



# Communications, Public Policy and Private Partnerships Division Directive

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Supersedes:

## WFP Directive on Information Disclosure

### 1. Introduction

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is committed to making information relating to its operations and programmes available to the public. WFP believes public access to information contributes to a better understanding of WFP's unique mission and enhances stakeholder participation in the fight against global hunger.

WFP's Information Disclosure Directive aims to enhance transparency and accountability of WFP's operations and decision-making. The Directive is intended to ensure that information related to WFP programmes and operations is available to the public, except for limited information that is deemed confidential as set out under Section III of this Directive. WFP is directly accountable to its Executive Board, comprised of representatives of United Nations (UN) Member States, the communities that WFP serves, and its donors.

Open dialogue with stakeholders and the public, including beneficiaries, will help enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of WFP projects and programmes.

For the purposes of this Directive, 'information' is defined as printed, electronic materials or oral communications that provide knowledge about WFP activities, including, but not limited to, its programmes and operations.

Compliance with the Directive is the responsibility of senior management and the heads of WFP departments and offices at Headquarters and in the field. They will: ensure that information covered by the Directive is made available for disclosure; respond to requests for information; and facilitate access to documents, all with a view to enhancing understanding of WFP's work.

The Directive is available on the WFP website.

## 2. Public Access

WFP disseminates information to the public through various means, including the WFP corporate website, publications, news releases, spokespersons, WFP representatives and senior staff. The Directive recognizes the following eight categories of information:

- i) institutional information;
- ii) information on WFP policies and strategies;
- iii) operational information;
- iv) information on evaluations;
- v) information on WFP procurement;
- vi) financial information;
- vii) legal information, and
- viii) information on hunger and humanitarian preparedness.

For further details of each type of information material above see Annex I.



General enquiries should be addressed to:

Communications and Public Policy Division

World Food Programme

Via C. G. Viola 68

Parco de' Medici

00148 Rome- Italy

[wfpinfo@wfp.org](mailto:wfpinfo@wfp.org)

Requests for information should be as specific as possible and should identify the documents or information sought. WFP will not respond to requests that are submitted anonymously. WFP reserves the right to deny abusive or excessive requests for information, and to make certain information available on a cost-recovery basis, particularly if the request pertains to hard-copy documents<sup>1</sup>.

### 3. Exceptions

WFP aims to strike a balance between disclosing information and its obligation to respect confidentiality. In some cases, there are legal, operational and practical considerations that are necessary to preserve the interests of WFP, its staff and its various partners. The kinds of information described below are deemed confidential and not available to the public:

- i) Internal inter-office or intra-office documents, including memoranda, draft documents and correspondence among WFP staff and consultants.

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<sup>1</sup> These costs include but are not limited to overheads, retrieval, preparation, reproduction and shipping. WFP management will develop a cost-recovery policy that details the procedures.

- ii) Information that is confidential under contractual or other legal obligations of WFP, or which could, if disclosed, increase WFP's exposure to legal risk or violate applicable law including WFP's internal regulations, rules and procedures.
- iii) Intellectual property covered by an obligation of confidentiality or non-disclosure, or where its non-disclosure is otherwise in the interest of WFP.
- iv) Information, the disclosure of which is likely to endanger the safety and security of any individual, violate his or her rights or invade his or her privacy.
- v) Information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the security or conduct of an operation or activity of WFP.
- vi) Information, other than generic reporting, that does not disclose the identities of individuals, regarding staff members, consultants, former staff members and consultants or prospective staff members and consultants, such as terms of employment, performance evaluations, medical information, investigations into suspected misconduct, disciplinary procedures and appeals to internal grievance and appeals mechanisms. This does not, however, prevent the release of information concerning staff members and consultants at their request or in accordance with applicable internal law of WFP, including standard UN system interagency agreements.
- vii) Information covered by legal privilege or related to audit and investigation reports or to disciplinary proceedings.

- viii) Information obtained in confidence from a government, international organization or other entity or person that would or would be likely to, if disclosed, compromise WFP's relations or policy dialogue with that party.
- ix) Information related to procurement processes, except that covered in Annex I, point v, such as pre-qualification information submitted by prospective bidders, tenders, proposals or price quotations other than total contract price, records of deliberations and financial, business or proprietary information about private entities received by WFP, unless permission is given by such private entities to release the information.
- x) Information that, because of its nature or the circumstances surrounding its creation or use, is deemed confidential in the interests of WFP or third parties.

In exceptional circumstances, WFP shall disclose confidential information if it determines that the public interest significantly outweighs the harm that may be caused by such a disclosure <sup>2</sup>.

