFP doubled the number of people assisted in response to multiple emergencies including COVID-19, monsoon floods and a tropical cyclone. Substantial increases in CBT distributions also took place in the Sudan, where WFP responded to floods and the arrival of Ethiopian refugees from Tigray region in addition to its regular emergency operations; and in Burkina Faso, where deteriorating conditions led to a rapid increase in internally displaced persons. In both cases, overall higher levels of CBTs were accompanied by a near doubling of the number of beneficiaries and an overall increase in food distribution.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, operations in Yemen experienced the largest declines in both food and CBT distributions, largely owing to funding reductions, access restrictions and interference from armed groups, and the global shortage of specialized nutritious food commodities. As a consequence, WFP maintained vital food and nutrition support at reduced levels by decreasing food rations and CBTs compared with 2019 while increasing the overall number of beneficiaries assisted by 7 percent.
80. In 2020, assessment at the outcome level demonstrated WFP's strong performance in ensuring that beneficiaries could meet their food and other essential needs. Through its operations, WFP helped countries assist a record number of people in deteriorating conditions where food security was further threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of 72 country offices, 45 reported strong achievements against targets. At the indicator level, most of the 39 relevant indicators showed strong

<sup>46</sup> Other notable increases in CBTs were observed in Colombia, Egypt and Mali.

performance against targets, but analysis of some of the most frequently applied indicators suggested a more mixed performance.

81. Food consumption scores<sup>47</sup> showed that despite COVID-19, targeted households were able to maintain their access to food in 49 of the 61 country offices that used this indicator. However, weak performance was observed against two of the three food consumption score – nutrition indicators, which measure diet quality in terms of the regular intake of protein and important micronutrients. Of the 26 countries that used these indicators, eight did not meet the target for improving iron intake and nine the target for vitamin A. In Far-North Region of Cameroon, poor results were achieved against both indicators, particularly where growing insecurity led to limited access and frequent suspensions of humanitarian operations by national authorities.
82. The moderate performance observed against targets for another widely employed indicator, the consumption-based coping strategy index, suggested that households had to resort to negative strategies to cope with food shortages. Particularly low achievement was registered in Lesotho, where urban food insecurity increased because households were highly reliant on salaries and daily wages for purchasing their food.

## Strategic Objective 2 – Improve nutrition

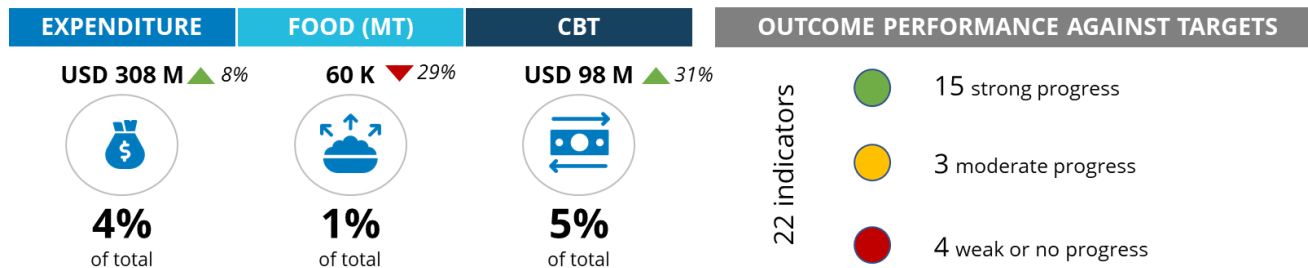


83. WFP operations under Strategic Objective 2 support efforts to end all forms of malnutrition by providing direct food assistance to beneficiaries and assisting partner governments in developing and scaling up their own nutrition programmes. This strategic objective is associated with one strategic result, Strategic Result 2 – No one suffers from malnutrition, aligned with SDG target 2.2.
84. In 2020, expenditures under this strategic result accounted for 6 percent of total expenditures. Distributions amounted to 139,000 mt in food and USD 43.8 million in CBTs, mainly through nutrition and school-based programme interventions.
85. Analysis at the outcome level showed that WFP programmes contributed to improving the nutrition status of the people assisted. Strong progress was observed against targets in four of the five indicators used to measure moderate acute malnutrition. Twenty-six of the 35 countries that used these indicators achieved their targets, and 32 achieved most,<sup>48</sup> reflecting WFP success in treating or preventing moderate acute malnutrition. While performance was strong overall, another widely used indicator – proportion of children 6-23 months of age who receive a minimum acceptable diet – registered mixed progress: only 55 percent of the countries that used this indicator achieved the relevant targets.

<sup>47</sup> The food consumption score reflects the quantity of a household's calorie intake at a given place and for a given time based on what the household consumed over the previous seven days.

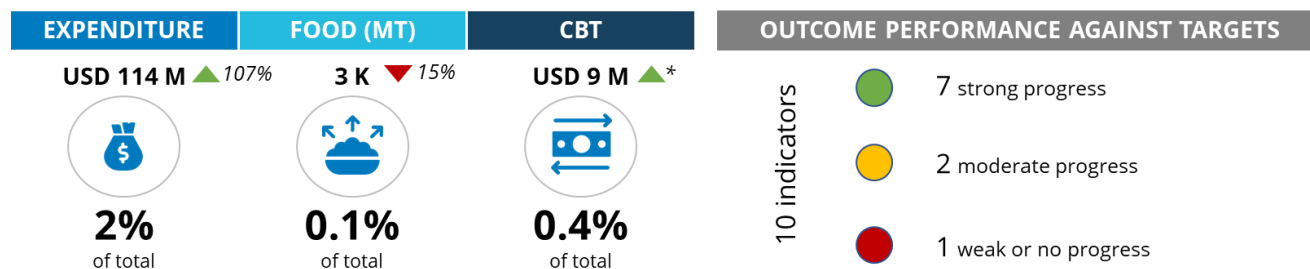
<sup>48</sup> 32 countries achieved at least 80 percent of the moderate acute malnutrition indicators used.

### Strategic Objective 3 – Achieve food security



86. WFP operations under Strategic Objective 3 support smallholders by facilitating the access of women and men farmers to markets and strengthening food systems through diverse interventions, such as by leveraging WFP's procurement expertise to form partnerships that strengthen local markets. This strategic objective has two strategic results, Strategic Result 3 – Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition through improved productivity and incomes, aligned with SDG target 2.3; and Strategic Result 4 – Food systems are sustainable, aligned with SDG target 2.4.
87. In 2020, combined expenditures under Strategic Results 3 and 4 accounted for 4 percent of WFP's total expenditures, distributed as 60,000 mt of food and USD 98 million in CBTs, mainly through asset creation and livelihood programmes. Compared with 2019, the 29 percent decrease in food distributed was offset by a 31 percent increase in the provision of CBTs in 2020. This shift occurred mainly in countries such as Kenya, Malawi, the Niger and South Sudan, where WFP expanded its use of alternative and digital transfer mechanisms to ensure continuity in delivery of programmes.
88. At the outcome level, strong progress against targets was registered in 14 of the 22 relevant indicators for Strategic Objective 3. Analysis of the most frequently applied indicators showed strong results in the percentage of targeted smallholders selling through WFP-supported farmer aggregation systems, and an overall high value and volume of such sales. In addition, a high proportion of the population in targeted communities – in all WFP country offices tracking this indicator – reported benefits from the assets created or rehabilitated through WFP's food assistance for assets programming.
89. While performance was strong overall, four widely used indicators reflected weak progress. Among them, the consumption-based coping strategy index was influenced by poor performance in Bangladesh and Lesotho; in Burundi, smallholders' rate of post-harvest losses was still significant, downgrading performance at the corporate level. However, a study on post-harvest losses among beneficiaries showed that capacity strengthening on post-harvest loss management had reduced losses from 9.4 percent to less than 1 percent. Additional information can be found in annex II-C.

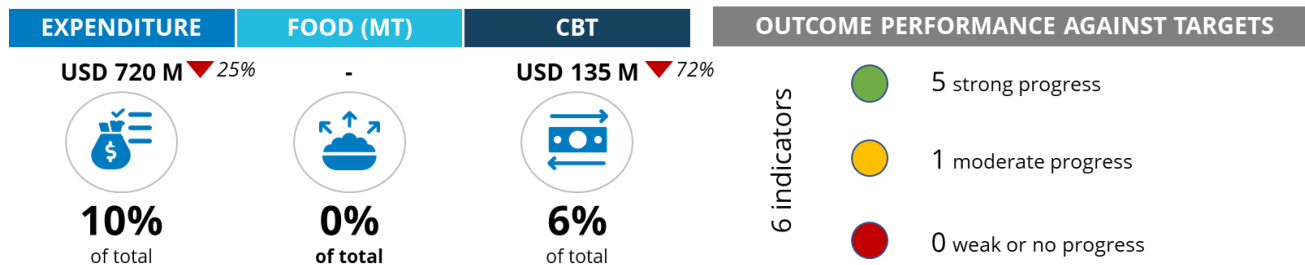
## Strategic Objective 4 – Support SDG implementation



\* A significant increase since 2019 was observed as CBT was transferred under SO4 by one country office.

90. Through operations under Strategic Objective 4, WFP provides support to national governments through capacity strengthening activities, including support for South–South and triangular cooperation, for the implementation of national plans and the achievement of zero hunger. This objective is aligned with SDG targets 17.9 and 17.14 under Strategic Result 5 – Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs; and Strategic Result 6 – Policies to support sustainable development are coherent.
91. While expenditures against this strategic objective represented only 2 percent of the total, USD 114 million was deployed across the majority of WFP operations to implement capacity strengthening activities. The bulk of expenditures came in Iraq, Mali, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In Iraq, with school feeding activities paused, WFP focused on providing capacity strengthening activities such as training on digital skills, communication and data collection for 50 education personnel. In addition, large increases in CBT distributions compared with 2019 were due mainly to the purchase of insurance policies in Mali and Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, WFP provided the Government with technical assistance on risk finance as part of the early response to the 2019/2020 drought. WFP also purchased a drought-risk insurance policy to complement the Government of Mali’s existing insurance, increasing the amount of insurance coverage available for more than 700,000 targeted people in the event of a drought in 2020.
92. Overall, WFP observed strong progress in seven of the ten outcome indicators used to assess performance under Strategic Results 5 and 6, based on reporting from the 48 countries with sufficient data for inclusion in the assessment. Performance was strong under the most widely collected indicator (introduced in 2019), with 28 of 43 countries meeting their targets for the number of national food security and nutrition policies, programmes and system components enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening activities. In Iraq – and many other countries – WFP increased its engagement with national governments in support of SDG implementation when its originally planned activities and operations were delayed because of COVID-19. However, only four countries provided data for the assessment of performance under Strategic Result 6.
93. Weak performance was observed in the two countries tracking the indicator “proportion of cash-based transfers channelled through national social protection systems”: Ethiopia and the Central African Republic. A limitation of this indicator is that it may not capture similar programming carried out in countries that did not use the indicator for monitoring performance.

## Strategic Objective 5 – Partner for SDG results



94. Through Strategic Objective 5 and its related strategic results – Strategic Result 7 on Developing countries’ access to a range of financial resources for development investment, and Strategic Results 8 on Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology strengthens global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs – WFP supports national governments and other partners in achieving the SDGs. Consistent with reporting in 2019, only WFP’s China Office included activities under Strategic Result 7. The new CRF will consider refining WFP’s results chain to better reflect the activities that are most widely implemented, reported on and relevant.
95. Strategic Objective 5 accounts for 10 percent of WFP’s total 2020 expenditures, the second highest level of expenditures after Strategic Objective 1. This strategic objective accounted for 6 percent of WFP’s total CBT expenditures, distributed entirely for the large-scale ESSN that was implemented through the Turkey country office in partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent. The reductions in expenditures and CBTs under this strategic objective were due mainly to WFP’s handover of implementation of the ESSN to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in March 2020. WFP’s significant scale-up in service provision in response to COVID-19, particularly in Ethiopia, the Sudan and Yemen, partially offset the decrease in expenditures in Turkey.
96. Performance at the outcome level was strong, with solid progress against targets in five out of six indicators, including the indicator most widely reported on under this strategic objective, which measures the satisfaction of WFP’s partners with its coordination and logistics support. Given the severe impacts of the pandemic on global supply chains and commercial transport markets, WFP’s robust performance against this indicator reflects its ability to leverage its extensive supply chain capacity and logistics expertise in supporting the health and humanitarian community.

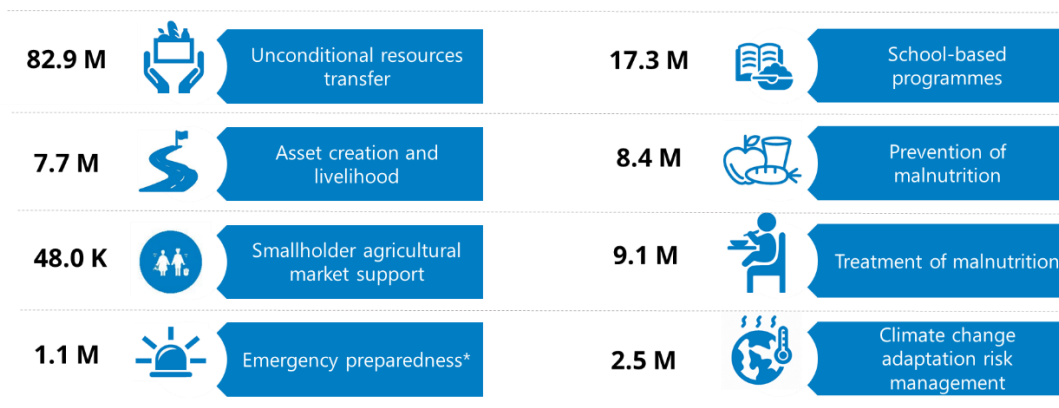
### Contribution to other SDGs

97. In line with its strategic plan, mandate and comparative advantages, WFP’s two strategic goals are directly linked to SDG 2 and SDG 17. However, the strategic plan acknowledges that WFP programmes may also contribute to advances towards other SDGs through its CSPs, operations and partnerships. For example, WFP’s efforts to make food systems more sustainable and equitable contribute to achieving all the SDGs, which by their nature are closely interconnected.
98. To increase transparency and accountability, facilitate more integrated programming and better communicate WFP’s contributions to all relevant SDGs, the revised CRF introduced new SDG-related indicators. These indicators aggregate information at the country level and provide visibility on the full range of WFP’s intended contributions to national efforts and the 2030 Agenda. However, only a few country offices reported against the new indicators, limiting the ability to report adequately on other SDG results. Opportunities for improving WFP reporting against the SDGs will be addressed during the development of the new CRF in 2021.

99. In 2020, 22 WFP offices reported their country-level results through the United Nations reporting system, UN INFO, at the local level, in line with the requirement that United Nations country teams report on their collective support to countries for the achievement of the SDGs by including their country-level results in the UN INFO system, in One UN Country Results Reports and on public dashboards.

## Performance by programme area

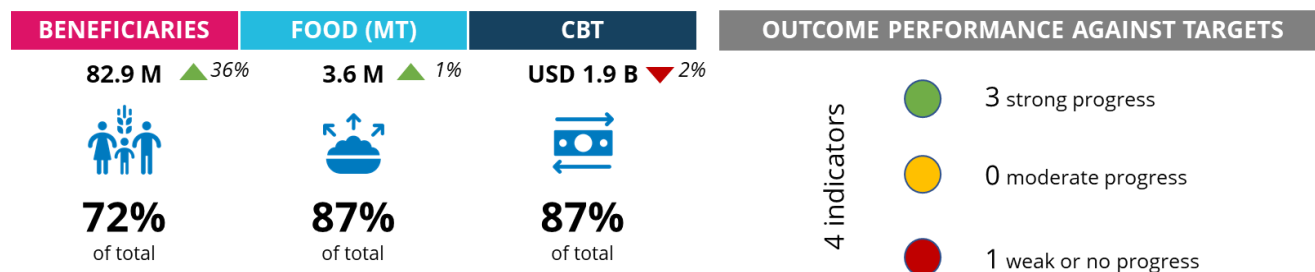
Figure 6: Beneficiaries reached by programme area, 2020\*



\* Beneficiaries reached in the emergency preparedness programme area include 320,615 beneficiaries who received emergency assistance in urban areas of Nairobi and Mombasa as part of WFP's COVID-19 response in Kenya. In addition, 53,952 beneficiaries were assisted with food distributions in areas affected by floods. There are overlaps between beneficiaries reached through nutrition treatment and those reached through nutrition prevention activities.

100. This section provides an overall analysis of results by programme area and an assessment of achievements at the outcome level.

### Unconditional resource transfers



101. WFP provides unconditional assistance to people affected by shocks, including conflict, extreme climate events, economic shocks and protracted crises. Unconditional resource transfers (also referred to as "general distribution") are provided as in-kind food transfers, through CBTs or using a combination of food and CBTs, according to national and local conditions. In line with previous years, unconditional in-kind food distributions and CBTs accounted for 87 percent of all of WFP's transfers in 2020, a slight increase compared with 2019.

102. In 2020, the majority of WFP's assistance was provided through unconditional food and CBT distribution programmes in 72 countries, helping to meet the food, nutrition and other essential needs of 82.8 million people. Compared with 2019, this 36 percent rise in the number of beneficiaries reflected the surge in newly food-insecure people affected by the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the amount of food distributed increased by only 1 percent to 3.6 million mt compared with 2019, while CBTs remained stable at USD 1.9 billion. The difference in provision of CBTs and in-kind food assistance between 2019 and 2020 reflected shifts in countries such as Egypt and Nigeria, from food assistance to the use of more timely and more cost-effective CBTs, and reductions in the sizes of rations in operations such as South Sudan, which faced resource shortfalls while needs continued to grow.
103. Food distributions occurred in 58 countries, but were heavily concentrated in five: Ethiopia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and Zimbabwe distributed 2.4 million mt of in-kind food, twice the total amount distributed in the remaining 53 countries. This situation highlights the continued plight of families and individuals in many "forgotten" emergencies or inaccessible areas where limitations on funding or access constrained WFP's ability to provide adequate and equitable assistance.
104. The Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, which continued to be among the world's most protracted and severe humanitarian crises, accounted for the bulk of all food distributions. In the Syrian Arab Republic, WFP reached a total of 5.3 million people with general distributions. While this was fewer than the number of beneficiaries reached in 2019, WFP was able to reach more people consistently every month. In addition, resource constraints forced WFP to lower the caloric value of the food basket to avoid having to reduce the number of beneficiaries assisted. In Yemen, the challenging operational environment – including increased interference from armed groups, access restrictions and a 21 percent reduction in funding – resulted in a 12 percent decrease in the amount of food distributed. To prevent food insecurity from reaching crisis proportions, WFP assisted the same number of beneficiaries throughout the year but had to reduce distributions to once every two months from April onwards in some areas.
105. Significant scale-up of food distributions occurred in Burkina Faso, Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan and Zimbabwe. To mitigate the compounding effects of a drought and the pandemic in Zimbabwe, WFP anticipated its lean season assistance for 3.7 million people by nearly six months, which increased food distribution levels more than fivefold over 2019 levels. The scale-up of CBTs was hampered by the outbreak of COVID-19, which presented new challenges such as reduced availability of cash, the need to avoid causing crowds of people to gather at contracted retail outlets following CBT distributions, and reduced engagement of beneficiaries resulting from the lack of face-to-face meetings.
106. CBT assistance was provided in 59 countries and was highly concentrated in Bangladesh, Jordan, Lebanon, Somalia, Turkey and Yemen, which together accounted for as much cash assistance as the remaining 53 countries. Cash interventions also increased significantly, at least fourfold compared with 2019, in Eswatini, El Salvador, Burkina Faso and the Niger.

