



Strategy for Sweden's cooperation with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) 2020–2023

1. Scope of the strategy

This strategy will underpin Sweden's cooperation with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) for 2020–2023. The strategy establishes the priorities and forms of collaboration for Sweden's membership of, and partnership with, the WFP at global, regional and national level.

The strategy is guided by Sweden's Policy for Global Development and its overall objective of contributing to equitable and sustainable global development¹, the Policy Framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance², and the Swedish Foreign Service action plan for feminist foreign policy 2019–2022³. The strategy also takes its cue from the Government's guidelines for strategies in Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance⁴ and Sweden's strategy for multilateral development policy⁵. The strategy is also in line with the Government's priorities in the area of humanitarian assistance and is in accordance with the Strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid provided through the Swedish International

¹ Our common responsibility – Sweden's policy for global development (Govt Bill 2002/03:122)

² Government Communication 2016/17:60

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<https://www.regeringen.se/496bd5/contentassets/8b3aa00d45f34e4cba0b96801815ba9d/utrikesforvaltningens-handlingsplan-for-feministisk-utrikespolitik-20192022>

⁴ UD2017/21053/IU

⁵ Reg. no UD2017/21055/FN

Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) 2017–2020⁶. According to these, humanitarian assistance must be based on humanitarian needs and be guided by the humanitarian principles of *humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence* and the principles of *good humanitarian donorship*.

This strategy is based on the WFP's mandate and strategic framework. The organisational assessment conducted by the Government Offices (Ministry for Foreign Affairs) in 2019 forms the basis of the strategy. The strategy also takes into account the information on cooperation with the WFP contributed by Swedish missions abroad and government agencies in Sweden. The agreement on four-year core support to the WFP entered into in 2018 also forms the basis of Sweden's advocacy work within the organisation.

The Government has devised the strategy in consultation with the relevant government agencies and civil society actors.

2. The WFP's mandate and activities

2.1 The WFP's mandate

The WFP has a dual mandate: it distributes food in humanitarian emergencies and supports development via food assistance. Its humanitarian activities account for approximately 80 per cent of its resources, while the rest goes to development activities, primarily in nutrition. As set out in Article II of the WFP's general regulations and general rules, it is (a) to use food aid to support economic and social development; (b) to meet refugee and other emergency and protracted relief food needs; and (c) to promote world food security in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Within the UN-led humanitarian system's cluster approach, the WFP leads the global clusters for logistics and IT functions in humanitarian operations. In addition, the WFP and the FAO jointly lead the Food Security Cluster

⁶ Reg. no UD2017/01299/KH

to improve coordination in that area. In 2018, the WFP's operations reached 86.7 million people in 83 countries.

2.2 Strategic plan

The WFP Strategic Plan for 2017–2021 has the overarching objective of contributing to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda. There is a special focus on SDG 2, zero hunger, and SDG 17, on partnerships for the SDGs. The SDGs involve moving from saving lives to changing lives, with a primary focus on the people with the greatest needs. According to the Strategic Plan, responding to crises is the WFP's primary focus, but the WFP also works to strengthen the resilience of affected people in protracted crises by applying a development lens in its humanitarian response.

2.3 The WFP's financial structure

The WFP's activities are financed exclusively through voluntary funding, and its annual revenue is approximately USD 7 billion. The proportion of core support – known as 'regular resources' – has fallen in recent years and was just below 6 per cent in 2018. The remaining 94 per cent of the WFP's revenue goes to various forms of earmarked operations. For several years now, Sweden has been the WFP's largest donor of core support, and in 2018 it was the eighth largest donor compared with other countries. Swedish core support to the WFP may only be used for humanitarian activities.

2.4 Organisational assessment

In 2019, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs carried out an organisational assessment of the WFP⁷. The conclusion of this assessment was that the WFP's unique capacity to contribute food assistance in humanitarian crises makes the organisation highly relevant and important to the Government's goal of using humanitarian assistance to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain the human dignity of people who have been affected by, or are at risk of being affected by, armed conflict, natural disasters or other disaster situations. Some of the Government's other thematic areas in which the WFP can play an important role include

⁷ UD2019/19478 Organisational assessment, UN World Food Programme (WFP)

environmental and climate-resilient sustainable development and the sustainable use of resources, peaceful and inclusive societies, and global gender equality.