Disclosure restrictions apply only for the protection period allotted for the document content concerned.

#### 4. Review/Appeal Process

If information being sought is not available under the categories specified in Section II, or if the information requested is denied for reasons that appear inconsistent with the spirit of this Directive, the requester may write making a case for reconsideration as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> This may be the case if, for example, WFP determines that the disclosure of certain confidential information would be likely to avert imminent and serious harm to members of the public.



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World Food Programme  
Via C. G. Viola 68  
Parco de'Medici  
00148 Rome  
Italy  
[wfpinfo@wfp.org](mailto:wfpinfo@wfp.org)

The enquirer must specify the reasons for submitting a request for review. Requests for review should preferably be submitted in English, French, Spanish or Arabic, in which case the response will be in the language of the request. Requests for review in another language will be responded to in that language if possible.

Every request for review will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt and responded to within 30 calendar days of receipt. In considering denials of requested information, the External Relations Department will consider the exceptions in Annex I of this Directive and public interest relating to disclosure of the requested information.

In the event that the requester is not satisfied with the response and a request for a document remains denied in whole or in part, the requester may ask for a review of this determination by the Information Disclosure Oversight Panel (hereinafter referred to as the "Panel"), providing reasons for the appeal.

Requests for appeals should be directed to:

The Secretariat, Information Disclosure Oversight Panel  
World Food Programme  
Via C. G. Viola 68  
Parco de'Medici  
00148 Rome  
Italy  
[wfpinfo@wfp.org](mailto:wfpinfo@wfp.org)

The Panel shall review the denial of requests to disclose a document or portion of a document to a member of the public, and provide its final decision within 90 calendar days after receipt of the appeal.

## 5. Information Disclosure Oversight Panel

### ⇒ Mandate

The Panel's mandate is to oversee the implementation of the Information Disclosure Directive and to consider and review appeals relating to it.

### ⇒ Functions

The Panel's main function is to review appeals submitted to it and to determine whether WFP's Information Disclosure Directive has been properly applied. The Panel may also meet to consider policy matters related to information disclosure and/or other ad-hoc issues, as necessary. The Panel shall make decisions by consensus. Where the Panel is not able to achieve consensus, its members shall convey their positions to the Executive Director who shall make a final decision.

### ⇒ Membership

The Panel, to be chaired by the Director, Communications, Public Policy and Private Partnerships Division, consists of the following members:

- i) Deputy Executive Director for External Relations
- ii) Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive Director
- iii) Inspector General and Director, Oversight Office
- iv) Director, Human Resources Division

Legal counsel shall attend meetings of the Panel in an advisory capacity.



⇒ Meetings and Secretariat

The Panel will meet in situ or virtually whenever there is an appeal for review. The Communications and Public Policy Division will serve as the Secretariat to the Panel, and prepare reports on the Panel's proceedings and decisions.



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## ANNEX 1

### i) Institutional Information

#### ⇒ Executive Board

The Executive Board website (<http://www.wfp.org/eb>) is part of the WFP website, and as such is available to the general public. It has its own home page, menu and multi-lingual platform and a search engine for Board documents dating back to 1996<sup>1</sup>.

#### ⇒ WFP Management and Staff

The organizational chart and descriptions of positions advertised for external recruitment are available on the WFP website.

Statements and speeches by the Executive Director are available on the WFP website.

#### ⇒ General Regulations and Rules

The General Regulations and Rules, which provides the legal framework within which WFP operates, is available on the WFP website in English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese.

### ii) Information on WFP Policies and Strategies

#### ⇒ Policy Papers

WFP's policy papers cover its approach to complex food assistance issues such as the role of food aid in promoting social and economic development and its policy on food assistance during transitions from conflict to peace.

Policy papers dating back to 1994 are available on the WFP website.

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<sup>1</sup>Documents on the website are for reference only. The contents of any document fully correspond to the original, but conversion into PDF may modify format and pagination. The originals of Board documents can be obtained from Conference Services at +39 06 6513 2645.

⇒ Strategic Plans

Strategic Plans set WFP's direction by establishing its strategic and management priorities for each four-year planning period. Strategic Plans are updated every two years and are available on the WFP website once they have been approved by the Board.

iii) Operational Information

⇒ Annual Reports

Annual Reports dating from 1995 are available on the WFP website.

⇒ Project Documents

WFP's emergency and development projects are divided into four categories:

- a) emergency operations;
- b) protracted relief and recovery operations;
- c) development projects;
- d) special operations

A project document contains a summary of the project and information about the objectives, number of beneficiaries, duration and food commitment. Project documents are organized by project category and by country and are available on the WFP website.