#### **CBT assurance protected beneficiary data and ensured delivery**

To strengthen data privacy and protection for CBT beneficiaries and ensure that the right cash-based assistance was provided to the right people, additional guidance on CBT assurance was issued to WFP staff and partners in 2020. The guidance established standards for key controls related to beneficiary identities, transfer management, payments and overarching controls aimed at reducing fraud, operational risks and diversion of CBT benefits. Data science-driven approaches



for detecting anomalies were employed as part of the assurance approach when options such as biometrics were rendered impossible by the pandemic.

To support the secure management and tracking of payment instruments such as e-cards, bank cards and SIM cards throughout their lifetimes, WFP's application for tracking payment instruments was launched in Lebanon in September 2020. The application will be improved and its use expanded to all other country offices in order to help ensure that people have access to the most effective payment instrument.

### Performance at the outcome level

107. On average, outcome performance against targets in the unconditional resource transfer programme area was strong in 2020, with targets reached against all relevant indicators in 43 of the 59 countries reporting.
108. The food consumption score, the most widely used indicator for unconditional resource transfers, showed overall strong performance against targets, demonstrating that most targeted households had improved access to sufficient calories during the week preceding the survey, compared with the baseline. Performance against targets for the consumption-based coping strategy index, another widely used indicator, was weak overall, suggesting that households had to resort to unsustainable strategies to cope with food shortages. Both indicators are subject to seasonal variations and may not fully capture changes in food and nutrition security. The third most widely used indicator, livelihood-based coping strategies, showed strong performance, suggesting that WFP's unconditional resource transfers helped households to avoid the adoption of negative coping strategies such as taking on debt or selling assets.

### Nutrition

109. The 2030 Agenda highlights the importance of nutrition to the achievement of SDG 2 and at least 11 other SDGs.<sup>49</sup> Despite these commitments, the most recent estimates indicate that 2.5 billion people living in low- and middle-income countries were unable to afford a healthy diet, while globally only 29 percent of children 6–23 months of age attained minimum dietary diversity.<sup>50</sup>
110. In 2020, WFP and its partners assisted a record 17.3 million beneficiaries,<sup>51</sup> primarily children and pregnant and lactating women and girls, through nutrition-specific programmes for the treatment or prevention of malnutrition in 51 countries. Complementary nutrition-sensitive programmes addressing the underlying causes of malnutrition were implemented in 69 countries. To help stop the intergenerational transmission of malnutrition and reduce its adverse health and developmental impacts, nutrition-specific activities targeted the most nutritionally vulnerable individuals facing the greatest risks of acute and chronic malnutrition or micronutrient deficiencies.
111. In 2020, disruptions to global food, health and economic systems caused by the pandemic exacerbated the risks of malnutrition, particularly for children and women in low- and middle-income

<sup>49</sup> 12 of the 17 SDGs include indicators that are highly relevant to nutrition: SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17. See <https://scalingupnutrition.org/nutrition/nutrition-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/> for more information.

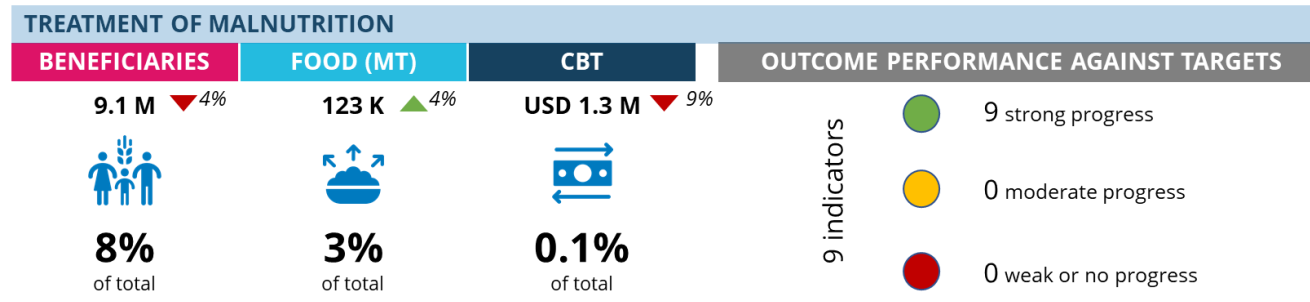
<sup>50</sup> FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2020. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/state-food-security-and-nutrition-world-sofi-report-2020>.

<sup>51</sup> In Burkina Faso and Somalia, 122,700 children and pregnant and lactating women and girls benefited from both malnutrition prevention and treatment.

countries. Experts estimated that during the first 12 months of the pandemic, an additional 6.7 million children under age 5 were at risk of becoming malnourished owing to COVID-19.<sup>52</sup> In 2020, WFP rapidly adapted its delivery mechanisms to ensure that nutrition assistance reached the people most in need by better predicting demand, anticipating pipeline shortfalls and reducing the lead time for deliveries of specialized nutritious foods. WFP also developed new strategies and partnerships to scale up the coverage of nutrition services, helping to ensure the continuity of operations despite shortages of vital supplies.

112. In 2020, in 48 countries WFP distributed 287,100 mt of specialized nutritious foods, which represent a cost-effective source of essential nutrients for vulnerable individuals, complementing food and cash-based nutrition programmes. This was 1 percent less than in 2019 owing to reduced production levels, which led to global shortages of specialized nutritious foods. In response, WFP prioritized the use of such foods for nutrition-specific programmes that treat and prevent malnutrition, and reduced their use in nutrition-sensitive programmes such as general food assistance.
113. Nutrition in emergencies accounted for approximately three-quarters of WFP nutrition operations in 2020, with about 60 percent of the total WFP nutrition beneficiaries reached being in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen.
114. WFP adhered to the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting,<sup>53</sup> adopted in March 2020. The action plan aims to accelerate countries' progress against wasting by addressing gaps in food, social protection and health systems. A new UNICEF-WFP partnership agreement was finalized in November 2020 on improving the coverage and efficiency of joint efforts to address wasting globally.

### Treatment of malnutrition

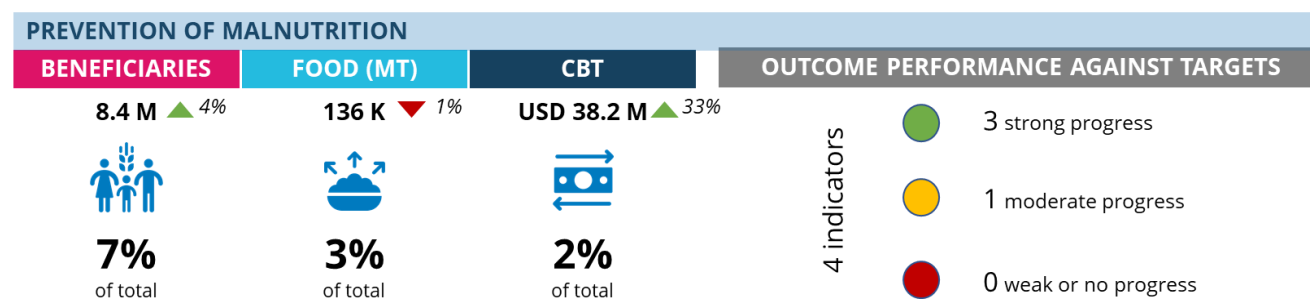


115. Delivering on global commitments, 9.1 million people (3 million women and girls and 6 million children) suffering from acute malnutrition benefited from WFP malnutrition treatment programmes in 2020, a slight decrease compared with 2019. Malnutrition treatment interventions reached a record 6 million young children suffering from moderate wasting. Monitoring results from WFP's malnutrition treatment programmes, targeting mostly children 6–59 months of age and pregnant and lactating women and girls, reflected strong performance in 2020 against all relevant indicators, despite the shortage of specialized nutritious foods and a drop of 9 percent in the value of CBTs. This was because WFP prioritized the allocation of specialized nutritious foods for malnutrition treatment programmes, ensuring that beneficiaries benefited from a full treatment regime.

<sup>52</sup> D. Headey *et al.* 2020. Impacts of COVID-19 on childhood malnutrition and nutrition-related mortality. *The Lancet*, 396(10250): 519–521. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31647-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31647-0/fulltext).

<sup>53</sup> Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/media/96991/file/Global-Action-Plan-on-Child-Wasting.pdf>.

## Prevention of malnutrition



116. WFP significantly scaled up malnutrition prevention programmes in 2020, reaching a record number of 5.8 million vulnerable children, 12 percent more than in 2019, and close to 2.6 million pregnant and lactating women and girls.
117. Programmes aimed at preventing malnutrition showed strong overall performance in achieving relevant targets. For example, the stunting prevention programme in Ethiopia showed strong results in achieving minimum dietary diversity for women and girls and minimum acceptable diet. All beneficiaries who participated in the programme reached recommended minimum dietary diversity, and 93 percent of children 6–23 months of age met the target for recommended minimum acceptable diet.<sup>54</sup> Households with pregnant and lactating women and girls received fresh food vouchers, while nutrient-dense food was provided for children 6–23 months of age through the National Productive Safety Net Programme. WFP also supported retail sales of nutrient-dense foods and carried out social and behaviour change activities on good nutrition practices.
118. Moderate performance was observed in the outcome indicator measuring the proportion of children 6–23 months of age receiving a minimum acceptable diet. This may be owing to the low performance against this indicator in many countries before WFP began its assistance programmes, the insufficient duration of the intervention for target beneficiaries, or the lack of complementary activities such as communications on health and child feeding practices.

## Nutrition sensitive

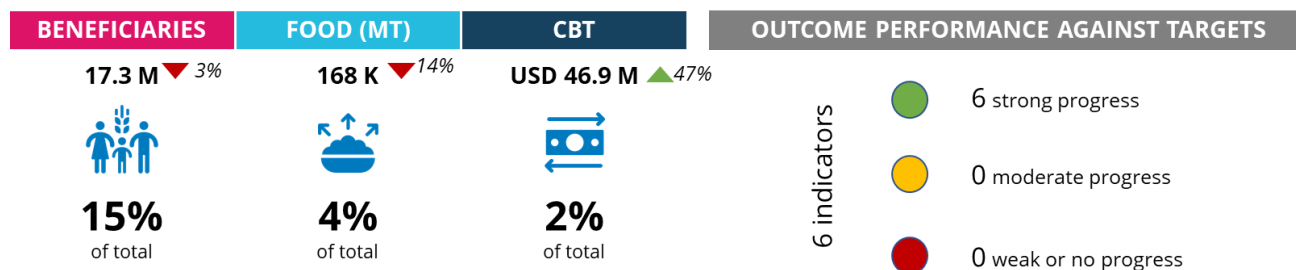
119. In 2020, WFP increasingly integrated nutrition objectives throughout its programmes and systems to make them nutrition-sensitive. The aim is to ensure that all activities contribute to sustainable improvements in nutrition by addressing the underlying drivers of malnutrition such as poor dietary diversity, inadequate access to clean water, poor sanitation and hygiene measures and insufficient knowledge about nutrition. In 2020, 75 percent of activities in the school feeding category, 75 percent in the unconditional resource transfer category, 69 percent in the asset creation and livelihood category and 82 percent in the smallholder agricultural market support activities category included a nutrition objective.
120. In Zambia, for example, 34 school vegetable gardens were established for diversifying the diets of students receiving school meals; income from surplus production was reinvested in the gardens or used for other school needs. In 2020, with support from WFP, a high-level steering and technical

<sup>54</sup> WFP 2020 annual country report for Ethiopia: [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=ET02&year=2020#/20694](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=ET02&year=2020#/20694).

committee in Nepal endorsed a standard for rice fortification; rice fortification is used in the country's school-based programme aimed at addressing micronutrient deficiencies among schoolchildren.<sup>55</sup>

121. However, performance during 2020 was weak, influenced by underperformance against the food consumption score indicator for nutrition, where the targets set by country offices were not achieved. As there is no established corporate target for this indicator, the poor performance may in part be attributable to high targets being set at the country office level.
122. At the request of their governments, WFP conducted Fill the Nutrient Gap analyses in 12 countries in 2020 aimed at identifying challenges and opportunities in national food, health, social protection and education systems for improving nutrition. These analyses involved identification of the main structural barriers that affect people's access to affordable, nutritious foods and of the most effective interventions for addressing these issues based on their potential to improve nutrient intake among vulnerable individuals.
123. Using the nutrient gap analyses conducted before or during 2020, several country offices and governments were able to ensure that their COVID-19 responses were more nutrition-sensitive. Examples included increasing the transfer value to improve people's ability to purchase nutritious foods in Burundi, adding a top-up voucher specifically for food in Timor-Leste, introducing fresh, nutritious foods in Bangladesh and Ethiopia, and adding fortified commodities to institutional meals or lockdown support packages in Bangladesh.

### School-based programmes



124. The important role of schools in building human capital and providing a platform for vital nutrition and health support, especially for the poorest children, is recognized globally. School feeding also acts as an incentive for families to enrol and keep children in school, especially girls and children in fragile or context-affected settings. In 2020, the closure of schools in response to the pandemic posed unprecedented risks to the education, health, and nutrition of almost 1.6 billion affected students worldwide. Hunger among schoolchildren became a global issue, as 370 million children lost access to school meals in at least 161 countries. In 59 countries where WFP implemented school feeding programmes in 2020, more than 12 million children were suddenly deprived of what was often their main meal of the day.<sup>56</sup>
125. WFP joined efforts with governments and global partners aimed at preventing children from going hungry, ensuring that they continued to receive vital health and nutrition services, and mitigating the risks of they or their families being forced to resort to harmful survival mechanisms such as early

<sup>55</sup> WFP 2020 annual country report for Nepal: [https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation\\_id=NP02&year=2020#/21340](https://www.wfp.org/operations/annual-country-report/?operation_id=NP02&year=2020#/21340).

<sup>56</sup> WFP. Global Monitoring of School Meals during COVID-19 School Closures. <https://cdn.wfp.org/2020/school-feeding-map/>.

marriage or child labour to meet their basic food and health needs. School health and nutrition activities and related partnerships were prioritized in WFP's COVID-19 response and recovery plans. A global dashboard was developed for mapping and monitoring the number of children around the world who missed out on school meals and providing updated information on what governments were doing to support these and other children during the lockdown.

126. In 42 countries, when schools were closed WFP rapidly switched from on-site feeding programmes to provide almost 7 million vulnerable children and their families with dry take-home rations – often distributed as family rations – cash or vouchers. These transfers provided a safety net for vulnerable families during COVID-19 lockdowns and an incentive for families to send their children back to school when they reopened. In the Syrian Arab Republic, for example, WFP and UNICEF provided 44,000 children with joint vouchers for food and hygiene items. In Ethiopia, WFP distributed alternative rations to more than 60,000 schoolchildren and worked with other humanitarian partners in support of the Government's comprehensive COVID-19 response.
127. In 2020, WFP reached a total of 15 million children in 59 countries with nutritious meals, school snacks or take-home rations in the form of food or CBTs, a reduction of 13 percent from 2019 levels and 15 percent less than the 2020 target of 17.7 million. Major contributing factors to this decrease included challenges imposed by the pandemic, which affected more than two-thirds of targeted children, funding restrictions and on the other hand, progress in moving school-based programmes to national ownership. Despite school closures, however, 45 percent of all children assisted in 2020 were reached with alternatives to on-site meals. Adaptations in programming allowed WFP to reach with take-home rations 2.3 million household members who otherwise would not have been reached.
128. In Egypt, for example, where in 2020 WFP no longer complemented a large part of the national school feeding programme but focused on reaching community schools only, the number of schoolchildren registered for WFP assistance decreased by more than 2 million; these children are now being assisted exclusively by the Government. On the other hand, WFP was able to scale up school feeding programmes in other countries, including Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.
129. In countries covered by the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, more than 100 million students missed out on nutritious school meals at the height of the school closures. WFP provided alternative take-home rations for 1.2 million children in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. Monitoring results demonstrated that alternative take-home rations helped targeted households to increase the dietary diversity, energy content, portion size and number of meals provided to children.
130. In 2020, the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program contributed USD 119 million to WFP school health and nutrition programmes in five countries. The multi-year nature of these funds enabled country offices to strategically plan the transition of their school feeding programmes to national ownership.
131. Transition and handover of school feeding programmes to national governments progressed in Cambodia, Djibouti and Lesotho, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In Djibouti, while the CSP initially planned a gradual handover of the management of all school feeding programmes to the Government over a five-year period, the process was significantly accelerated during 2020. Programmatic changes brought about in response to COVID-19, coupled with lack of funding for WFP and the readiness of the Government to take over responsibility, expedited the process, which was completed in September. This is a significant milestone for WFP, signalling a shift to the provision of upstream technical assistance and capacity building support after 35 years of direct implementation.

## Performance at the outcome level

132. The pandemic and school closures affected the ability of country offices to gather all relevant data for measuring performance related to this programme area. Only 39 countries reported on at least one of the outcome indicators, for school-based programmes and data were available for only 61 percent of all relevant indicators, the lowest level observed in all WFP programme areas. Analysis of reported results in those countries with complete data demonstrate that WFP's interventions led to measurable, and in some instances significant improvements in children's access to education. Overall, 92 percent of countries reporting on outcome indicators showed strong progress against targets including those for the three most frequently used education outcome indicators – enrolment, retention and attendance rates. Further analysis is needed to capture the effect of the pandemic on these outcomes.
133. Five decentralized evaluations of WFP's emergency school feeding activities in fragile settings were conducted during 2020. In all countries, school feeding programmes were found to have improved food security and education outcomes such as enrolment, attendance and retention rates.

### **A chance for every schoolchild – progress in implementing WFP's school feeding strategy (2020–2030)**







WFP's school feeding strategy – approved by the Executive Management Group in January 2020 – reaffirms the vision of all schoolchildren benefiting from an integrated package of health and nutrition services in schools, including school meals. The goal of the ten-year strategy is to extend school-based programmes to meet the needs of 73 million vulnerable schoolchildren in 60 countries by facilitating national government ownership of the programmes.