According to the organisational assessment, the WFP plays an important role in developing norms and standards in the area of humanitarian assistance, although the complex situations in which the organisation often operates sometimes limit the possibilities of exerting influence at policy level or contributing to capacity development. Moreover, the WFP is considered to play an important coordinating role in the humanitarian system, within the framework of its mandate. In addition, the WFP is considered to integrate the perspective of poor people and a gender equality and rights perspective in a satisfactory way in its operations, while there is a need for a more structural approach concerning the integration of a conflict perspective, and more efforts are needed to ensure that environmental and climate perspectives gain more traction in all its activities.

Since the last organisational assessment from 2015, the WFP is considered to have made progress in streamlining its work. The organisation has a clear structure with a long-term strategy for its work, and the Strategic Plan for 2017–2021 is well adapted to SDGs 2 and 17. The WFP provides life-saving help and conducts targeted operations in line with the organisation's strategic objectives. Planning and implementation take place in complex operational environments, and operations are generally considered to be conducted in a cost-effective manner. The evaluation indicates that operations follow national priorities and that cooperation with partner countries is relevant and works well – the WFP thus achieves the desired results.

3. Focus and thematic priorities

Through strategic dialogue and predictable and flexible financial contributions, Sweden will work to ensure that the WFP achieves its overall remit and implements its Strategic Plan, with a focus on Sweden's priority issues. Sweden must be clear about the priorities identified in dialogue with the WFP at central, regional and country level, and actively work to promote synergy effects between different activities. Bilateral

support to the WFP must be in line with the strategy's priorities and approaches in relation to the WFP.

3.1 Saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity

The WFP's activities are an important component in achieving Sweden's overall objective in the humanitarian area: to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity for the benefit of people in need who have been affected by, or are at risk of being affected by, armed conflicts, natural disasters or other disaster situations. The WFP has a unique capacity to contribute food assistance in humanitarian crises and disasters. Since the WFP is often the first organisation from the international community on the ground in an emergency, it plays a crucial role in adhering to the humanitarian imperative and the humanitarian principles. The organisation's role in terms of coordination and providing logistics throughout the UN system means that its contribution to achieving the objective of Swedish humanitarian policy is even greater.

Sweden will act to ensure that:

- the WFP pursues a needs-based, rapid and effective humanitarian response in the area of food security to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain the human dignity of people affected by crises;
- the trend towards earmarked contributions is reversed, particularly at activity level, which affects the organisation's efficiency in emergencies;
- the WFP works to guarantee the sustainability of results, including strengthening the link between operations, capacity-building and long-term development results, as well as risk prevention and building resilience, in order to save lives and reduce the risk of recurrent humanitarian crises; and
- the WFP integrates protection for people affected by crises into its activities and works for increased respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law.

3.2 Thematic priorities

The Government's thematic areas of environmentally and climate-resilient sustainable development and the sustainable use of resources, peaceful and inclusive societies, and global gender equality, are also important in cooperation with the WFP.

3.2.1 Environmentally and climate-resilient sustainable development and sustainable use of natural resources

The WFP's work is to contribute both internally and externally to environmentally and climate-resilient sustainable development and the sustainable use of resources to achieve the SDGs, and also to reduce the risk of recurrent crises and disasters and ensure that the organisation's resources are used in the most efficient way. By virtue of its size within the UN system, the WFP's impact in this respect is considerable.

Sweden will act to ensure that:

- the WFP strengthens the integration of climate-resilient and environmental sustainability and measures to keep in line with the Paris Agreement and effectively implement the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda; and
- the WFP considers sustainability in all procurements the organisation carries out.

