PROGRAMME CYCLE MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL BRIEF

Summary

The Programme Cycle Management (PCM) Technical Brief provides an overview of each stage of the PCM process at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP). It has been developed by the UNHCR-WFP Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub and aims to build an understanding and awareness of these processes to inform joint work, including at the global, regional and country office levels.

The information in the guidance is primarily based on and adapted from the **UNHCR Programme Manuel (Chapter 4)**, the **WFP Country Strategic Planning Manual** and other resources referenced in this resource.

Programme Cycle Management is the cyclical process of planning, managing, and monitoring and evaluating programmes. While conceptually the cycle operates in a sequential fashion – *assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation* – in reality certain phases often take place simultaneously (e.g. assessment and implementation) or repeatedly (e.g., monitoring throughout the year, reporting at mid-year and year-end), depending on the situation and operational context.

Figure 1: UNHCR Operations Management Cycle

It is important for any actors involved in joint programming or other initiatives with both UNHCR and WFP to understand the planning cycles of both agencies, to identify opportunities that would allow greater strategic or operational collaboration between the two organizations.

As other agencies and organizations working with UNHCR and WFP have their own specific cycle adapted to their internal processes, it should be noted that operational cycles are not synchronized between partners, and WFP and UNHCR may need to adapt to broader planning cycles and processes (such as national development plans, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and Humanitarian Response Plans).

The table below presents a summary of the key features of the different PCM stages for WFP and UNHCR, with each stage outlined in further detail in the guidance document for each phase.

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	UNHCR	WFP
ASSESSMENT	• Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) • Participatory Assessment • Global Needs Assessment (GNA)	• Food security analysis • Essential Needs Analysis (ENA) • Market assessments • Seasonal and agricultural monitoring • Climate analysis
	• Joint Assessment Missions • Joint Guidance: Targeting of Assistance to Meet Basic Needs	
PLANNING	• UNHCR Strategic Directions (2017-21) • Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) – *biennial planning* • Country Operations Plans (OP) – *annual operational plan* **Budget** • Biennial programme budget • Operations Plan (OP) – *needs based budget* • Operating Level Budget (OL) – *prioritized budget*	• WFP Strategic Plan (2017-21) • Country Strategic Plan (CSP) – *3-5-year strategic planning* • Annual Performance Plan – *annual operational plan* **Budget** • Country Portfolio Budget (CPB) • Needs-based plan / budget • Implementation plan – *annual plan (budget) based on resources*
IMPLEMENTATION	• Direct implementation • Implementing partnership	• Direct implementation • Cooperating partnerships
MONITORING & REPORTING	• Core indicators • Impact monitoring plan • Performance monitoring plan (PA) • Performance monitoring plan (direct implementation) **Reporting** • Year-end report (YER) • Global Report • AGD Accountability Report • Annual Statistical Report (ASR)	• Corporate Results Framework (CRF) • Post distribution monitoring (PDM) • Activity Implementation Monitoring • Retail Monitoring • Distribution Monitoring • Basket Monitoring • Warehouse Monitoring **Reporting** • Annual Country Report (ACR) • Annual Performance Report
EVALUATION	• Centralized evaluations • Decentralized evaluations	• Centralized evaluations • Decentralized evaluations