In 2020, regional implementation plans for the strategy were prepared by each regional bureau, based on analysis of the region's school health and nutrition challenges, ongoing interventions and partnerships, existing policy frameworks and lessons from evaluations. The plans strengthen and more clearly define WFP's future role in implementing programmes directly while simultaneously strengthening the capacities of governments to implement and manage their own school nutrition and health programmes.

134. In 2020, WFP published *The State of School Feeding Worldwide 2020*.<sup>57</sup> Compared with 2013 when the first such report was published, the number of children benefiting from school feeding worldwide has increased by almost 10 percent, reaching a record of 388 million. In countries supported by WFP, the number of children receiving school feeding increased from 69 million in 2013 to 107 million in 2019. The greatest increases were found in government-led programmes in lower-middle-income countries, where numbers had nearly doubled, although low-income countries also stepped up their investments. While the number of schoolchildren directly assisted by WFP has remained relatively stable since 2013, indirect assistance such as policy engagement, technical assistance and capacity strengthening efforts has the potential to change the lives of up to 155 million schoolchildren in 74 countries and assist countries in becoming more self-reliant.

<sup>57</sup> WFP. 2020. *State of School Feeding Worldwide 2020*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2020>.

## Smallholders, livelihoods, food systems and climate risk management<sup>58</sup>

BENEFICIARIES		FOOD (MT)	CBT (USD)	OUTCOME PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS	
	7.7 M	125 K	157.4 M	9 indicators	 6 strong progress
	48 K	970.0	549 K		 1 moderate progress
	2.5 M	559.0	16.9 M		 2 weak or no progress

\* FFA: food assistance for assets; SAMS: smallholder agricultural market support; CRM: climate risk management

135. To secure their current and improve their future livelihood security, smallholders, market traders and people vulnerable to shocks and stresses in general depend on food systems that are resilient to natural and human-induced shocks. Using participatory methods, WFP helped vulnerable households and host governments to plan and undertake a range of asset creation, livelihood, food systems and climate risk management activities. These activities were often combined with other programme activities and offered as an integrated resilience package for promoting livelihood opportunities along the agricultural value chain and gender equality and women's empowerment in the agriculture sector.
136. This programme category achieved the highest performance rating overall, with 80 percent of measurements registering an improvement in 2020 compared with baselines.<sup>59</sup> This was largely owing to strong results in improving target communities' access to environmental benefits and their capacity to manage climate shocks and risks. The ability of targeted women and men smallholder producers to sell their products through WFP-supported farmer aggregation systems also improved. Moderate results were observed in the percentage of WFP food procured from smallholder farmer aggregation systems, but poor results were observed in the rate of smallholder post-harvest losses and the default rate on WFP pro-smallholder farmer procurement contracts, which was 50 percent. It is important to note that this indicator was adopted by only four countries and only two complete measurements were reported, which affected the performance rating.

### Asset creation and livelihoods

137. In 2020, through its asset creation and livelihoods activities, WFP provided 7.7 million people, including 4.0 million women and girls, with more than 125,000 mt of food and USD 156 million in CBTs and commodity vouchers in 49 countries, helping them to feed their families and invest in critical assets such as roads, micro-dams and soil and water retention structures.
138. Activities resulted in the rehabilitation and improvement of nearly 159,000 ha of farm and non-farm land, the planting of more than 1,800 ha of forest, the repair or construction of nearly 11,000 km of roads and trails, and the building or repair of more than 321,000 assets such as social or community infrastructure, water points, bridges and culverts.
139. WFP's Asset Impact Monitoring from Space service used satellite imagery in five countries to assess the implementation, maintenance and evolution of nearly 1,300 assets. The analysis suggested positive impacts of WFP's asset creation activities on changing land use from non-cropland or rainfed

<sup>58</sup> Comparisons with metric tons and CBTs distributed in 2019 are not possible owing to the revised guidance on planning and reporting for this programme area provided in 2020.

<sup>59</sup> See annex II E for further information on the nine indicators that measured performance in this programme area.

land to irrigated cropland, extending the area of irrigated cropland and improving crop productivity. For example, the survey found that cropland condition was maintained and improved at the site in Zimbabwe, despite the occurrence of severe climatic events, including record drought in the 2015-2016 season. Since its inception, satellite-based asset monitoring has been carried out in 18 countries, providing timely, standardized data when reliable ground information is often lacking. In 2020, the service evolved from a digital paper-based reporting system to a web-based platform that facilitates access to the growing number of users, information exchange with country offices and automation of analysis.

140. In the Regional Bureau for Western Africa, despite the significant rise in the number of crisis-affected people assisted – from 2.5 million in 2019 to 6.5 million in 2020 – WFP reinforced its efforts to achieve long-term development outcomes through integrated resilience programming. For example, in Mauritania a joint peacebuilding project was launched with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) aimed at reducing tensions over the use of natural resources between farmers and pastoralists along the border with Mali.
141. During the year, WFP launched a comprehensive capacity strengthening initiative on food assistance for assets for national staff. In 2020, 40 national staff members from the regional bureaux for Eastern and Southern Africa participated in online training on the food assistance for assets guidance manual; staff from the remaining regional bureaux will be trained in 2021.

#### Smallholder agricultural market support

142. In 2020, WFP delivered its smallholder agricultural market support programmes in 35 countries with the aim of improving the livelihoods of targeted women and men smallholder farmers and inducing positive systemic changes along targeted value chains. These activities strengthened the capacities of private and institutional buyers to procure from smallholder farmers and of smallholder farmers to engage in market systems, with a focus on including gender equality measures to improve women's agency and voice along the agricultural value chain.
143. In 2020, WFP and partners supported more than 3,260 smallholder farmers' aggregation systems, such as farmer organizations, by providing agricultural equipment and training sessions on marketing, post-harvest handling and connections to dealers and buyers. Indicators measuring smallholder sales through WFP-supported aggregation systems recorded positive results. A value of 105 percent of the target was reported in the percentage of targeted smallholder farmers selling through these systems; substantial increases were also recorded in the value and volume of sales conducted by these farmers through WFP-supported systems. Overall, in 30 countries smallholder farmers sold surplus production of 361,707 mt, valued at almost USD 40 million.
144. Countries reporting the highest percentages of targeted farmers selling through WFP-supported farmer groups were the Republic of Congo (100 percent), Mali (85 percent) and the Central African Republic (81 percent). In these countries, 65 percent, 40 percent and 86 percent respectively of the farmers supported were women. In Zambia, 45 percent of targeted farmers sold through WFP-supported farmer groups in 2020, an achievement of 225 percent compared with the target. Increasing participation of smallholders in collective sales may indicate that small producers are changing their marketing behaviour because they have surplus produce to sell and can benefit from selling through the aggregation systems, or because the aggregation systems are improving the farmers' capacities and are perceived as the preferred channel for marketing household produce.
145. On the supply side, WFP and partners trained 108,000 farmer organization leaders and individual farmers on good agricultural, post-harvest, warehouse management and



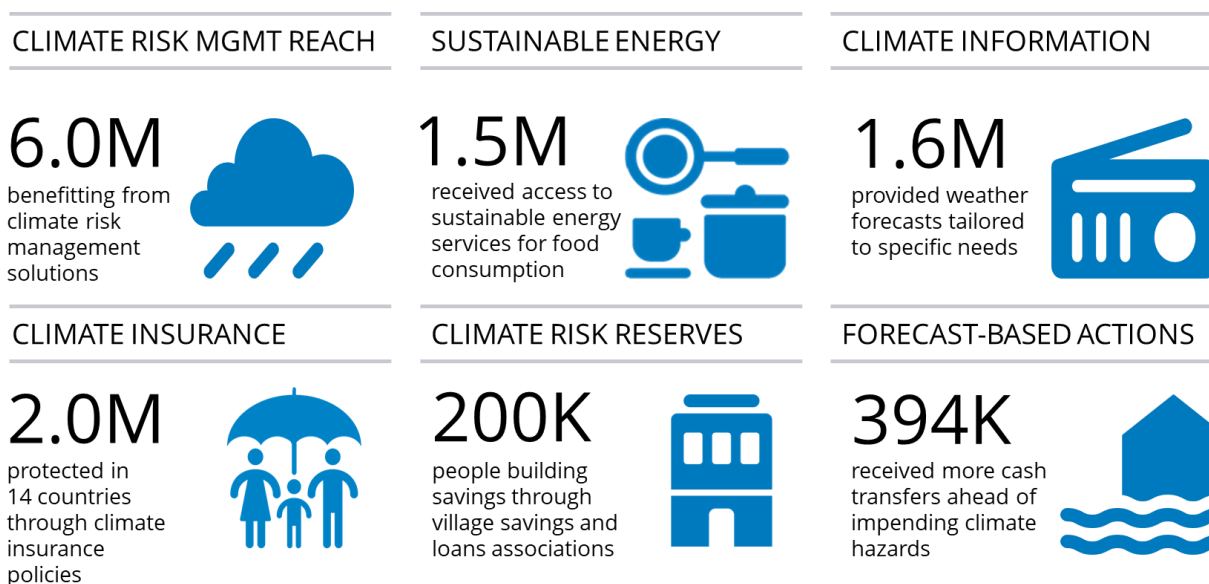
marketing practices. Nearly 410,000 farmers also received agricultural equipment or support with access to financial institutions or market opportunities. To meet its own programme requirements in 2020, WFP procured 110,486 mt of food commodities valued at USD 49 million from smallholder farmers, either directly from farmer organizations or indirectly through traders in 27 countries, a 16 percent increase in tonnage compared with 2019.

146. In 2020, two complementary initiatives aimed at building the resilience of South Sudan's farmers and agricultural institutions were launched. The European Union and WFP signed a USD 6.6 million agreement for a four-year project assisting 10,000 vulnerable households. Launched in October 2020, the project will integrate asset creation with activities that facilitate smallholders' access to agricultural inputs and markets, help reduce their post-harvest losses and increase their employment and savings opportunities. In addition, WFP, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and the Agricultural Bank of South Sudan formalized an initiative aimed at building the bank's financial management, risk mitigation, compliance and safeguard capacities, quadrupling WFP's local food procurement between 2020 and 2021, and increasing the production and marketing capacity of smallholder farmers.

### Climate risk management

147. Record extreme temperatures in 2020 fuelled stronger than usual hurricanes, floods and wildfires that led to insured losses and damages totalling USD 150 billion. In response, WFP helped countries and communities to mitigate the effects of climate disasters, and COVID-19, by implementing a combination of climate risk management activities, including climate risk insurance, forecast-based action, early warning and risk information and sustainable energy services.
148. By the end of 2020, 28 WFP country offices had implemented one or more climate risk management solutions benefiting more than 6 million people. Of these, 2.5 million people received more than USD 16.9 million in CBTs and 559 mt in food commodities through climate insurance or anticipatory actions.

**Figure 7: Climate risk management activities and reach, 2020**



149. More than 2 million people were protected in 14 countries through sovereign insurance mechanisms and micro- or meso-insurance policies, with a financial coverage exceeding USD 60 million. This reflects WFP's growing engagement in the design, testing and scale-up of risk transfer solutions for food-insecure households, the provision of technical assistance on risk financing for governments. Post-distribution monitoring indicates that insurance pay-outs in the event of a drought have acted as buffer capital preventing households from resorting to negative coping strategies, allowing them to purchase food and agricultural inputs for the following season and to cover children's school fees.
150. Protected by insurance, households were able to invest in riskier but more remunerative enterprises and in seeds, fertilizers and new technologies for increasing agricultural productivity. In 2020, about 237,000 people, 75 percent of whom were women, established small-scale savings in village savings and loan associations promoted by WFP. Greater financial inclusion facilitated the access of women to credit, which in turn supported productive activities and more diversified and less risky livelihoods.
151. To mitigate the combined effects of climate disaster and COVID-19, in 2020 more than 417,000 people in five countries received more than USD 3.5 million in CBTs from WFP prior to impending climate-related shocks. Using reliable and timely forecast information, anticipatory action in response to floods in Bangladesh reached more people at half the cost of the humanitarian response in 2019.
152. In 2020, more than 1.6 million people in nine countries were provided with access to sustainable energy services for food consumption, production and communications: people in Malawi, the Niger and Rwanda received clean and efficient household appliances for cooking; in Armenia, the Niger and Senegal communities were provided with access to energy products and services for productive uses; and solar power systems and appliances were piloted in Armenia, Chad and Somalia.
153. More than 2.4 million beneficiaries received seasonal forecasts and climate information services tailored to their specific needs; the majority (nearly 1.8 million people) were reached through radio programmes, and the remaining 600,000 through face-to-face communication channels, mobile phone and SMS services. The aim is to enable better planning and investment decisions and to strengthen the capacities of households to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

### Emergency preparedness

154. WFP provided support to governments in strengthening their capacities to improve emergency preparedness and response through the development of robust contingency plans and the provision of timely food assistance for shock-affected people, using pre-positioned stock and non-food items that support local food distributions. Preparedness activities provided support to 1.1 million beneficiaries primarily in Cuba, Djibouti, Guinea and Kenya, with emergency preparedness activities. In Cuba, WFP adapted its programmes to the COVID-19 pandemic by including distributions of in-kind food assistance and incorporating mitigation measures that assisted 610,500 people. WFP also developed a pandemic-specific communication campaign for the hurricane season and donated 1,049 household hygiene kits and 1,250 thermometers to evacuation centres.
155. Additional capacity building efforts included WFP's continued work on strengthening countries' emergency preparedness and response capacities. WFP trained 4,800 government and national partner staff members in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nigeria.

## Support to national priorities

### Country capacity strengthening

156. Additional corporate resources were invested in WFP's country capacity strengthening (CCS) activities in 2020, reflecting the organization's growing focus on enabling countries to strengthen their own food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and school feeding programmes and related systems. Investments included the creation of a CCS task force to enhance coordination among programmes and functions, the establishment of a CCS unit and an increase in the number of dedicated staff.
157. WFP's medium-term programme framework for responding to COVID-19 prioritized technical assistance and CCS as a key strategy for engaging with governments. A CCS investment fund for facilitating capacity strengthening activities in support of government and national civil society responses to the pandemic was piloted in Burundi, Colombia, Jordan and the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean. In Burundi, for example, the fund contributed to the localization of aid by enabling the Burundi Red Cross to implement its COVID-19 response plan, including the establishment of an emergency communication cell and the launch of the forecast-based financing approach.
158. Despite a challenging implementation environment in 2020, progress was reported towards long-term institutional capacity outcomes in more than 100 CSP activities carried out in 62 countries. Country offices introduced programmatic shifts to support and foster adaptation of national systems, which were placed under unprecedented stress in the wake of the pandemic. During the year, budget revisions for 17 WFP CSPs related to the COVID-19 response proposed increased requirements for institutional capacity strengthening under CSPs.
159. Where possible, measures were taken to improve the safety and security of capacity strengthening activities, such as by providing virtual technical training on improvements to the central beneficiary information management system for 1,500 participants from the Government and national partners in Bangladesh.

#### **Leveraging capacity strengthening to support the COVID-19 response in Peru**

When the pandemic and the Venezuelan regional migration crisis led to a dramatic rise in food insecurity in Peru, the country office switched its focus from CCS to emergency response. An emergency response unit was established in March 2020 to complement government programmes, coordinate the direct provision of CBTs to more than 25,000 people, and implement logistics strengthening activities for the distribution of food and non-food items. Despite the difficult conditions, WFP exceeded its CCS targets, more than tripling the number of government and national partner participants trained, and providing support to nearly 30 percent more national partners than originally planned. The country office also strengthened the Government's pandemic recovery efforts by implementing studies and projects that generate evidence for improved zero hunger decision making, formulating protocols to guide the nationwide reopening of community kitchens and assessing options for making national social protection measures more shock-responsive.

## Evidence from evaluations on capacity strengthening

160. Evaluations of first-generation CSPs found that the new framework proved to be an effective platform for strengthening support to governments, with all five CSP evaluations in 2020 noting a high degree of alignment with national policies. CCS efforts in the five CSPs were uneven, with the stated ambitions set out in CSP strategic outcomes not yet realized and considerable effort required to achieve sustainable transition towards national ownership of WFP-supported programmes. WFP played a key role in advancing the coordination of food security analysis systems in Cameroon, but prospects for scale-up and sustainability were limited. Plans on strengthening government capacities in emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were limited to training for government staff owing to resource constraints. Indonesia and Timor-Leste country offices focused on capacity strengthening at the individual level but with incremental rather than transformative changes noted. Technical assistance for the Government of Bangladesh consisted primarily of training and exposure visits rather than broader engagement in policy in areas related to WFP's mandate.

## South-South cooperation

161. WFP rapidly adapted its South-South and triangular cooperation services to support host governments in strengthening their efforts to achieve SDG 2 despite the pandemic. In 2020, key activities included establishing a COVID-19 South-South fund, adapting modalities to a virtual environment and establishing a corporate task force to further articulate WFP's strategies, partnerships, delivery modalities and role in this area. The new fund enabled WFP country offices to implement South-South cooperation activities with host governments aimed at responding to and mitigating the impacts of the pandemic through national social protection systems, basic service delivery for school-based and nutrition programmes, and food systems. In addition, WFP issued a quarterly newsletter and a thematic report on its approach to and evidence on the brokering of South-South cooperation.<sup>60</sup>
162. WFP's centres of excellence were recently recognized for their critical role in supporting governments in the implementation of integrated school-based health and nutrition programmes through South-South cooperation mechanisms.<sup>61</sup> In 2020, the three centres<sup>62</sup> continued to share relevant knowledge and expertise in supporting host governments across programme areas. In 2020, for example, with support from the centre of excellence in China and in collaboration with FAO, five pilot field projects in South-South and triangular cooperation were implemented in the Congo, Ecuador, Kenya, Peru and Sri Lanka, strengthening the capacity of 1,790 smallholder farmers and 250 government officials in the host countries. The regional centre of excellence in Côte d'Ivoire facilitated institutional and technical cooperation among governments, including those of Benin, the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire, in optimizing the cassava value chain by training members of women's cooperatives and farmers.
163. This activity was complemented by an inter-regional South-South and triangular cooperation pilot project with China and Chinese research centres on training school cooks, bakers and smallholder farmers in the production of high-quality cassava flour and the preparation of cassava flour-based

<sup>60</sup> WFP. 2020. *Leveraging progress against hunger through South-South and triangular cooperation*. Beyond the Annual Performance Report 2019 Series. [https://publications.wfp.org/2019/beyond-apr/South\\_South\\_Triangular\\_Cooperation.html#01](https://publications.wfp.org/2019/beyond-apr/South_South_Triangular_Cooperation.html#01).

<sup>61</sup> African Union. 2021. *African Union Biennial Report on Home-Grown School Feeding (2019–2020)*. Addis Ababa. <https://au.int/en/documents/20210301/african-union-biennial-report-home-grown-school-feeding-2019-2020>.