3.2.2 Peaceful and inclusive societies

Given that 80 per cent of global humanitarian needs are in conflict-affected environments, the WFP has to continuously take account of conflict-related issues in its operations. The WFP's role in contributing to a reduced risk of conflict by reducing hunger is becoming increasingly important, and work is under way within the organisation to ensure that activities in conflict areas are more clearly conflict-sensitive and can make an active contribution to developments towards peace or reduced tensions. The WFP's work to increase synergies between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding operations is very important in helping to reduce levels of conflict, achieving sustainable results and, in the long-term, reducing humanitarian needs.

Sweden will act to ensure that:

- the WFP strengthens the link between humanitarian aid, development operations and peace operations; and
- the WFP contributes to further strengthening harmonisation and coordination within the UN system to make use of synergies between various activities in a spirit of extended and inclusive partnership.

3.2.3 Global gender equality

Sweden's continued engagement in the WFP's gender equality work is important as part of the feminist foreign policy. The WFP plays a role in

implementing the goal of global gender equality as the organisation has such a comprehensive presence in many parts of the world and reaches areas that often lack state presence. The WFP's impact in terms of normative issues such as gender equality is therefore extremely important.

Sweden will act to ensure that:

- gender equality is integrated into all activities to guarantee transformative results.

4. Priorities concerning the organisation's working methods

According to the Government Offices' organisational assessment, the WFP has a clear long-term vision and strategy for its work. The current Strategic Plan for 2017–2021 is adapted to SDGs 2 and 17 on zero hunger and implementation and global partnership for the SDGs. The strategic focus is well-known and is welcomed within the organisation and by its partners. The WFPs' comprehensive reform processes in recent years have gradually strengthened the WFP's ability to deliver the desired results. However, the assessment is that the WFP's results framework needs to be developed to clarify the link between priorities, resources and results. The Strategic Plan is well-adapted to the normative framework, particularly in terms of the SDGs. The WFP has developed into a highly decentralised organisation, and decision-making has largely been delegated to the country directors. Work remains to be done to clarify roles and responsibilities in this area and to staff the organisation with the right skills. However, the organisation can also improve its ability to follow up and systematically learn from evaluations.

The WFP's dual mandate, including both humanitarian assistance and long-term development cooperation, makes the organisation particularly well suited to ensuring that both approaches can reinforce each other on the basis of a joint analysis and risk assessment, as well as shared objectives. In this way, the WFP can support long-term resilience as well as national and local capacity to prevent and prepare for risks related to natural disasters, conflicts, climate change and other crises.

The WFP has independent external and internal audit systems that follow international guidelines. However, one identified weakness of control

mechanisms is the case management time-frame, which can be long. The organisation has robust policies to combat fraud and corruption. Since 2018, there has been a revised policy against harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination, and an action plan for this work is in the process of being drawn up.

On the basis of the Government Offices' organisational assessment of the WFP, the Government intends to prioritise the following issues concerning the WFP's working methods:

With issues concerning predictable and flexible financing, Sweden will focus on:

- the WFP's work to increase the proportion of core support and/or softer earmarking in the budget, and increased visibility for Swedish core support and Sweden's bilateral support; and
- the WFP's work to broaden the donor base and spread knowledge about the advantages of predictable and flexible financing.

With issues concerning reform and streamlining the UN system, Sweden will focus on:

- the WFP's work to implement reform of the UN development system with the objective of implementing the 2030 Agenda;
- the WFP's important role and responsibility in efforts to further strengthen harmonisation and coordination within the UN system, including between the Rome-based UN bodies in light of the ambition to deliver as *one* UN;
- the WFP's commitments to making the humanitarian response system more efficient, transparent and inclusive, in light of the Grand Bargain agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in 2016; and
- the WFP's work on cash-based support, which has increased considerably in recent years. Collaboration within the broader humanitarian system in the area of cash support will be an important issue in this context, as will the challenges that come with arrangements, such as computer security for recipients.

With issues concerning sustainable results and results-based management, Sweden will focus on:

- the WFP's work to strengthen results-based management and budgeting and to make clear the link between objectives, resources, activities and results in the organisation's auditing;
- effective integration of cross-cutting priorities in the organisation's core budget in order to guarantee qualitative and sustainable results in all operational activities;
- the WFP's development of sustainable procurement (use of selection criteria for economic, environmental and social sustainability, and application of life cycle analysis), including coordination with other UN bodies;
- the WFP's ability to constructively and effectively cooperate with the private sector and civil society in the field.