⇒ Standardized Project Reports

Standardized project reports (SPRs) provide information on project activities, outputs and outcomes from 1 January to 31 December for each reporting year. Any government or organization that has donated to WFP can register for access to SPRs on a password-protected website.

⇒ Assessment Reports

WFP conducts approximately 100 emergency needs assessments every year in partnership with governments, United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors. These assessments highlight food insecurity and malnutrition and report on health and education findings. They are available on the WFP website.

⇒ Information on WFP Partnerships

WFP's agreements with governments and other organizations will be available on its website. Links to United Nations agencies, NGOs and governments working with WFP, are available on the website.

⇒ Country Briefs

Country briefs, which contain facts and figures relating to a particular country and describe WFP's activities, are available on the WFP website.

iv) Information on Evaluations

The Evaluation Policy of June 2008 emphasizes that evaluation is a corporate responsibility, resting on the twin pillars of accountability and learning. It reiterates the independence of reporting evaluation findings, namely that all evaluation reports are submitted by the Director, Office of Evaluation, without prior clearance. S/he signs off on evaluation reports and submits them simultaneously to the Executive Director and the Executive Board. In keeping with WFP's full disclosure policy for evaluation, the Policy furthermore states that all evaluation reports are posted on the WFP website<sup>2</sup>. Both the full and summary evaluation reports produced by the Office of Evaluation since 1996 are publicly available on the WFP website<sup>3</sup>. Earlier reports are available upon request.

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<sup>2</sup> The full version of the WFP evaluation policy is available on the WFP website: <http://one.wfp.org/eb/docs/2008/wfp187763~2.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Full reports represent solely the consultants' views. The Executive Board Summary Reports provide a synthesis of these findings.



Guidelines for WFP's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) procedures are available on the WFP website.

Queries related to evaluations should be addressed to:

Office of Evaluation  
World Food Programme  
Via C. G. Viola, 68/70  
Parco de' Medici  
00148 Rome  
Italy  
Fax: +39 06 6513 2833 - [HQ.Evaluation@wfp.org](mailto:HQ.Evaluation@wfp.org)

#### v) Information on WFP Procurement

##### ⇒ Tender Awards

WFP procurement is guided by policies and procedures set out in documents such as Doing Business with WFP, covering food, goods and services with details of the criteria for vendor registration and qualification. Doing Business with WFP is available on the WFP website.

Details of contracts awarded for procurement tenders undertaken by WFP Rome for food are available on the WFP website. Details of contracts for goods and services, other than transport, valued at more than US\$100,000, are also available on the WFP website. The details include: names of suppliers, contract values and the nature of the products or services procured.

##### ⇒ Food Procurement Materials

The Food Procurement Map and Annual Reports provide details on WFP food and goods/service procurement. They are available on the WFP website.



Queries related to procurement should be addressed to:

Procurement Division

World Food Programme

Via C. G. Viola, 68/70

Parco de' Medici

00148 Rome

Italy

Tel: + 39 06 6513 2993

Fax: + 39 06 6513 2399

[food.procurement@wfp.org](mailto:food.procurement@wfp.org)

[goods-services.procurement@wfp.org](mailto:goods-services.procurement@wfp.org)

#### vi) Financial Information

- ⇒ **WFP Management Plan and Budget**  
Biennial management plans, which include WFP budgets and supplementary budgets, are public documents and available on WFP's website.
- ⇒ **Financial Statements**  
WFP's annual financial statements are public documents and are available on WFP's website.
- ⇒ **Reports of the External Auditor**  
The reports of the External Auditor detail the audit findings relating to WFP's accounts, trust funds and special accounts, and are public documents, available on WFP's website.



vii) Legal Information

Governance documents including the General Regulations, General Rules, Financial Regulations, and Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board of WFP, and the Headquarters Agreement between the Republic of Italy is on the WFP website.

viii) Information on Hunger and Humanitarian Preparedness

⇒ Hunger Facts

WFP has compiled a database of facts and figures about world hunger, food aid and food production from sources that include NGOs and other United Nations agencies. This information is intended to educate, inform and encourage reflection on hunger and poverty issues. The database is available on the WFP website.

⇒ Humanitarian Early Warning Service

The Humanitarian Early Warning Service is a WFP-developed website providing real-time information on the threat of natural disasters. It is intended as a global service to support humanitarian preparedness. It can be accessed through the WFP website.



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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organization
SPR	standard project report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Nancy E. Roman

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Director  
Communications, Public Policy and  
Private Partnerships Division