<sup>62</sup> The centres are hosted by the governments of Brazil, China and Côte d'Ivoire.

dishes. Women in the Congo were offered food safety and hygiene training for the preparation of *mbala pinda*, a local nutritious snack made from cassava and peanuts. In 2020, 70,000 snack bars were produced, generating USD 48,000; WFP distributed the snacks to 3,000 children enrolled in its school feeding programmes and to 3,390 vulnerable household members.

## Social protection

164. Social protection is central to WFP's global portfolio, as evidenced by its recent membership of the universal social protection initiative, USP 2030, aimed at contributing towards the achievement of SDG target 1.3 for expanded coverage of social protection. Drawing on growing partnerships with international financial institutions, in 2020 WFP supported 65 governments in introducing new measures, scaling up or adapting their existing social protection schemes in order to mitigate the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on households and communities. Support provided in 2020 included technical advice in areas such as needs assessment, targeting, verification, monitoring, transfers, community feedback mechanisms and the provision of third-party assurance services. This was facilitated by WFP's growing partnerships with international financial institutions (IFIs).<sup>63</sup> Throughout 2020, WFP supported 37 governments in their cash-based responses for mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19.
165. WFP operations in Armenia, Egypt, Lebanon and the Sudan had the largest new funding requirements for ongoing and planned support for national social protection responses through a combination of capacity strengthening, service provision and complementary activities.
166. Many countries introduced and adapted social protection measures aimed at ensuring basic income provision and mitigating the economic impacts of COVID-19. WFP provided vital support to help governments scale up and improve their existing social protection responses by assisting with policies, programmes and delivery mechanisms, including through relevant guidance and capacity building for country offices and governments in their pandemic response.

### Shock-responsive social protection in Malawi

Since 2015, WFP has assisted the Government of Malawi in strengthening the capacity of its national system for response to shocks, including the annual emergency lean season responses. As a result, during the 2019/2020 lean season, for the first time, social protection donors funded the Government for direct provision of emergency response assistance in four districts, including USD 3 million for CBTs. This approach increased the Government's capacity to implement CBT programmes, encouraged social protection donors to increase funding for food insecurity, and strengthened the delivery system for better meeting chronic and acute needs.

## Global common services and bilateral service provision

167. WFP's service provision capacity is key in enabling humanitarian response on the ground. WFP provides services through leadership of the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters and co-leadership of the food security cluster, through the WFP-managed United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) network, and through bilateral service provision by its Supply Chain Operations Division. From the beginning of the pandemic, WFP's capacity to provide timely and flexible services for the humanitarian and development communities proved fundamental in enabling governments, United

<sup>63</sup> In December 2020, guidance was issued to country offices to help them better engage with international financial institutions on social protection.

Nation agencies and other partners to reach beneficiaries and respond efficiently and effectively despite the restrictions and risks related to COVID-19.

**Figure 8: Global common services support in the COVID-19 response, 2020**



168. When COVID-19 disrupted global supply chains and international transport was severely reduced, WFP launched the global common services platform to support the pandemic response of the humanitarian and health communities. Working closely with WHO, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in 2020 WFP transported more than 26,700 health and humanitarian personnel from 415 organizations to 68 destinations through its COVID-19 global common services. In addition, after the Secretary-General activated a common COVID-19 medevac system in May 2020, WFP and the United Nations Department of Operational Support co-led the aviation arm of the medevac cell. In 2020, the medevac cell completed 110 medical evacuations, of which 69 were carried out by WFP.
169. Leveraging the existing WFP-managed UNHRD network, WFP also established eight humanitarian response hubs with corresponding air links for facilitating cargo movement during the pandemic. Through this network of hubs, WFP dispatched 135,440 m<sup>3</sup> of critical health and humanitarian cargo to 171 countries on behalf of 71 organizations, 89 percent of which was moved on a free-to-user basis under the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19.
170. WFP developed an online Emergency Service Marketplace application through which humanitarian actors could request the transport of cargo for their humanitarian interventions during the pandemic. This platform underpinned WFP's supply chain network, enabling secure deliveries of personal protective equipment and other vital health and humanitarian cargo globally. In 2020, 48 organizations booked cargo transport through the Emergency Service Marketplace, with a total of 118,800 m<sup>3</sup> of health and relief cargo dispatched to 160 countries.
171. To ensure support for the global response, WFP mobilized key partnerships in the field. The WFP-led and co-led clusters were scaled up to facilitate partner operations and provide inter-agency coordination and information management capacity. New clusters were activated where requested by national governments seeking to meet the needs imposed by the pandemic.
172. In 2020, the emergency telecommunications cluster worked with national ministries of health and other partners in the Central African Republic and Libya on setting up common helplines and combatting misinformation about COVID-19. The cluster also extended its services to communities by integrating culturally responsive chatbots in local languages that provide 24-hour access to vital country-specific health and safety information. Country capacity strengthening services were improved through the transfer of WFP's technology expertise to governments and partners.
173. The food security cluster teams quickly adapt to different ways of working while continuing to coordinate life-saving assistance for the people most in need during the year. The cluster's partners worked in 45 countries with global humanitarian response plans, up from 31 before the COVID-19

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pandemic, aiming to sustain and scale up life-saving responses. Despite the operational challenges, the cluster partners jointly reached more than 90 million people in 2020, 20 percent more than in 2019. Timely and crucial adaptations included switching assistance modalities, giving beneficiaries a two-month supply of rations, expanding activities into urban areas and using information and communication technology to monitor and analyse the food security situation.

174. In 2020, the logistics cluster swiftly adapted working modalities to ensure continued provision of support to its 543 partners, which relied on the cluster for coordination and information management. Activities included facilitating access to common transport and warehousing services for 137 partners through a record 16 operations, providing more than 2,000 humanitarian logistics information updates, assisting 20 countries in strengthening their preparedness, and providing skills training to more than 1,100 humanitarians from 135 organizations. As part of the global humanitarian pandemic response, the cluster organized 12 global consultations with 139 humanitarian organizations and produced an update on comprehensive cargo entry points with border information for supporting operational planning.

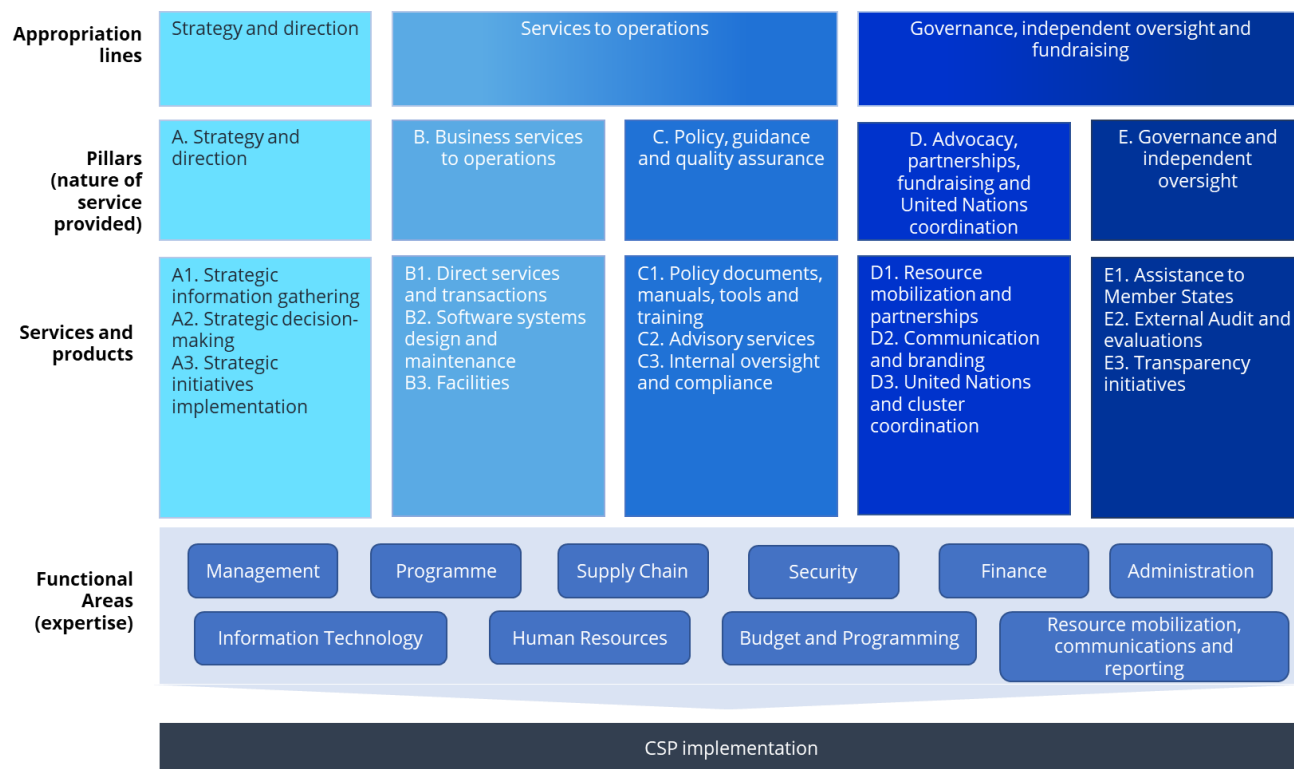
## Part III: Management performance

Part III provides an analysis of overall WFP management performance, assessing WFP’s functional units, the services provided by regional bureaux and headquarters and performance in priority areas identified by senior management. The part also assesses WFP’s performance against corporate key performance indicators and results pillars and provides major findings from internal exercises measuring efficiency and effectiveness.

### Key performance indicators: management performance

175. WFP has three key performance indicators (KPIs) for assessing management performance. KPI 1 measures progress in CSP implementation, KPI 2 assesses emergency preparedness and response, and KPI 3 reflects management performance in ten functional areas. The KPIs, their components and their targets were all rigorously reviewed in 2020. As a result of WFP’s performance in the results pillars and functional areas (see figure 9), and its ability to adapt operations rapidly, 115.5 million people in 84 countries were reached with food and cash-based transfers in 2020. Figure 9 illustrates the management activities measured, and the activities, outputs and outcomes that are monitored throughout programme implementation.

**Figure 9: Classification of management activities and services**



### KPI 1 – Overall progress in country strategic plan implementation

176. Headquarters and regional bureaux support country offices in the design, implementation and monitoring of CSPs. WFP assesses the support for operations using KPI 1, which reflects the implementation and achievement of outputs and outcomes. Both outputs and outcomes are considered as being implemented if the approved CSP logical framework has some expenditure



recorded during the reporting period (regardless of the amount of expenditure) and if there are also some planned resources assigned to that output or outcome at any given point in the reporting year (according to the needs-based plan). In terms of achievement, outputs are marked as achieved or on track if the actual value of the output indicator is at least 75 percent of the planned value, while outcomes are marked as achieved or on track if the actual value is at least 80 percent of the annual target.

177. The results for 2020 show that WFP performed well in its use of allocated resources, despite large funding gaps. In 2020, activities for 96 percent of outputs and 96 percent of outcomes were being implemented, meaning that instead of reducing the number of activities implemented, country offices prioritized maintaining at least partial coverage of most planned operations, albeit in many cases at reduced scale. However, output and outcome performance indicators measuring the extent to which activities were carried out showed that performance fell short of targets. Only 60 percent of output indicators and 66 percent of outcome indicators were either achieved or on track to being achieved. In performance tracking, higher values are achieved against outcome indicators compared with output indicators because outcome indicators are longer-term metrics that are more likely to be considered achieved during the implementation period of a CSP. Output indicators cover shorter periods and are more likely to emerge as not achieved. The effects of the funding gap and the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen clearly in output performance, where indicators are more likely to be affected by short-term shocks. See annex III-A for more details.

## KPI 2 – Emergency preparedness and response

178. While COVID-19 became the dominant story in 2020, ongoing and new emergencies did not stop when the pandemic was declared. Instead, response to emergencies became even more complex as the movement of goods and people was constrained. WFP was able to adapt swiftly because of its robust investments in early warning systems and institutionalized approaches. Systems such as the corporate alert system, the weather warning system and the first joint report on early warning with FAO enabled WFP to foresee emerging crises, mobilize corporate resources in a timely fashion and take early action. In 2020, WFP efficiently partnered for success, through cluster coordination, extensive humanitarian–military interaction, stand-by partnerships (such as the augmented logistics intervention team for emergencies) and the use of innovative tools.
179. On average, in 2020 WFP was responding to ten Level 2 and seven Level 3 emergencies each month, underscoring the importance of the organization’s ability to implement its preparedness measures. Performance against this is captured through KPI 2, which comprises a collection of component indicators that reflect the changing needs of WFP’s beneficiaries and the related adaptation of the organization’s monitoring approach. As part of the KPI review exercise, in 2020 the five emergency component KPIs were reduced to three component KPIs under KPI 2 to better reflect WFP’s performance in this area.
180. For 2020, KPI 2 assesses whether sufficient training occurred in all areas of emergency response, how well training events met their learning objectives and the degree to which countries in the corporate alert system benefited from advance financing through the Immediate Response Account (IRA), the Immediate Response Request (IR-R) system and the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness (IR-PREP). In 2020, emergency training on health emergencies and operational information management and reporting was delivered via webinars; targets for the number of sessions held were met in 100 percent of training areas. WFP also reported that 93 percent of learning objectives were met in emergency training compared with the target of 85 percent; and 88

percent of countries in the corporate alert system benefited from advance financing, just under the target of 90 percent. See annex III-A for more information.

### **KPI 3 – Overall achievement of management performance standards, by functional area**

181. KPI 3 is a collection of 20 key performance indicators that assess performance in WFP's ten functional areas (see figure 9). Each functional area has an index made up of component indicators that track the most important performance metrics in the functional area. The indicators are designed to reflect how well WFP offices manage available resources in implementing prioritized CSP activities. The indicators and their targets change over time, so annual comparisons are not useful. For example, WFP no longer reports on "favourable media coverage" but is working with a new partner that provides other metrics, as described in more detail in annex III-A. KPI 3 provides a snapshot of whether WFP's functional areas met their performance targets for the year.
182. Ideally each functional area would be assessed as either having met targets or being on track to meet them. When WFP consistently achieves high values, it means that it is time to change targets and/or indicators to stimulate growth and improvement. It is for this reason that the KPIs and targets<sup>64</sup> for the programme functional area were revised significantly in 2020. An important achievement is that in the first year of applying these revised indicators, the programme area is on track for meeting its targets. As all other functional areas performed well, their targets have been raised for 2021. More details on KPI 3 and its component indicators are provided in annex III-A.

### **Regional bureau and headquarters services – performance by pillar (5 pillars)**

183. While the management services provided by country offices contribute directly to CSP implementation, the contributions made by management services from the regional bureaux and headquarters units are broken down into five pillars. The following subsections describe the five pillars and provide examples of work under each pillar that contributes to effective and efficient operations.

#### **Results pillar A – Strategy and direction**

184. This pillar relates to the decisions that are taken by senior management and to the implementation of those decisions. The decisions concerned have a high level of impact and significant, long-term implications that chart the future of a division, a department or the organization. When WFP classified the COVID-19 crisis as a Level 3 corporate surge emergency in March 2020, it appointed a corporate response director and established a crisis management team. To strengthen the focus on field needs, corporate activities were reprioritized and some critical corporate initiatives were scaled back. The emergency designation was deactivated on 1 October 2020.
185. The original plans and assumptions regarding available resources with which WFP began the year were rapidly adapted when the full potential impact of COVID-19 on operations emerged. Within eight weeks, the implementation plans and funding outlook for the field were reduced, deployments to the field were prioritized and support for regional bureaux and country offices was enhanced.

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<sup>64</sup> Targets for the indicators revised in 2020 were set before data collection.

186. Throughout WFP, the work and personnel of divisions and offices were aligned with the organization's people strategy and corporate priorities in 2020. The Human Resources Division completed a two-year organizational alignment project in 51 countries, aligning country office staffing structures to the needs of CSPs and launching a strategic workforce planning exercise aimed at identifying essential skills and establishing staffing structures appropriate to those needs. The Corporate Finance Division was the first to utilize this approach in developing a strategic workforce plan that supports the Finance Strategy (2019-2024).<sup>65</sup> Work included an extensive review of the effectiveness of the function globally and led to the development of a people strategy for the finance function. WFP also implemented policy improvements such as the finalization of delegation of authority arrangements in the Integrated Road Map implementation workstream and a renewed focus on future planning and organizational performance.

### Results pillar B – Business services to operations

187. For 2020, the core theme under this pillar was business continuity in the face of COVID-19. Continuity required rapid adaptation of practices and policy in all ten functional areas. New and adapted human resource policies and business support services facilitated staff deployments, with staff working in challenging and unfamiliar ways, often under conditions of great stress, and supported remote working arrangements. As this was the first time that WFP had activated a Level 3 emergency response involving headquarters, a COVID-19 internal response assessment was carried out. The survey revealed that staff were positive about how well WFP supported the transition to remote working. Digital platforms rapidly transformed the ways in which staff met, worked and travelled, and addressed the needs of staff from WFP, governments, United Nations partners, NGOs and other responders in the field.
188. Responding to the challenges of travel during the pandemic, WFP's travel team launched an interactive map which was continuously monitored and updated, seven days a week. The improved, fully digital service facilitated the safe, secure and informed travel of frontline responders and international travellers, including during medevacs. Existing self-help and learning platforms were enhanced and a dedicated COVID-19 learning channel was established while the online human resources self-service platform was expanded to allow remote processing of many transactions.
189. Business continuity measures were implemented rapidly as the COVID-19 emergency affected every area of WFP's work. In addition to a crisis management team, WFP established a global operations task force to monitor needs and resources, and working groups to promote staff wellness. WFP arranged centralized procurement and global shipment of personal protective equipment and office hygiene items for all offices, and provided governments with technical supply chain support, infrastructure and services, including mobile storage units for use as COVID-19 screening locations.
190. WFP implemented two years' worth of digital transformation in two months as staff shifted from offices to remote working arrangements. The Technology Division published secure information technology services on the world wide web, providing access from home, redesigned customer support to make it fully remote, rolled out a digital signature solution, and designed a remote working toolkit in partnership with the Innovation Accelerator. Staff and Board members adapted to virtual meetings: more than 590,000 Teams meetings took place in 2020, averaging more than 13,000 per week since March, compared with fewer than 800 per week in January and February. Remote conferencing facilities were swiftly launched to allow the continuity of essential governance meetings.

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<sup>65</sup> Available on the WFP intranet at: <https://newgo.wfp.org/documents/finance-strategy-2019-2024>.

In 2020, the Technology Division's infrastructure maintained 99.98 percent availability, resolving 70,000 requests for support remotely even though 90 percent of the team worked from home.