With issues concerning risk management, transparency, independent control systems for internal controls, and anti-corruption, Sweden will focus on:

- the WFP's work for greater transparency and closer information exchange with donors concerning the organisation's work, including in the follow-up of recommendations from internal and external audits and the ability to learn lessons and incorporate important conclusions into activities;
- the WFP's work to combat corruption and abuse of power, improved protection for whistleblowers and the requisite resources; and
- accountability and transparency – including, but not exclusively, in relation to the organisation's handling of the issue of harassment, sexual harassment and exploitation, power abuse and discrimination within the organisation and its operations;

With issues concerning personnel policy and workplace culture, Sweden will focus on:

- the WFP's recruitment of staff, which must be based on skills and achievements;
- the WFP's work to ensure an even gender balance, with a special focus on senior/management positions, non-discriminatory

employment and organisational structures and a human resources policy that makes it easier for both men and women employees to combine work and family life; and

- the WFP's work to ensure that the workplace culture is respectful; in this context, it is important for the WFP to implement the 2018 policy on harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of power and discrimination in all parts of the organisation.

5. Advocacy and forms of collaboration

5.1 Advocacy

Sweden's long-term and comprehensive support to the WFP provides good opportunities for influence and advocacy on the work of the Executive Board and in dialogue with the organisation. According to the established rotation, Sweden has a seat on the WFP Executive Board for nine out of every 12 years, currently during the period 2019–2021. The fact that Sweden entered into a strategic partnership agreement in 2018 on multi-year core support to the WFP further deepens our close cooperation with the organisation. The main advocacy channels include:

- a continuous and consistent bilateral dialogue with the WFP at both political and official level;
- active and constructive involvement in the WFP Executive Board, together with like-minded Member States, with the aim of gaining traction for Swedish priorities and values;
- an annual high-level consultation with the WFP's leadership, preferably at state secretary level;
- ongoing monitoring of both core and bilateral support to the WFP, which includes a close dialogue with counterparts in the organisation;
- a constructive and results-oriented dialogue at regional and country level with the WFP in countries where Sweden has humanitarian aid and where the WFP is represented so as to monitor both Swedish core support and bilateral support;

- harnessing Swedish expertise and experience in the WFP's areas of activity by promoting recruitment of Swedes to the WFP's regular positions and to secondments and JPO positions for mutual learning and skills exchange; and
- harnessing Swedish companies' expertise and innovative capacity, particularly concerning sustainability issues, in procurements.

5.2 Forms of collaboration

The Government Offices (Ministry for Foreign Affairs) has the main responsibility for Sweden's relations with the WFP. Strategic, coherent and effective advocacy requires close cooperation and information exchange with all the relevant government agencies and missions abroad (especially the Swedish Embassy in Rome, Sida and other relevant missions abroad) and with other actors in Sweden, such as civil society organisations, business and academia. The overarching division of roles and responsibilities within the Government Offices, and between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and the missions abroad, in relation to the WFP is set out in Sweden's strategy for multilateral development policy.

Organisation consultations on the WFP are held at least once a year, with the aim of sharing experiences from cooperation and dialogue and strengthening coordinated and strategic action. The organisation consultations are convened by the Government Offices (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), which invites representatives of relevant ministries, Sida, the Swedish Embassy in Rome and other relevant agencies in Sweden and abroad to attend.

6. Follow-up

The main results monitoring is carried out in relation to the WFP's Strategic Plan and its accompanying results frameworks, as well as Sweden's priorities as stated in this strategy.

Implementation of the strategy is set out in a joint annual work plan for the Swedish actors. The work plan specifies how the year's activities will contribute to achievement of the strategy's goals and the division of work

and responsibilities between the Government Offices (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), Sida and Sweden's missions abroad. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for developing and updating the work plan in consultation with the relevant government agencies and missions abroad.

The next organisational assessment of the WFP will be conducted ahead of the upcoming strategy period and by 2023 at the latest.

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