191. This transformation occurred as WFP maintained its focus on the modernization and automation of key platforms, including satellite connectivity and support for country-level CBT operations through a global programme on improving connectivity in the field. The project was launched prior to the pandemic, in February 2020, in 450 locations (including 330 with satellite connectivity) in 80 countries. WFP's scale-up of this project at the onset of the pandemic was instrumental in achieving the rapid improvements in internet connectivity, security and communications that became essential.
192. In 2020, WFP made important progress in expanding the digitization capacity and strengthening the reliability of its beneficiary and cash transfer management platform, SCOPE. As a result, nearly USD 1.3 billion in CBT assistance for more than 14.7 million beneficiaries in 44 countries was managed through SCOPE in 2020, increasing the share of all WFP CBTs managed by SCOPE from 45 percent in 2019 to approximately 60 percent in 2020. The ability to register beneficiaries' details in a secure digital format contributed significantly to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of WFP's planning and targeting. During the year, the number of people registered in SCOPE increased by 32 percent, to 63.8 million, and 27 percent more people were registered with fingerprints, photographs or both, thereby improving beneficiary verification. Further examples of digital transformation included the introduction of a common service "control tower" that provides end-to-end visibility in cargo tracking, and an online Emergency Service Marketplace that provides a single contact point for handling partners' requests for cargo transport services.
193. The pandemic caused an unprecedented need for emergency surge deployment and response, and through the special account for surge capacity in emergencies, WFP deployed more than 500 staff members to 71 countries. The Security Division increased its workforce surge capacity by more than 25 percent, ensuring that staff were ready for deployment and providing support for Level 2 and Level 3 operations.
194. Protection for WFP employees and their families was provided at duty stations and COVID-19 medevacs were made available to all employees and eligible dependants. WFP increased the number of wellness staff by recruiting medical doctors and counsellors in several Level 3 operations. This ensured the provision of essential care for employees and their families when local healthcare services were overwhelmed or unavailable. WFP also contributed aviation assets and operational capabilities to support the United Nations global framework that covers COVID-19 medevacs for all contract types and their dependants.

### Results pillar C – Policy, guidance and quality assurance

195. This pillar comprises activities that are not directly attributable to a single operation, but that provide a framework, guidance and policies for facilitating delivery against organizational strategies. In 2020, WFP continued to invest in strengthening its emergency workforce, applying emerging good practice and ensuring the availability of a continuously replenished pool of qualified staff for immediate deployment to emergency responses. For example, 3,000 employees participated in training on fraud risks in emergencies, 1,400 registered for online emergency training, simulation exercises or mentoring initiatives, and 1,640 registered for online self-paced training courses. By connecting surge requirements and learning activities, WFP could monitor its capacity to improve the impact of emergency deployments.
196. Senior managers contributed to the review and simplification of the Executive Director's assurance exercise, which resulted in 185 fewer transactional steps and time savings of 25 percent. This exercise resulted in production of the management review of significant risk and control issues and

the statement on internal control submitted to the Board. The review summarized the actions that WFP management has taken and will continue to take to mitigate the risks identified in the corporate risk register and to ensure the most efficient and effective use of WFP's resources and the safeguarding of its assets. This work stimulated feedback on significant risk and control issues and facilitated exercises such as the development of a corporate COVID-19 risk register and minimum controls for managing third-party risks during emergencies, the Executive Director's COVID-19 controls inquiry, and the management assurance project, which assessed eight key functions, 29 focus areas and 89 individual controls.

197. In the first half of 2020, WFP helped country offices to develop COVID-19-related risk registers and guidance and developed a corporate COVID-19 risk register. Results from the Executive Director's COVID-19 controls inquiry and COVID-19 risk registers were taken into account during the management assurance project launched in the fourth quarter of 2020 to provide further management assurance on field implementation of the controls.
198. *Evidence from evaluation of the gender policy.* Despite strong efforts made by the Gender Office and regional gender advisors in supporting the integration of gender equality perspectives into CSPs, the evaluation of the Gender Policy (2015–2020) found that WFP needs to properly resource and support its gender architecture by building the capacities of employees at all levels, particularly senior management.

#### Results pillar D – Advocacy, partnerships, fundraising and United Nations coordination

199. Activities under this pillar are related to the monitoring of WFP's engagement with external bodies for advocacy, coordination, fundraising, partnerships and programme implementation purposes. In 2020, donor governments and the European Union provided 89 percent of contributions, while 2 percent came from the private sector. To increase private sector contributions, WFP invested in a critical corporate initiative in 2020 and enhanced the efficiency, transparency and oversight of finances related to the scale-up and expansion of private sector fundraising. A KPI tracking tool was developed for measuring and reporting on WFP's performance in fundraising through individual giving. The private sector strategy critical corporate initiative exceeded its fundraising targets by raising a total of USD 161 million.
200. At the onset of the COVID-19 response, with United Nations agencies and international NGOs through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, WFP spearheaded an advocacy initiative aimed at generating public and political attention to the critical role that common services would play in the global COVID-19 response. Other inter-agency work continued, particularly with regard to Grand Bargain commitments such as the localization of humanitarian response. Since 2013, WFP has consistently met the obligation to transfer at least 25 percent of resources to or through local partners and has maintained a large portfolio of local partners and community-based organizations that implement WFP programmes. Through their CSPs, country offices engage local partners in WFP's analysis, consultation, planning and response, including through stakeholder meetings with national host governments and in country clusters.
201. WFP advanced its contribution to the United Nations reform through various initiatives in 2020. To support system-wide integrated programming and the achievement of common results at the country level, WFP helped to develop guidance on the new United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF) and accompanying tools, including the common country analysis (CCA), and implemented the management and accountability framework in full. Country offices reviewed their CSPs with a view to aligning activities, outcomes and cycles with UNSDCFs and national

development plans and enhancing their contributions to collective outcomes. Zero hunger strategic reviews completed during the year were linked to CCA processes.

202. As co-chair with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of the business innovations group until mid-2020, the Executive Director led action towards the various system-wide targets for efficiency gains. WFP maintained its influence in the new business operations task team by leading in common fleet and digital solutions such as the humanitarian booking hub. By the end of the year, WFP was sharing 46 percent of its premises worldwide with other United Nations agencies, against the Secretary-General's target of 50 percent common premises by the end of 2021.
203. Throughout 2020, partnerships with national governments and international financial institutions strategically positioned WFP in the development sphere and mobilized new resources for advancing related development priorities. As a result, countries traditionally viewed as recipients have become new donors. For example, Somalia emerged as WFP's 14th largest donor (with USD 93 million) in 2020, and Haiti became the 18th largest (with USD 60 million). In total, WFP received USD 290 million in 27 countries through tripartite agreements, compared with USD 21 million received in 2019. Tripartite forms of partnership supported activities in all six regions of WFP's operations and are expected to become increasingly important in supporting social protection, CBT delivery systems and service provision.
204. WFP focused on continued expansion of partnerships in core areas such as climate change, population displacement, durable solutions, education, health, migration and social protection. Shortly after WFP and WHO signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2020, the collaboration was expanded to focus on the COVID-19 global response while continuing to contribute to health-related SDGs. Partnerships continued with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which collaborated with WFP on COVID-19 impact assessments in 11 countries that informed the formulation of socioeconomic response plans, while FAO, UNICEF and WFP published an inter-agency guidance note on mitigating the effects of COVID-19 on the food and nutrition of schoolchildren. In 2020, along with FAO, IFAD and other United Nation agencies, WFP contributed to the Committee on World Food Security's voluntary guidelines on food systems and nutrition and collaborated with the Economic Community of West African States, the International Food Policy Research Institute, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and six universities on establishing the university network for resilience in the Sahel. WFP also developed agreements with Senegal and the Group of 5 Sahel Ministerial Council regarding joint responses to COVID-19, conflict and climate change. In 2020, for the first time, all WFP annual country reports included a section on partnerships, reflecting the growing importance of working with partners to achieve results.
205. As a voluntarily funded organization, WFP values all types of funding, including that earmarked for specific operations. At the same time, receiving flexible unearmarked funding that allows agile and quick response to humanitarian needs is critical for WFP, while the multi-year funding provided by an increasing numbers of donors is critical for the long-term planning of the organization's engagement in resilience and root causes. WFP's proactive dialogue with donors on predictable, flexible and multi-year funding aimed at strengthening operational continuity, including in saving lives, is a priority. Details on flexible funding are discussed in part IV of this report.

## Results pillar E – Governance and independent oversight

206. Pillar E comprises activities related to independent, internal oversight, and governance provided by external parties, including all activities related to the work of the Board, independent oversight functions such as evaluation and audit, and transparency initiatives. WFP continued to share data with the open database of the International Aid Transparency Initiative<sup>66</sup> and in 2020, the organization again received the highest ranking of more than 1,000 organizations in the Aid Transparency Index, scoring 99 percent.<sup>67</sup> Working closely with the Board, the Executive Board Secretariat piloted virtual platforms for online informal and formal sessions of the Board, ensuring that Board members could participate remotely in virtual meetings with interpretation services in all United Nations languages, and overcoming the challenges of social distancing while ensuring the completion of its programme of work and continuity in its formal decision making and governance role. Digital solutions made it possible to hold an online high-level panel event during the second regular session of the Board in November commemorating the recognition of WFP as the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate for 2020, which was attended by the Secretary-General, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, the President of the World Bank, the Commissioners of the African Union and the European Union and the heads of United Nations agencies.
207. WFP conducted an exercise on prioritizing audit issues within the organization. The status of implementation of agreed actions and the timeliness of responses to the Office of the Inspector General's recommendations from internal audits, proactive integrity reviews and field inspection reports is summarized in table 3 and details are provided in annex III-A. The findings from assurance reports and reviews present opportunities for management to address the issues identified, analyse lessons learned and implement recommendations in a timely and coordinated manner. As of 31 December 2020, there were 156 outstanding internal audit recommendations of which 51 percent were overdue according to their original due dates for implementation, and 12 percent were overdue according to revised dates. Of the 71 high-risk recommendations included in the total outstanding, 56 percent were overdue. In 2020, WFP reduced the number of outstanding high-risk audit recommendations from 79 to 71, the number of outstanding recommendations from 208 to 156, and the number of overdue actions from 114 to 99 compared with 2019.

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<sup>66</sup> Available at: <http://d-portal.org/>.

<sup>67</sup> Available at: [http://publishingstats.iatistandard.org/summary\\_stats.html](http://publishingstats.iatistandard.org/summary_stats.html).

**Table 3: Status of implementation of agreed actions, 2019 and 2020**

	High risk 2019	High risk 2020	Medium risk 2019	Medium risk 2020	Total 2019	Total 2020
<b>Open at beginning of year</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>225</b>
Issued in the period January to December	85	56	118	68	203	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>349</b>
Closed in the period January to December	50	66	123	127	173	193
<b>Outstanding at year-end</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>156</b>
Overdue (beyond initial agreed implementation date)	38	34	76	46	114	80
Overdue (beyond revised implementation date)	n/a	6	n/a	13	n/a	19

208. Eight centrally managed evaluations were completed in 2020 and presented to the Board for consideration: an evaluation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020), a strategic evaluation of funding WFP's work, evaluations of the CSPs in Bangladesh, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia and Timor-Leste, and a synthesis of lessons and evidence from policy evaluations. An inter-agency humanitarian evaluation of the response to Cyclone Idai and a thematic inter-agency humanitarian evaluation on gender equality were also completed in 2020. Together, the findings of these evaluations form an evidence base from which WFP has drawn multiple lessons, expanded on in annex VIII.

### Performance against senior management priorities, category II indicators

209. Senior management identified seven priority areas where WFP needs to make progress, in addition to measuring performance in the functional areas and pillars that are established annually. WFP made mixed progress on these priorities in 2020, largely owing to the challenges of COVID-19, but also in some cases to changes in the methods used for assessing results. The related indicators are subject to more change and adjustment than other KPIs, and so are treated as a separate category and reported on in the management plan.



**Table 4: WFP senior management priorities, 2020**

<b>United Nations system and coordination-related performance indicators*</b>	<b>2019 value</b>	<b>2020 target</b>	<b>2020 value</b>
Percentage of UN-SWAP 2.0 indicators achieved	75	88	81
Percentage of cluster user surveys that reach their satisfaction targets	100	100	100
<b>Executive thematic priorities</b>	<b>2019 value</b>	<b>2020 target</b>	<b>2020 value</b>
Percentage of employees completing mandatory training in harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse	91	95	82
Percentage of country offices with a functioning community feedback mechanism	66	60	53
Percentage of WFP cash transfers supported digitally**	72 (62)	80	71 (69)
Percentage of WFP country offices implementing environmental management systems	Not reported	20	8
Percentage of funding directed at strategic outcome level or above	Not reported	30	26

\* The indicator of “percentage of achievement of quadrennial comprehensive policy review commitments” captured the policy recommendation of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review 2016–2019. Member States adopted new United Nations system policy guidance for the 2020–2023 quadrennium in December 2020. Reporting against the indicator was therefore suspended in 2020 while adjustments are made in accordance with the new policy guidance.

\*\* The percentage of CBTs supported digitally is higher than the value reported for 2019 owing to slight data amendments after publication last year. The 2019 values reported here replace the values reported in the annual performance report for 2019. Figures in brackets are the percentages when the ESSN in Turkey is excluded from the calculation.

210. WFP’s performance against indicators of United Nations system and cluster coordination was positive, based on demonstrated user satisfaction in all cluster services and improvements in results against UN-SWAP 2.0 indicators over 2019 values.<sup>68</sup> However, as indicated in table 4, reductions were noted in the numbers of employees completing mandatory training on harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and of country offices with a functioning community feedback mechanism. This reduction in compliance was attributable to system issues linked to the hiring of new employees and changes in the requirement for all employees to retake the course on prevention of fraud, corruption and sexual exploitation and abuse every three years. Specifically, when the requirement for staff to retake mandatory training courses every three years was introduced, employees were unfortunately not informed that their certifications were about to expire until after they had expired, leading to a reduction in the compliance rate. This issue has since been addressed, and WFP will redouble its

<sup>68</sup> The United Nations System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) is the system-wide accountability framework for measuring, monitoring and driving progress towards a common set of standards for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women. Reporting on the UN-SWAP is mandatory for all United Nations entities, departments and offices in the United Nations system.

efforts to reach the target for 2021 by improving the percentage of employees completing mandatory training.

211. The decline in functioning community feedback mechanisms (CFMs) reflects WFP's efforts to establish higher standards in its systems and methods for obtaining and using feedback from the community level. Starting in 2021, for a CFM to be deemed "functional", at least three of the following five conditions must be met. First, there should be evidence that the country office used reliable information from or about different groups of affected people (women, girls, boys, men, persons with disabilities, older persons, minorities, etc.), their information needs, language requirements and preferred communication channels. The evidence should also demonstrate that this information is being used in the design and implementation of the CFM. Second, there should be evidence that the country office conducted a data protection exercise for the purposes of its CFM. Third, the country office's CSP should include an appropriate dedicated budget for ensuring the functionality of the CFM. Fourth, there should be evidence that the CFM is "closing the loop" on at least 80 percent of the feedback it receives by addressing and resolving the issues raised. Fifth, there should be evidence that programmatic changes are validated with the communities served, directly linked to the feedback received.
212. While 2020 saw increases in digitally supported CBTs in many countries, the relatively consistent KPI values between 2019 and 2020 are primarily due to the USD 350 million reduction in the emergency social safety net (ESSN) in Turkey, from USD 487 million in 2019 to USD 136 million in 2020 out of a total CBT portfolio of USD 2.1 billion each year. When this operation is removed from the calculations, the percentage of WFP CBTs supported digitally rises from 62 percent in 2019 to 69 percent in 2020, a marked increase.
213. The final two indicators in table 4 were developed for the Management Plan (2020–2022) and were not reported on in 2019. Targets were taken from 2018 baseline data. Please see annex III-A for more information on category II indicators. WFP is making consistent efforts to reduce the environmental footprint of its operations. Achievement of the target for percentage of WFP country offices implementing environmental management systems was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Comprehensive action plan

214. Work on the comprehensive action plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the joint Board/management working group on harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination was initiated in January 2020 and a report on concrete steps towards implementation progress<sup>69</sup> was presented at the abbreviated first regular session of the Board in April 2020. The comprehensive action plan (CAP) was approved by the Board in June 2020.<sup>70</sup>
215. The first progress report on implementation of the CAP was presented to the Board at its second regular session in November 2020.<sup>71</sup> The report describes the status of individual initiatives, and employees' perception of progress made in the six core areas of the CAP. Employees' perceptions were measured by using a digital "pulse check" survey, conducted as part of a major employee engagement exercise on workplace culture in September 2020.
216. A set of 16 indicators measuring progress in implementation of the CAP cover the six core areas of the plan and are based on metrics used in past WFP global staff surveys (GSS). Overall GSS results available at the time of writing show significant improvements in all six core areas compared with

<sup>69</sup> WFP/EB.1/2020/9-A/2/Rev.1.

<sup>70</sup> WFP/EB.A/2020/12-A.

<sup>71</sup> WFP/EB.2/2020/10-A.

2018. A stocktaking exercise of CAP initiatives and activities in 2020 confirmed these findings: 83 percent of activities in the core area of leadership and 91 percent in the core area of disciplinary process achieved their targets, while delays in initiatives and activities in the core area of policy and systems revisions were due mainly to the prioritization of other work aimed at mitigating the impact of the pandemic on employees. While significant progress has been made in implementation of the CAP, further efforts are needed to accelerate and sequence action in all six core areas in order to make durable and sustainable change in workplace culture. For details on each of the six core areas please see annex III-D.

217. The most recent GSS was carried out in March 2021 and the global participation rate reached 84 percent compared with 85 percent in 2018. Both participation rates are the highest ever for a large United Nations agency, which makes the data highly representative. The survey results are the best since 2012, when WFP started systematically measuring employee engagement. Compared with 2018, all areas covered by the survey have improved. The level of overall satisfaction showed a significant increase, and there were similarly substantial improvements in innovation and change, communications, and teamwork and belonging. Overall, 76 percent of respondents indicated that they were either extremely or highly satisfied, while 92 percent reported that WFP's mission and purpose makes them feel that their jobs are important. Significant progress was reported in the areas of line manager effectiveness, and growth and development. These results reflect positive shifts in one of WFP's priorities: moving towards an improved and increasingly respectful and inclusive workplace where harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination are not tolerated.

### Ethics and accountability

218. The Ethics Office registered a record number of advisories in 2020, with a 26.5 percent increase over 2019 under the annual conflict of interest and financial disclosure programme. An updated whistleblower protection policy was issued, expanding the scope of protection from retaliation for reporting misconduct and cooperating with duly authorized audits and investigations.
219. During the COVID-19 response, WFP continued to advocate for work on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse at the inter-agency levels, including with the other Rome-based agencies, supporting or launching several projects and inter-agency initiatives, such as the "Say No to Sexual Misconduct" learning package for partners and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse capacity assessment for United Nations implementing partners. WFP piloted the assessment tool in selected country offices and embedded it in the United Nations Partner Portal. Modules on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse were integrated into existing and emerging core WFP training materials and regional level, in-person training was adapted to online delivery so that employees deployed to high-risk locations and emergencies could identify, prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse in the field.
220. Training for ethics ambassadors and respectful workplace advisors was aligned with training for risk and compliance advisors, while collaboration among the ethics offices of the Rome-based agencies continued to address issues of racism and gender-based violence.

### Critical corporate initiatives

221. WFP has used the programme support and administrative (PSA) equalization account for critical corporate initiatives (CCIs) since 2015. These initiatives aim to strengthen internal systems and the workforce with a view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of services for beneficiaries. The preliminary recommendations of an external audit of CCIs, which was nearly

completed by the end of 2020, called on WFP to revisit the governance and selection criteria for funding future CCI projects submitted to the Board. In particular, all future CCI funding proposals should clearly explain the one-off nature of the CCI, emphasize its cross-cutting contribution to organizational change and be clearly aligned with the CRF.

**Table 5: Critical corporate initiatives, 2019–2020**

	Critical Corporate Initiative	Initial timeframe (years)	Budget approved in management plan (USD million)		Expenditures	
			2019	2020	2019	2020
✓	Integrated Road Map <b>(complete)</b>	1	10.0	-	9.8	0.2
Ongoing	Workforce 2020	2	11.1	-	1.5	2.4
	WFP 2030 Fund	2	15.0	-	0.7	4.2
	Cash and Digital Platform	2	20.0	-	10.9	8.7
Renewed	Systems integration and IT-enabled efficiencies	1	5.0	11.0	4.7	6.6
	UN reform	2	8.2	8.1	4.6	4.2
New	Programme/partnership support	2	-	2.5		0.9
	Private sector strategy	2	-	13.1		12.6
	Workplace culture/ethics	2	-	5.0		1.6
	<b>Total</b>		<b>69.3</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>38.8*</b>	<b>41.1</b>

\* Expenditures total aligns with statement V of WFP's Financial Statements accounting for CCI extensions approved in 2017 and 2018, but not listed in the table - USD 6.8 million in 2019 total. \*\* Retroactive payroll postings - (USD 0.4 million) in 2020 not shown in table.

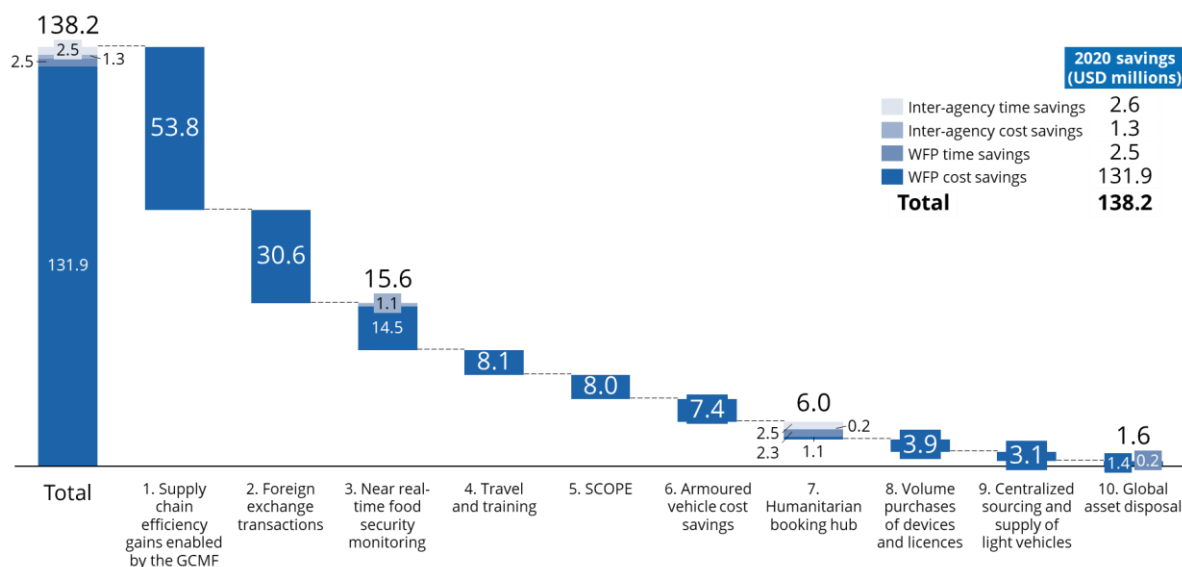
222. In 2020, USD 39.7 million was approved for five CCIs, with total expenditures of USD 41.1 million (table 5). Three projects are ongoing, with funding and implementation apportioned over two years; the balance of funds from 2019 was carried over into 2020. Two initiatives were continued from 2019 with renewed funding in 2020, and three new initiatives were established. Please note that for initiatives with a two-year timeframe, the allocation of funds may not be evenly distributed. For example, the CCI on programme/partnership was approved for US 2.5 million in the Management Plan 2020, and USD 1.2 million was allocated in 2020.

223. The new CCI on the private sector strategy financed actions in the first year of individual giving, a key pillar of the strategy. The first full tranche of investment (USD 13.1 million) was spent on acquiring new donors, who in turn contributed USD 17.8 million in paid acquisition income, exceeding the target of USD 16.5 million by 8 percent. An additional investment in private sector partnerships is expected in 2021 given the positive results to date. Detailed reporting on the results of each critical corporate initiative can be found in annex III-B.

## Efficiency gains and value for money

224. Efficiency is one of the Executive Director's key priorities and a core value of WFP: every dollar saved means that WFP can reach more hungry people with much-needed food assistance. This section reviews the top ten initiatives that demonstrated efficiency gains with validated savings realized internally and through initiatives with other United Nations agencies and humanitarian actors. WFP measures efficiency gains in terms of cost and time savings throughout its value chain, from emergency preparedness and programme design to programme delivery and enabling services, in accordance with United Nations reform targets and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group's efficiency agenda. Efficiency gains are derived predominantly from operations, although use of the PSA budget can also generate savings in operations. In 2020 for example, PSA funds were used to support supply chain savings enabled by the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF), fleet management, foreign exchange transactions, remote monitoring and the humanitarian booking hub, all of which produced efficiency gains. Details are provided in annex III-C.
225. In 2020, through its top ten efficiency gain initiatives, WFP realized more than USD 138 million in cost savings and a time saving equating to 134 full-time equivalent units. These results can be broadly attributed to WFP's strategic innovation, digital transformation, operational optimization and simplification and inter-agency collaboration. More than 30 other initiatives also generated savings. Key initiatives are in the expansion phase, with efficiency results expected in the coming years. Digital platforms and improved ways of working – including cross-functional efforts in simplifying and automating business processes – innovation, and the application of advanced technology in the areas of emergency preparedness and programme implementation will all contribute to even more efficient and effective delivery and management of operations.

**Figure 10: WFP's top ten cost-saving efficiency gains in 2020**



\*Total savings includes cost savings and time savings (FTE, full-time equivalent)

226. A good example of a tool for achieving efficiency and effectiveness is the GCMF, an advance financing mechanism through which WFP procures and pre-positions food using corporate funding in anticipation of confirmed contributions. The objectives are to reduce food delivery lead times,

shorten emergency response times, purchase food when market conditions are more favourable and support local and regional procurement when possible. In 2020, procurement through the GCMF allowed recipient country offices to receive their commodities after an average of 28 days, a 77 percent reduction compared with the average of 120 days needed under conventional procurement processes. The time saving was particularly critical in humanitarian crises, and seven of the eight countries facing Level 3 emergencies relied on the GCMF to fulfil most of their operational requirements. Owing to timely purchasing and economies of scale, savings of USD 53.8 million were realized in supply chain costs (food and external transport).

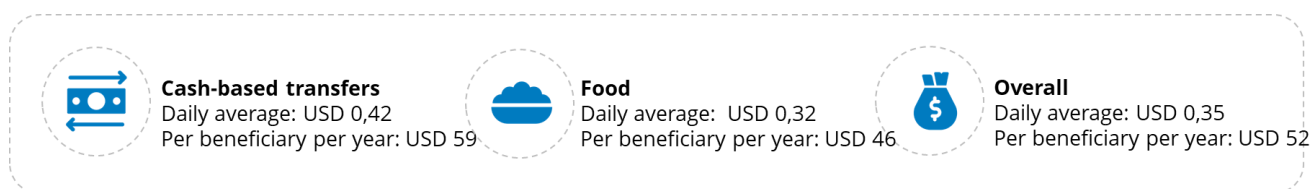
### Value for money: Bangladesh anticipatory action and integrated risk programming

The USD 140 million anticipatory humanitarian action project, led by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, marks the first time that the fund has disbursed humanitarian funding in advance of a predicted crisis. The project was developed in partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with funding from Germany and the Republic of Korea and was crucial in expanding WFP's forecast-based financing project in Bangladesh. This project is based on an innovative mechanism that uses robust weather forecasts to trigger the disbursement of funding for humanitarian assistance before crises – such as weather-related flooding in Bangladesh – occur. WFP received USD 4.5 million, allowing it to reach a total of 142,000 people with mobile-based CBTs days in advance of floods in five districts.

WFP designed and tested a forecast-based financing intervention, reaching some 30,000 people with cash-based assistance up to four days ahead of the July 2020 floods. Climate risk insurance for 10,000 people was also piloted as a safety net against daily wage losses resulting from an anticipated climate crisis. A significant proportion of households assisted with this funding were found to have acceptable levels of food consumption immediately before the flood and did not have to adopt negative coping mechanisms. The fact that 89 percent of targeted beneficiaries spent anticipatory assistance on food showed that immediate needs were met through this preparedness response.

With COVID-19 increasing the vulnerability of disaster-prone communities, and in the face of climate change, these anticipatory funding mechanisms are increasingly important in ensuring community resilience and facilitating recovery.

## Cost per beneficiary



227. Analysis of the cost per beneficiary is based on the transfer values and transfer costs defined in the country portfolio budget for serving direct beneficiaries in each programme area. The cost per beneficiary reflects the expenditure on food or cash-based transfers designed to achieve programme results. It is calculated for the duration of assistance and as a daily average. Beneficiaries can receive a combination of various forms of assistance in several programme areas and through different modalities, such as cash, vouchers or food, according to the integrated programme approaches outlined in the CSP. The intensity (amount and duration) of assistance is currently being reviewed to

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take into account the effects of the growing number of emergencies, the difficulty in reaching beneficiaries in challenging emergency settings, and the size, composition and nutritional value of rations, with the aim of ensuring that assistance is adequate compared with the daily needs of target groups.

228. The average daily cost per beneficiary is calculated by multiplying the number of feeding days by the number of beneficiaries assisted as recorded in each distribution report. A distribution report typically covers a month but the period covered can vary depending on the distribution cycle. The daily average cost for CBTs is based on the number of beneficiaries assisted through CBTs in a specific location and month multiplied by the number of assistance days covered by that distribution. The analysis does not include other implementation costs, service delivery costs and direct and indirect support costs.
229. In 2020, WFP distributed 11.8 billion food rations and 5.4 billion food-ration equivalents in the form of CBTs. The daily average cost per direct beneficiary was USD 0.35 (USD 0.32 for food, USD 0.42 for CBTs). The average annual cost per beneficiary reached by WFP in 2020 was USD 52 (USD 46 for food, USD 59 for CBTs). More information, including a breakdown of costs by programme area, can be found in annex III-A.

## Part IV: Financial resources and funding

*This section presents an overview of WFP's financial resources, expenditures and trends in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated needs in already challenging conditions. It highlights WFP's efforts to respond to the strategic evaluation of funding by diversifying its donor base through a private sector fundraising strategy and implementing new financing mechanisms such as debt swaps, blended finance and co-financing. WFP's pioneering work in advance financing continued to demonstrate value as many operations faced overlapping crises.*

### Overview of financial position

#### Growing contributions and expenses against rising needs

230. In 2020, WFP received record contributions of USD 8.4 billion<sup>72</sup> – 5 percent higher than in 2019 – meeting 61 percent of requirements against a funding need of USD 13.7 billion.<sup>73</sup> Contributions came from 104 funding sources (government donors, the private sector, United Nations entities, international financial institutions and other organizations) compared with 90 in 2019.
231. Expenses<sup>74</sup> amounted to USD 8.1 billion in 2020, a 6 percent increase from 2019. This growth is attributable to an increase in food distributions during the year, amounting to USD 2.4 billion (a 3 percent increase from 2019), and other costs totalling USD 3.5 billion (a 12 percent increase), primarily for contracted air services. CBTs were at nearly the same level as in 2019, with USD 2.1 billion distributed to beneficiaries by WFP.
232. Figure 11 shows the growth of contributions and expenses since 2016.<sup>75</sup> Over this five-year period, WFP's contribution revenue grew by 45 percent. Expenses have increased at a slightly higher rate of 50 percent overall, reflecting an increase in operational activity keeping up with strong growth in contributions.

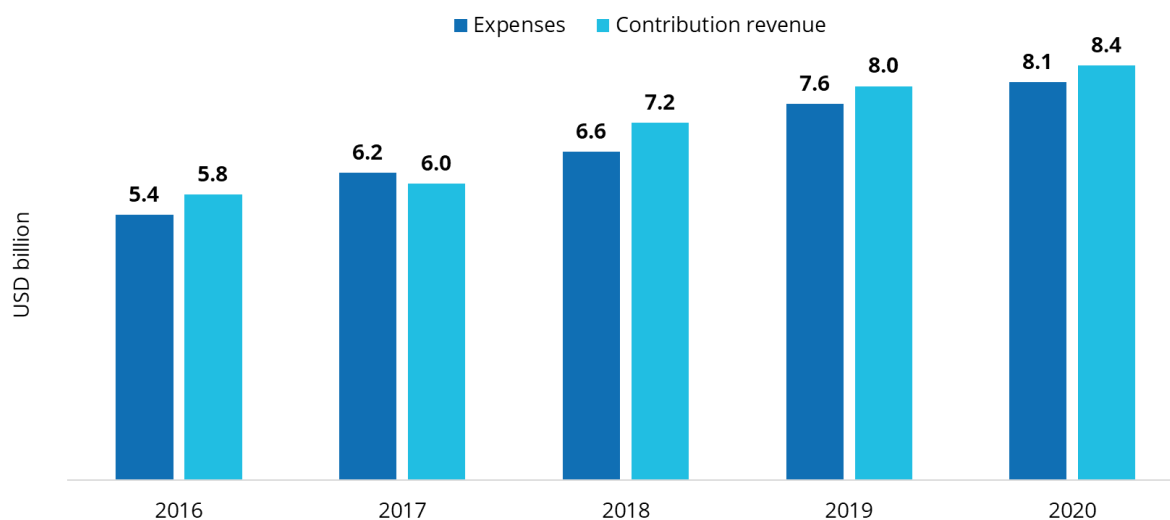
<sup>72</sup> WFP recognizes contributions revenue when confirmed in writing and where the contribution has been stipulated for the current financial reporting year.

<sup>73</sup> Needs-based plan of 31 December 2020.

<sup>74</sup> Expense categories include cash and vouchers distributed, food commodities distributed, distribution and related services, staff costs, contracted and other services, and other expenses.

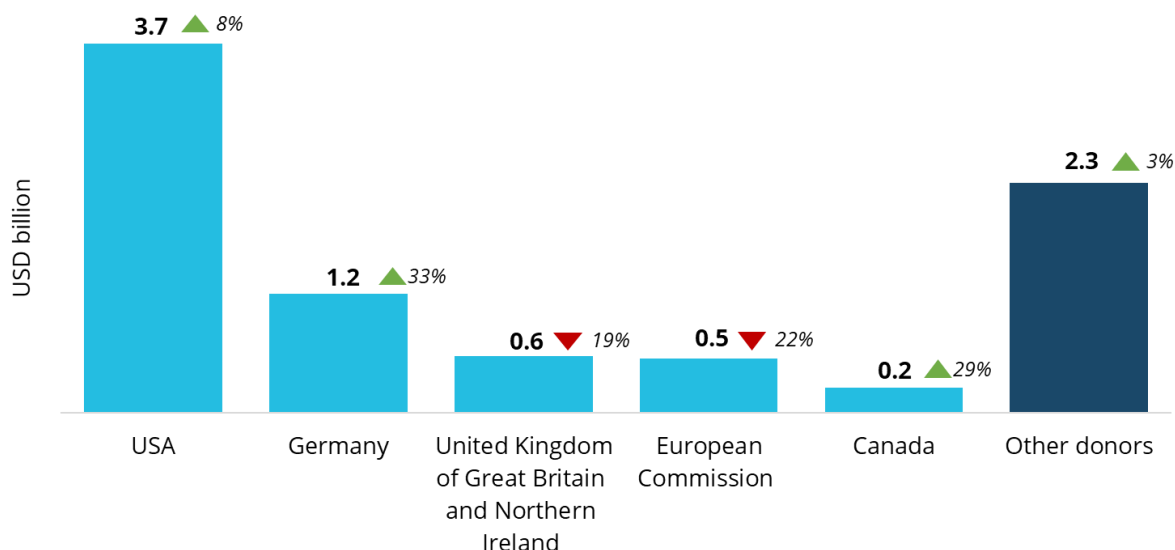
<sup>75</sup> WFP's budget is prepared on a commitment basis, and its financial statements on an accrual basis. When referring to financial performance related to revenue, expenses are used, classified on the basis of the nature of the expenses. When referring to programme performance, expenditures are used, classified by strategic result into WFP cost categories.



**Figure 11: Contribution revenue and expenses, 2016–2020**

### Top donors and contributors to flexible funds

233. Figure 12 illustrates WFP's largest donors in 2020 and the changes in their contributions compared with 2019. In 2020, increased contributions were received from most of the largest donors, governments and intergovernmental organizations, including the United States of America, Germany, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund and other United Nations funds, Canada, Japan and Sweden. Other major donors included the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Commission. The top five donors accounted for 74 percent, or USD 6.2 billion, of total contributions, slightly less than in 2019.
234. Contributions from the private sector (companies, individuals and foundations) exhibited the most significant growth in 2020, increasing by 60 percent from 2019 to USD 161 million. This positioned the private sector as WFP's tenth largest donor in 2020.
235. Contributions from the United States of America reached a record USD 3.7 billion in 2020, representing 43 percent of all donor contributions and an increase of 8 percent over 2019. Of this amount, USD 238 million was for supplemental funding for the COVID-19 response and a record USD 119 million was for the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program in five countries. Collaboration between country offices and the United States of America's donor counterparts ensured the most effective use of contributions.

**Figure 12: Largest confirmed contributions from WFP donors, 2020**

236. In 2020, WFP received USD 482 million in flexible funds from 32 donors, representing a 14 percent increase in such funding compared with 2019. Despite appeals for decreased earmarking of contributions for the COVID-19 response, flexible funds represented only 5.7 percent of total 2020 contribution revenue, a share similar to that of previous years. The top five donors contributing flexible funds in 2020 were Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway. The amounts and proportions of flexible funding from the private sector and individuals continued to grow steadily.
237. While every dollar received by WFP is essential for operational continuity, flexible funding is critical in enabling agile and effective response to sudden-onset emergencies and investments in timely preparedness and resilience activities. In a year during which WFP and partners responded to 17 concurrent emergencies worldwide, unearmarked funding was particularly instrumental in sustaining WFP's work at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. In Zimbabwe, flexible funds supported essential food assistance for rural and urban households in response to the drought and the COVID-19 pandemic as well as helping to prevent a pipeline break in the support provided to refugees. The funds also enabled WFP to commence a timely food assistance for assets cycle in 2020, ensuring the provision of combined critical food and resilience building assistance. Conversely, in Yemen, the earmarking of funds to specific modalities prevented the timely and optimal use of resources, affecting procurement lead times and modality preferences.

### Evidence on funding from evaluations

238. Funding for WFP's work has increased dramatically in recent years – with a high proportion linked to Level 3 emergencies – but a substantial funding gap persists. As noted in the strategic evaluation report, WFP funding is heavily reliant on a few government donors which provide largely earmarked contributions, a substantial portion of which is to be spent in one year or less. The Cameroon country office was challenged in developing a multi-year funding approach while working with a one-year funding cycle, and in Indonesia, donor earmarking increased compared with the pre-ICSP period, limiting WFP's flexibility and ability to respond quickly to needs. The earmarking of most donor

contributions in Bangladesh resulted in underfunding of certain activities and constrained the country office's ability to realize the strategic shift envisaged in the CSP. The uncertainty of resource allocations in Timor-Leste resulted in sustained short-term planning.

239. WFP's success in raising humanitarian funds has masked the uncertainty of WFP's funding sources, with gaps disproportionately affecting WFP operations in countries that are not facing a Level 3 emergency, and in resilience building and development activities. Country capacity strengthening efforts in Cameroon, Indonesia and Timor-Leste were all hindered by the absence of predictable, longer-term funding.

### Focus on new, emerging and individual giving to diversify WFP's donor base

240. To address the persistent funding gap for long-term programmes, WFP has broadened its donor base through innovative mechanisms such as debt swaps, increased South-South collaboration and access to pooled funds. The strategic evaluation of funding<sup>76</sup> provided timely recommendations that help WFP increase, protect and diversify its funding base. Efforts in 2020 focused on strengthening partnerships with the private sector, United Nations agencies and national governments in implementing strategies for working with international financial institutions, exploring innovative financing mechanisms and increasing advocacy for predictable and flexible funding.

#### Activating the Emerging Donor Matching Fund

The Emerging Donor Matching Fund (EDMF) provides cash to cover the operational and support costs associated with contributions from eligible in-country donors that cannot cover such costs. The fund helps to maximize the resources available for meeting beneficiary needs through mobilization of domestic resources and has a multiplier effect: for every dollar allocated from the fund since 2019, WFP has received nearly twice as much in contributions. The EDMF has expedited the delivery of humanitarian assistance to crisis-affected people, increased national ownership of programmes assisted by WFP, and enabled some country offices to widen their collaboration with national governments.

In 2020, USD 7.8 million was allocated from the EDMF to cover the associated costs of in-kind and cash-based contributions and to mobilize technical expertise from 13 eligible governments. For example, the fund facilitated the provision of technical assistance for the local production of fortified cereal blends in El Salvador, supporting the search for local solutions for ending malnutrition. The fund also covered the associated costs of an in-kind contribution from the Government of Nigeria, enabling WFP to swiftly support the Government's response by distributing food in COVID-19-affected urban areas.

241. Agreements with national governments, global platforms such as the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, and international financial institutions resulted in increased revenues in 2020. Contributions and service agreements with national governments that are supported by international financial institutions, increased from USD 20 million in 2019 to more than USD 280 million in 2020. This growth reflects WFP's concerted efforts to align programmes with national financing priorities through central ministries.
242. Private sector funding increased from USD 101 million in 2019 to USD 161 million in 2020, demonstrating the strong potential for further growth, particularly from individual giving. WFP tripled the funding raised through its digital individual giving programme, which amounted to USD 35 million in 2020. For example, the ShareTheMeal application raised more than USD 23 million for WFP operations worldwide from more than 4 million users around the world. This increase of 134 percent

<sup>76</sup> WFP/EB.A/2020/7-C.

was a result of WFP's efforts to expand and diversify the use of various social media platforms and establish new partnerships in 2020, most notably with the food delivery platform DeliveryHero, which has integrated WFP's ShareTheMeal donation feature into its own application.

243. After the first full year of its private sector partnership strategy, WFP's investment in individual giving has surpassed targets for both income and efficiency. For every USD 1 invested, USD 2.36 will be received over the following 12 months, providing WFP with the agility to fund operations that are often neglected and enhancing its response to the people most in need.

### **Innovative finance – debt swaps, blended finance and co-financing**

244. WFP's Management Plan (2020–2022)<sup>77</sup> prioritized the use of innovative financing in diversifying WFP's funding sources and helping to reduce the organization's funding gap. WFP's approach to innovative financing has generated some successes, particularly in forecast-based funding and advance financing, but there is still need to strengthen the organization's estimation of their potential value.
245. In WFP's management response to the recommendations of the strategic evaluation of funding,<sup>78</sup> it acknowledged that approaches to-date have been piecemeal and that WFP is at risk of falling behind its peers in areas such as innovative finance. In 2020, a cross-departmental steering committee was established to define WFP's priorities in innovative finance and identify potential challenges and opportunities. The three areas prioritized for 2021 are debt swaps, blended finance and co-financing.
246. Debt relief is a global priority and renewed opportunities for debt relief and swaps should be used to assist in confronting the development emergency caused by COVID-19. WFP is well positioned to facilitate debt swaps by offering suitable food security and social protection programmes at sufficient scale to make an impact. In addition, WFP can provide effective accountability for the use of resources to both debtors and creditors, which in many cases are WFP's key donors. WFP can also efficiently use the proceeds of debt swaps in local currencies. Previous examples of such interventions include working with the governments of Egypt and Mozambique to have their debts swapped with bilateral creditors such as Germany and the Russian Federation by channelling funds through WFP in support of national school feeding programmes.
247. As a result of efforts made in 2020, a debt conversion agreement between the governments of Spain and Mauritania was finalized in March 2021, which aims to contribute to national priorities and the pan-African Great Green Wall initiative. The agreement will fund a two-year project developed by WFP and Mauritania's Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and aimed at leveraging successful ongoing work in order to promote resilient livelihoods across the Sahel.
248. In recognition of the promising potential of blended finance and co-financing, WFP began conducting feasibility studies in 2020 and is planning several pilots in 2021. WFP operates in accordance with the OECD-DAC's blended finance principles, the objective of which is to attract commercial capital for projects that contribute to sustainable development while providing financial returns to investors.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> WFP/EB.2/2019/5-A/1. Available at: <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000108558/download/>.

<sup>78</sup> WFP/EB.A/2020/7-C.

<sup>79</sup> Based on the OECD definition available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/blended-finance-principles/>.

249. WFP's first blended finance pilot will involve collaboration among the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the Government of Rwanda and private sector partners on scaling up smallholder agriculture and market support activities in Rwanda. The pilot will provide technical assistance on crop production, post-harvest loss reduction and connecting farmers to commercial demand.
250. WFP is also examining the advantages of co-financing arrangements that offer incentives for partners to invest in food security. The first memorandum agreement between WFP and the Islamic Development Bank was signed in early 2020 and reflects a joint commitment to working to identify co-financing and other cooperation opportunities. These efforts are aligned with other corporate developments, such as implementation of the local procurement policy, contributions to preparations for the United Nations Food Systems Summit, and enhanced partnerships with international financial institutions.

### Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on financial needs

251. Shortly after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in March 2020, the Executive Director issued an appeal for USD 1.9 billion for pre-positioning of a three-month supply of food stocks for priority operations. Thanks to rapid support from donors, this target was reached by the end of June. In the same month, WFP issued a first global appeal for USD 4.9 billion for supporting the COVID-19 response through its operations in 84 countries. Against this appeal, USD 4.3 billion was received from 82 donor sources. The top five recipient operations were Yemen (USD 532 million), South Sudan (USD 298 million), Lebanon (USD 320 million), Somalia (USD 256 million) and the Syrian Arab Republic (USD 204 million).
252. The appeal included USD 316 million for providing crucial common services for the humanitarian community. Donors including governments, the European Commission, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund and private sector organizations provided USD 271 million, and USD 14 million was allocated from flexible funds.
253. Through its rapid launch of the COVID-19 appeal, use of internal advance financing facilities and success in obtaining flexible funding and early confirmation of contributions, WFP was able to adjust its responses quickly in the face of rapidly evolving needs and circumstances.

### Advance financing and the Global Commodity Management Facility

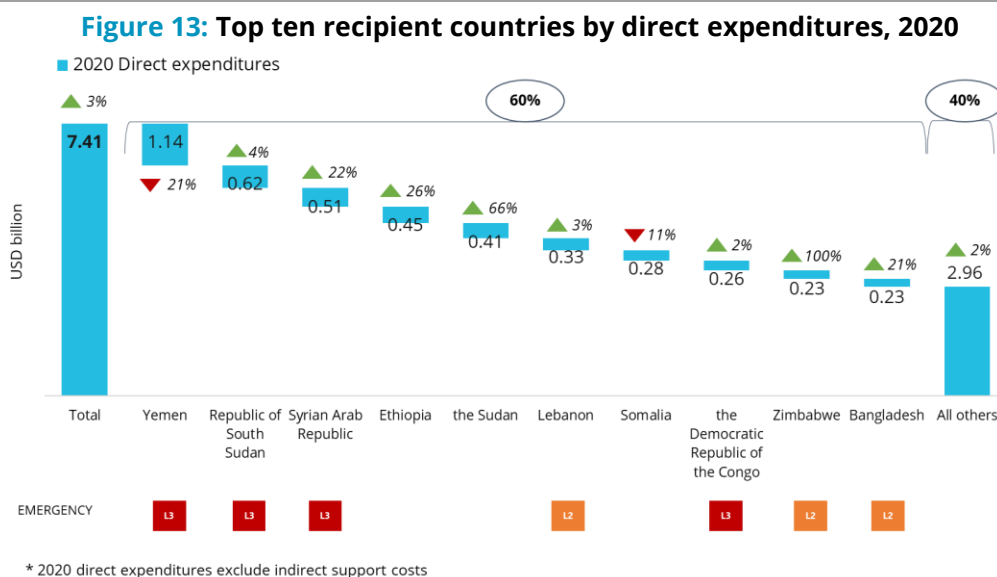
254. Despite longer lead times caused by COVID-19-related challenges to the supply chain, delivery timelines were met and delivery costs did not increase substantially. The combined action of advance financing mechanisms and supply chain planning enabled WFP's operations to achieve significant efficiency gains.
255. In 2020, USD 1.4 billion in advance financing for WFP operations used forecasted contributions as collateral, giving country offices access to funds before the funds' confirmation dates. An additional USD 188 million was allocated through the Immediate Response Account (IRA) in order to provide life-saving food assistance in the absence of forecasted funds; the top four recipient countries for IRA advances were Yemen, Burkina Faso, Mozambique and Lebanon.
256. For capital projects with quantifiable economic and efficiency benefits, WFP provides upfront financing through a dedicated budgeting facility. In 2020, this mechanism was used to advance USD 27 million to projects including SharetheMeal, the beneficiary and transfer management platform, SCOPE, in South Sudan and the enhancement of truck fleet capacity in Ethiopia.

257. As highlighted in part III, WFP's Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) plays an essential role in enabling WFP to reach beneficiaries more effectively and efficiently by providing a steady supply of food with shorter lead times and greater value for money. In 2020, 1.8 million mt of food in 49 countries was delivered through the GCMF, representing 41 percent of the total volume of food handled by WFP in the year.

## WFP's direct expenditures in 2020 and growth under the strategic plan

### Breakdown of 2020 direct expenditures by country, strategic result and focus area

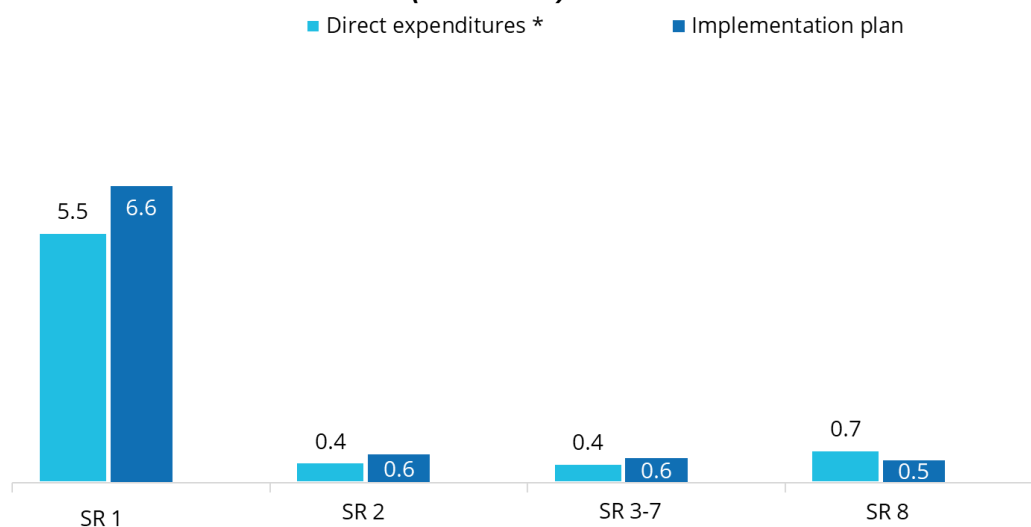
258. Excluding indirect support costs, total direct expenditures<sup>80</sup> in 2020 were USD 7.4 billion, an increase of 3 percent from 2019. Figure 13 shows the ten countries that accounted for 60 percent of WFP's total direct expenditures in 2020, slightly less than the percentage accounted for by the top ten recipient countries in 2019.
259. Yemen remained the largest operation, although it experienced one of the highest reductions in expenditures, of 21 percent compared with 2019. Overall, funding for the Yemen humanitarian response plan faced a decrease, which was partially attributed to the deterioration of the operating environment and the ensuing erosion of donor confidence. Yemen accounted for 15 percent of WFP's global portfolio, exceeding USD 1.1 billion in direct expenditures in 2020.
260. Expenditures in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Zimbabwe increased significantly compared with 2019. In Zimbabwe, they doubled in 2020 in response to the worsening drought. In Somalia, the impact of COVID-19 delayed the implementation of some activities, causing a 11 percent reduction in expenditures from 2019. As a result, WFP carried over 48 percent of available funding to provide timely assistance early in 2021.
261. Seven of the ten countries with the highest expenditures were facing Level 3 or Level 2 emergencies. In addition, Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan, which were not among those with Level 3 or Level 2 emergencies, continued to have historically high needs due to protracted conflict and climate shocks.



<sup>80</sup> Direct expenditures, or direct operational costs, exclude indirect support costs and may differ from actual expenses presented in the audited annual accounts because they exclude outstanding commitments.

262. Figure 14 shows the breakdown of actual expenditures by strategic result compared with the implementation plan. Because indirect and direct expenditures are not attributable to any one strategic result, the following analysis – and the following subsection on focus areas – considers aggregated activity costs for a total of USD 7.1 billion. This amount accounted for 86 percent of the implementation plan in 2020, a rate consistent with 2019.
263. As in previous years, Strategic Result 1 – everyone has access to food – accounted for the bulk of WFP’s expenditures, reaching USD 5.5 billion or nearly 78 percent of total expenditures in 2020. When compared with the implementation plan, the shortfall reflects severe operational constraints in countries such as Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where operations are challenged by high levels of conflict and humanitarian access constraints.
264. Strategic Result 8 – enhanced global partnerships – incurred expenditures of 140 percent of the implementation plan, or USD 720 million. The utilization rate for Strategic Result 8 was particularly high in countries such as Ethiopia, the Sudan and Yemen. This is mainly owing to the unforeseen large-scale activities related to service provision that were implemented, particularly in the context of COVID-19, where WFP assists host governments in meeting people’s needs using funds from international financial institutions, host governments and multiple donors.

**Figure 14: Direct expenditures compared with implementation plan by strategic result, 2020 (USD billion)**



\* 2020 direct expenditures exclude direct support costs and indirect support costs; note: expenditures differ from the actual expenses presented in statement V of the audited annual accounts because they exclude outstanding commitments.

265. Table 6 displays expenditures by focus area and shows an increased share of funds being allocated to crisis response, a similar trend as in previous years. During the year, crisis response accounted for 83 percent or USD 5.9 billion of expenditures (excluding indirect and direct support costs) compared with 78 percent and USD 5.1 billion in 2019. Resilience building accounted for 13 percent of expenditures in 2020, and addressing root causes for 3 percent.

**Table 6: Direct expenditures\* by focus area, 2019–2020 (excluding direct and indirect support costs) (USD billion)**

Focus area	Expenditures (% of total)		% increase /decrease to 2019
	2020	2019	
Crisis response	5.9 (83%)	5.3 (78%)	↑ 12%
Resilience building	1.0 (13%)	1.3 (19%)	↓ 26%
Root causes	0.2 (3%)	0.2 (4%)	↓ 3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.1 (100%)</b>	<b>6.8 (100%)</b>	<b>↑ 4%</b>

\* Direct expenditures exclude direct support costs and indirect support costs. Expenditures differ from the actual expenses presented in statement V of the audited annual accounts because they exclude outstanding commitments.

266. WFP's primary responsibility for responding to emergencies and saving lives is reflected in its increased activity in crisis response. Compared with 2019, crisis response expenditures grew by 12 percent, while spending on resilience building dropped by 26 percent, from US 1.3 billion in 2019 to USD 954 million. Root causes remained relatively stable, decreasing by 3 percent from 2019 to USD 230 million in 2020. As countries' needs continue to evolve, country offices will switch between responding to the short-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting governments in minimizing the long-term effects of related protracted socioeconomic shocks.

#### Direct expenditure growth by cost category under the strategic plan

267. To accomplish its goal of saving lives and changing lives, WFP makes use of a range of transfer modalities. Since implementation of the current Strategic Plan (2017–2021), WFP has focused on reaching more people for longer periods and with increasingly diversified transfer modalities for achieving a world with zero hunger.
268. Table 7 illustrates the growth in direct expenditures over the period of the strategic plan, by cost category. Although expenditures in all transfer modalities have increased since 2017, expenditures for CBTs and capacity strengthening and service provision have risen the most. CBTs have grown by an average of 14 percent each year from 2017 to 2020, establishing WFP as the leading global agency for the delivery of cash-based assistance in humanitarian and development settings.

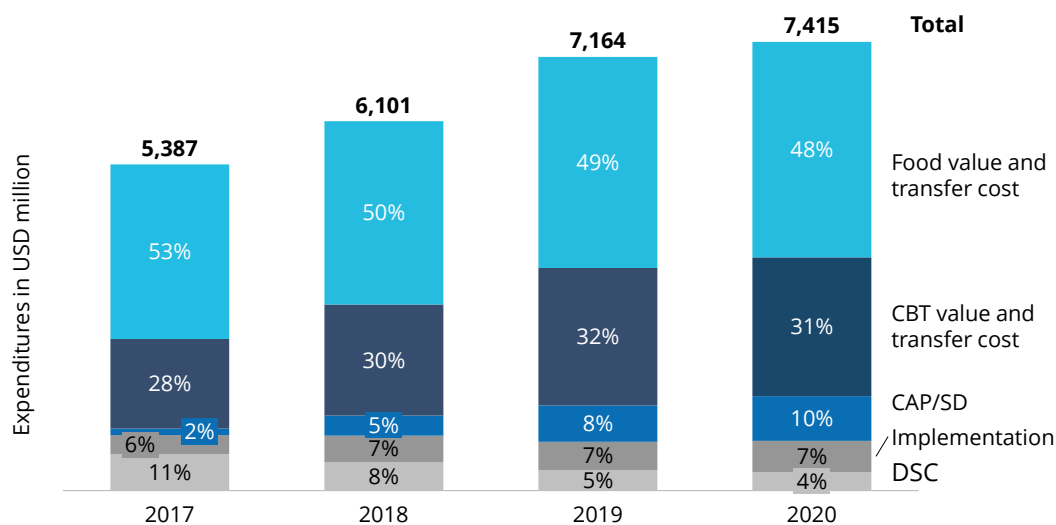


**Table 7: Direct expenditures\* by cost category, 2017–2020**

Cost category	Direct expenditures (USD million)				2017–2020 CAGR
	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Food value and transfer cost	2 882	3 028	3 488	3 563	↑ 7%
CBT value and transfer cost	1 532	1 860	2 273	2 291	↑ 14%
Capacity strengthening/ service delivery	108	332	599	738	↑ 90%
Implementation	263	408	468	514	↑ 25%
Direct support costs	602	473	336	310	↓ 20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 387</b>	<b>6 101</b>	<b>7 164</b>	<b>7 415</b>	<b>↑ 11%</b>

\* Direct expenditures exclude indirect support costs, trust funds and special accounts. The CAGR – compound annual growth rate – represents the constant rate of change over the period. Expenditures differ from the actual expenses presented in statement V of the audited annual accounts because they exclude outstanding commitments.

269. WFP's expenditures for capacity strengthening and service provision to help governments improve their national policies and capacities, social protection and food systems have nearly doubled each year from 2017 to 2020, from USD 108 million in 2017 to USD 738 million in 2020. Much of the growth in 2020 was in service provision, which increased by 30 percent over 2019 as WFP activated its extensive supply chain network to provide cargo and passenger transport services on behalf of all humanitarian organizations.
270. As a result, CBTs and capacity strengthening and service delivery have increased as a share of overall assistance (figure 15), especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2017, CBTs accounted for 28 percent of expenditures and capacity strengthening and service delivery for 2 percent; in 2020, CBTs accounted for nearly one-third of direct expenditures, slightly less than in 2019, primarily owing to WFP's handover of the CBT programme in Turkey. Capacity strengthening and service delivery accounted for 10 percent in 2020 and investment in government capacities to support people is expected to grow, with the long-term aim of reducing the need for humanitarian interventions.

**Figure 15: WFP direct expenditure by cost category, 2017–2020**

Note: expenditures differ from the actual expenses presented in Statement V of the Annual Audited Accounts because they exclude outstanding commitments

Abbreviations: CAP/SD = capacity strengthening/service delivery; DSC = direct support costs

271. Although food transfers have decreased as a percentage of direct expenditures since 2017, food transfer values and delivery costs have grown steadily by an average of 7 percent per year, from a total value of USD 2.9 billion in 2017 to USD 3.6 billion in 2020. The quality of food transfers has also improved, particularly through increased use of fortified staple foods for addressing vitamin and mineral deficiencies, which represent one of the most cost-effective ways of contributing to the achievement of SDG 2 on zero hunger.
272. While WFP's programme of work has increased substantially, country-level direct support costs have decreased on average by nearly 20 percent per year since 2017, from USD 602 million to USD 310 million in 2020. This reduction is in part owing to WFP improving its attribution of costs, but also reflects gains made through economies of scale. Implementation costs have grown by an annual average of 25 percent, to USD 514 million in 2020, but have remained at a consistent level relative to other cost categories. Looking ahead, budget management will continue to be a critical area of focus for WFP as it moves to safeguard its funding base in the face of increasing uncertainty.

## Part V: Looking forward

*This final part of the annual performance report reviews how WFP plans to address challenges and leverage opportunities in 2021 and beyond in ways that help people, communities and governments achieve zero hunger and in light of the continued operational challenges posed by COVID-19 and other shocks.*

### Operational impacts of COVID-19, economic, climate and conflict shocks

273. Food and nutrition security are predicated on the complex interactions among people and their economies, armed conflict and climate. As the challenges of 2020 have highlighted, these interactions are increasingly fragile. The momentous economic decline unleashed by COVID-19 is projected to continue, driving up to 163 million additional people into extreme poverty in 2021.<sup>81</sup> An estimated 34 million people, the majority living in 23 countries, were at risk of famine in early 2021.<sup>82</sup> In 79 countries with WFP operational presence, 270 million people were estimated to be affected by food crisis or worse as a result of conflict and political instability, pandemic-related destitution and climate shocks.<sup>83</sup> The exceptional speed and magnitude of the deterioration in global food security threaten to overwhelm the humanitarian system.
274. Climate change has contributed to the growing frequency and scale of weather-related disasters and is projected to increase the risk of floods – a major cause of disaster-related displacement – fivefold by 2090.<sup>84</sup> In addition, global warming is likely to exacerbate migration and conflict over natural resources, continuing the decade-long global rise in conflict and violence. Estimates for mid-2020 suggested that forced displacement affected 80 million people globally and nearly 46 million people were internally displaced;<sup>85</sup> at the beginning of 2021, countries including the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic were experiencing escalating violence.
275. The exceptional needs and challenges posed by COVID-19 may continue well beyond 2021. WFP's ability to address historically high needs is challenged by a growing funding gap, which stood at 42 percent in January 2021, based on forecast operational requirements of USD 13.5 billion and expected contributions of USD 7.8 billion.<sup>86</sup> There is a risk that the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to long-lasting reductions in the levels of financial support for WFP's operations, as governments continue to face large deficits and pressing domestic priorities. The pandemic has underscored the increasingly complex operational environment facing WFP and will continue to have an impact on operations for the foreseeable future.

<sup>81</sup> World Bank. 2021. *Updated estimates of the impact of COVID-19 on global poverty: Looking back at 2020 and the outlook for 2021*. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/updated-estimates-impact-covid-19-global-poverty-looking-back-2020-and-outlook-2021>.

<sup>82</sup> WFP and FAO. 2021. *Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity*. (March to July 2021 outlook). <https://www.wfp.org/publications/hunger-hotspots-fao-wfp-early-warnings-acute-food-insecurity-march-july-2021-outlook>.

<sup>83</sup> WFP. 2021. *Update on operational requirements and funding forecast for 2021*. (WFP/EB.1/2021/5-B/1.). <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000121844/download/>.

<sup>84</sup> European Parliament. 2020. *Climate Change and Migration. Legal and policy challenges and responses to environmentally induced migration*. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655591/IPOL\\_STU\(2020\)655591\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/655591/IPOL_STU(2020)655591_EN.pdf).

<sup>85</sup> UNHCR. 2020. *Mid-year Trends Report 2020*. Available at: [UNHCR - Mid-Year Trends 2020](https://www.unhcr.org/press/2020/07/2020-mid-year-trends-report)

<sup>86</sup> WFP/EB.1/2021/5-B/1. *Update on operational requirements and funding forecast for 2021*.

## Strategic planning in the context of United Nations reform

276. The year 2021 marks an important transition for WFP as it develops a new strategic plan and corporate results framework (CRF) for 2022–2026, continues to implement the United Nations reform and innovates its ways of working in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and climate-related risks. At time of writing, formulation of the WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2026) is under way. This will be the first strategic plan to be shaped by an organizational theory of change establishing the basis for results measurement and accountability. The new CRF will be informed by a “line of sight” exercise and will present an opportunity to review WFP’s corporate indicators and methods of aggregation. In addition, the new strategic plan and accompanying CRF will have important implications for second-generation CSPs, which will focus on emergency response while articulating how WFP contributes to national hunger reduction priorities and a broad range of SDGs through strategic partnerships.
277. Receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize has highlighted the importance of articulating the parameters of WFP’s contributions to peace. In 2021, WFP became co-chair of the DAC-United Nations dialogue on implementation of the OECD-DAC recommendation on the humanitarian–development–peace nexus in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The dialogue is expected to strengthen partnerships in these settings and improve collective efforts to end need, sustain peace and achieve the SDGs.
278. In April 2021, WFP management hosted a roundtable with the Executive Board on measuring WFP’s contribution to peace. The peace measurement approach launched in 2020 is being piloted in several countries with the aim of integrating relevant data into WFP’s reporting, risk management and monitoring systems. In parallel, WFP’s 2013 policy on peacebuilding in transition settings<sup>87</sup> will be evaluated to review the quality of the policy in the current global landscape, and implementation challenges.
279. WFP will continue to align the analysis, design, implementation and monitoring of its country-level operations with the collective outcomes laid out in United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks (UNSDCFs). System-wide reporting mechanisms such as UN INFO will be supported and adapted to improve alignment with other United Nations reporting on the SDGs. Emphasis will be placed on leveraging opportunities presented by the United Nations reform and the new Grand Bargain (2021–2023), acquiring access to new sources of SDG financing, promoting localization, engaging with the private sector and improving country-level coordination and accountability.
280. A new resolution of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) was adopted in December 2020 and will orient the development priorities of the United Nations system for the next four years. In 2021, WFP is analysing the implications of the new QCPR on the organization’s field operations and corporate accountability instruments with the aim of operationalizing the new mandates emerging from the reform in the WFP Strategic Plan (2022–2026) and other instruments. WFP will continue to support efforts to define joint activities, improve the measurement of joint programming results and participate in reviews of joint programme guidance, including the Funding Compact.

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<sup>87</sup> WFP. 2013. WFP’s Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings. (WFP/EB.2/2013/4-A/Rev.1). [https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/eb/wfpdoc062766.pdf?\\_ga=2.157569530.1110231927.1620670137-988507363.1619778430](https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/eb/wfpdoc062766.pdf?_ga=2.157569530.1110231927.1620670137-988507363.1619778430).

## Strengthening core functions and pursuing corporate priorities in 2021

281. In 2021, WFP will continue to pursue six corporate priorities that build on those outlined by the Executive Director in past years: leadership in emergencies; funding and partnerships for zero hunger; digital transformation; excellence in programming – the humanitarian-development-peace nexus; unlocking WFP's potential – simplification and efficiency; and people management.
282. WFP's capacity to meet the growing need for emergency response will remain a priority in 2021. Integrated risk analysis and improved systems and tools will enhance preparedness and ensure adequate surge capacity at the global level and strong leadership in early action and response. The pandemic has provided impetus for further simplifying WFP's emergency preparedness and response systems and procedures, strengthening engagement in the emergency telecommunications, food security and logistics clusters, and expanding the provision of common services. A new emergency response framework will be finalized in 2021, reinforcing the organization's leadership in this field. WFP will continue to leverage its capacity in access negotiations and its field presence to secure sustainable access for itself, its cooperating partners and the broader humanitarian community as a foundation for effective humanitarian response and a contribution to peacebuilding.
283. Against this background, WFP will reinforce its core support functions, such as budget and risk management, internal controls and investigations, and supply chains. WFP will mitigate the risks outlined in the corporate risk register, including third-party risks during emergencies, in order to maximize the efficient and effective use of WFP's resources and safeguard its assets.
284. The recommendations from WFP's bottom-up strategic budgeting exercise, which include developing new budget governance structures and frameworks for addressing many of the audit and evaluation findings regarding the organization's allocation of internal resources, will be put in place by mid-2021. These measures aim to align WFP's funding more efficiently to operational priorities, improve transparency regarding where funds are allocated, and strengthen accountability to beneficiaries and donors. Building on WFP's success in service provision, pilots are under way aimed at developing global shared service centres with other United Nations agencies. For example, FAO is considering using WFP's vehicle leasing arrangements, and the use of shared financial service centres will be explored.
285. Recommendations on optimizing the allocation and management of PSA and extra-budgetary funding in order to better meet operational requirements will be implemented in 2021 and changes will be incorporated into the WFP management plan for 2022–2024. Efforts to diversify, pilot and scale up innovative funding streams and to monitor and manage financial risks will also be prioritized, including by increasing the use of debt swap contributions and establishing new strategic financing partnerships with international financial institutions. WFP will continue to scale up its collaboration with the private sector and seek to increase giving from individuals to USD 70 million by the end of 2021.
286. The digital transformation of WFP's business and data processes will be continued in 2021 to ensure that its decision making is driven by updated and comprehensive data, while generating savings, enhancing data security and improving services to partners and beneficiaries. The use of WFP's digital assistance platform for cash-based and in-kind distributions will be expanded with the aim of reducing the risk of errors and duplication of beneficiary data. Building on existing work, efforts to improve the timing, quality and aggregation of data on supply chains, programmes, monitoring and evaluation, security and emergency response, from the field and headquarters, will be augmented. Online services such as the centralized ticketing service and maintenance of a COVID-19 interactive

travel map will be continued in 2021, enabling WFP staff and partners to undertake essential humanitarian travel while meeting COVID-19-related international travel restrictions, quarantine provisions and testing requirements.

287. In 2021, WFP will strategically plan and operationalize all aspects of its workforce and people management through the application of critical frameworks such as the new WFP people policy to be presented to the Board in 2021, and the comprehensive action plan (CAP) on addressing harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination. WFP is committed to accelerating progress in meeting the CAP's goals and will continue to roll out enhanced initiatives that confirm the organization as an improved, respectful and inclusive workplace for all its employees. The results of the global staff survey carried out in early 2021 will help shape the development of new policies and activities.
288. Building on lessons learned in 2020, WFP is considering a phased adoption of new ways of working for staff worldwide. Implementation would begin with a pilot in headquarters starting in October 2021, once the restrictions on office presence are lifted. This shift from remote working to smart working may involve reducing the number of staff members who are present in the office every day; staff whose tasks and roles require physical presence will be given priority for returning to the office. Similar new ways of working, adapted to local contexts, may be extended to field offices in 2022.

## **Saving and changing lives in recovering from COVID-19**

289. WFP responded swiftly and successfully to the COVID-19 pandemic – despite the immense challenges placed on its operations, systems and staff – ensuring the continuity of humanitarian assistance throughout the world. An evaluation launched in 2020 will assess how WFP adjusted its management, policies, programmes and operations to the pandemic. Building on good practices from the response, WFP will enhance and expand its investments in remote analysis, real-time data collection and early warning systems; logistics and emergency preparedness, including for future health emergencies; and the use of flexible funding instruments.
290. As governments expanded their cash-based safety nets in the wake of the pandemic, they increasingly turned to WFP for support in sustaining national social protection systems and ensuring delivery of basic services, such as school-based and nutrition programmes. In 2021, WFP began to explore the opportunities for, challenges to and risks of adapting its service provision model to meet evolving requests, and launched a cross-division review to identify options and implications for its policies, processes and risk management and accountability frameworks.
291. The high likelihood and impact of future social, economic, climate and environmental risks underscores the importance of taking a holistic, systems-based approach to reducing food and nutrition insecurity. Priority should be given to implementing gender equality, protection and accountability measures that tackle the rising levels of inequality that have arisen following the pandemic, including through further work in implementing the disability inclusion road map. WFP will also prioritize assistance for countries and support for programmes focused on back-to-school efforts to reverse the harm caused by school closures. School health and nutrition programmes, especially school feeding, will help reverse lost human capital potential due to the pandemic and act as an incentive for children to return and stay in school.
292. Strengthening global and local food systems, and ensuring that they are sustainable and equitable, requires building people's resilience to shocks and stressors, and concerted global effort. WFP is playing an active role in the June 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit, supporting the United Nations Special Envoy, providing human and financial resources for the Summit Secretariat and participating in the pre-summit and summit processes and governance structures. WFP is the

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administrative agency for the summit and the anchor agency for action track 5 on building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses, and the Executive Director serves on the summit advisory committee.

293. Looking ahead, the prospects for 2021 and beyond seem daunting as new waves of COVID-19, continued economic weakness and protracted conflict have transformed last year's concerns of famine into the sad reality of 2021. However, the launch of COVID-19 vaccination programmes in early 2021 and the implementation of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access Facility (COVAX) that supports equitable access to vaccine supplies provide hope for the global community in the long term.
294. Responding to emergencies and saving lives and livelihoods – through direct assistance or by strengthening country capacities – remain at the heart of WFP's operations, especially as humanitarian needs become increasingly complex and protracted. Concurrently, WFP continues to change lives by building the resilience of food insecure people, communities and food systems. The challenges of 2020 were unprecedented, but as this annual performance report attests, WFP successfully met those challenges, demonstrating its agility and capacity in accelerating innovation and adapting to provide a record number of people with needed food assistance during a global pandemic.

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## Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
BIG	Business Innovations Group
CAP	comprehensive action plan
CBO	United Nations Common Back Office
CBT	cash-based transfer
CCA	common country analysis
CCI	critical corporate initiative
CCS	country capacity strengthening
CFM	complaint and feedback mechanism
COVID-19	2019 coronavirus
CPP	Corporate Planning and Performance Division
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CSP	country strategic plan
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
DCO	United Nations Development Coordination Office
EDMF	Emerging Donor Matching Fund
ERP	enterprise resource planning
ESSN	emergency social safety net
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	food assistance for assets
FIN	Corporate Finance Division
FSP	financial service provider
GaM	Gender with Age Marker
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
GHRP	Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19
GSS	global staff survey
HRM	Human Resources Division
IAHE	inter-agency humanitarian evaluation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICSP	interim country strategic plan
IDP	internally displaced person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	international financial institution
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organization

INK	Innovation and Knowledge Management Division
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IRA	Immediate Response Account
IRM	Integrated Road Map
IR-PREP	Immediate Response Account for Preparedness
ISC	indirect support costs
KPI	key performance indicator
LEG	Legal Office
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MSD	Management Services Division
NGO	non-governmental organization
NYC	New York Office
PRO	Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division
PSA	programme support and administrative (budget)
PSEA	prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
QCPR	quadrennial comprehensive policy review
RBA	Rome-based agency
SCO	Supply Chain Operations Division
SCOPE	WFP's digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SNF	specialized nutritious food
SCO	Supply Chain Operations Division
SRAC	Strategic Resource Allocation Committee
TEC	Technology Division
UNCERF	United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSC	United Nations Digital Service Centre
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework
UNSDG	United Nations sustainable development group
WHO	World Health Organization