

# WFP ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION

WFP APC, October 24-27, 2022, Rome

## TOP TAKEAWAYS

ICVA attended WFP's Annual Partnership Consultation (APC) in Rome on October 24-27, themed "Partnering to turn the tide against hunger", to pass key messages calling for:

- (i) Strong partnerships between WFP and NGOs, notably through **meaningful engagement** and consultations at global and operational levels
- (ii) Clear communications with partners on **funding challenges** to support joint advocacy to donors
- (iii) Clear commitment to follow-up the **WFP-NGO partnership survey** with an **action plan** and timeline on priority concerns (budget process, delayed payments, poor communication, lack of clear escalation pathways)
- (iv) Collective action and **advocacy** across stakeholders to address hunger

Overall, the APC format was more of a conference than a working consultation with partners. The limited space for meaningful discussions and exchanges between WFP and partners resulting in some dissatisfaction.

Partners shared their priorities and challenges on equitable and meaningful partnerships, localization, quality funding, victim-centered approaches to PSEA, meaningful engagement with organisations of persons with disability (OPDs), local formulation, production, and procurement of specialized nutritious foods to address and prevent malnutrition and partnering with and empowering local women organisations.

For most NGO partners, the Field Level Agreement (FLA) session was the crucial space to address challenges and strengthen partnerships, during which preliminary findings of the WFP-NGO Partner Survey were presented. Partners highlighted key challenges around budget flexibility, multi-year agreements, communication and capacity-building. Scheduled for only an hour, the session offered limited space for partner engagement and dialogue. Many agreed a minimum half a day should be dedicated to partnerships in future APCs. WFP will distill partners' feedback on the FLA survey into a plan of action, but no information was shared on timeline or process during the APC.

## NEXT STEPS

- WFP suggested that ad hoc consultation efforts with InterAction and ICVA should be formalized in a working group and monitoring tools could be developed to track progress.
  - ICVA agrees with building on the ad hoc consultation efforts with InterAction and WFP and formalize collaboration in a working group with monitoring tools developed to track progress, as per WFP's suggestion
  - ICVA suggests an agreement be reached on a short-term list of action items building on the FLA survey partners' feedback.
  - ICVA suggests a post-APC meeting be organized with partners to build on discussions and share a preliminary jointly developed plan of action
- Follow-up meeting held with AFC, ICVA and WFP in October. Further follow-up meetings with InterAction will be held for November.

## RESOURCES

- WFP-NGO Partnership Summary Update 2022, including ICVA talking points for 2022 APC, available to members [here](#).

- Further information on the WFP 2022 APC, including agenda and support documentation can be found [here](#).

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

### 1. Strategic Roundtable

The panel discussed the current crises context, including the shrinking humanitarian space, compounded needs from the global food security and protection crises, and the urgency to scale up to face unprecedented needs. Compounded crises have stretched our joint response capacity and force us into terrible choices of prioritization. “If our vision is for people to thrive, we need to look at unique ways to activate the right partnerships, with a complementarity of mandates and activities”.

ACF insisted on the need to depoliticize humanitarian action, but also need to call for a better **political approach for addressing hunger at global level**. Hunger is a systemic crisis and should be addressed as a political issue, not just a humanitarian one. “Without food security, the achievement of Agenda 2030 and gender equality is compromised”.

Somali NGO Consortium highlighted the critical importance of empowering and investing in **meaningful and equitable partnerships with local NGOs** and other local actors, built on trust and mutual respect. This includes consistently engaging in consultations with local communities, **risk-sharing** rather than transferring risks, and engaging NNGOs and LNGOs as **partners in fundraising**. Local actors have links to diaspora, local private sector, and better links to non-traditional actors.

On working together on programmatic solutions, participants discussed the need for a shift of power and funding, bringing local actors at the table, and to adopt a bottom-up approach starting at the local level to address root causes.

On raising the necessary funds, participants agreed that financing was not keeping the pace of needs and discussed the key need to address not only the volume but also the quality of funding. Funding is still very donor-driven and inflexible. WHH called to pushed donors to provide more funding for anticipatory action, in line with the G7 declaration available [here](#).

Joint advocacy was discussed as a powerful but underleveraged tool. Partners discussed the need to make use the advocacy tools we have, including monitoring the G7 [commitments](#) and building on the Famine Prevention and Mitigation [Compact](#).

### 2. School Meals Coalition

The School Meals Coalition was presented as a successful advocacy initiative that received very high support during the Food Systems Summit, and great growth in membership. Many participants highlighted the positive multi-sectoral effects of the school meals initiative from child to families, schools and communities, to food, health and education systems.

Various statements were made on the key importance of youth engagement and participation, cross-generational consultations, the need to account for indigenous cultures, the impact on local markets and farmers, the necessity to engage at all levels (subnational, national, global) to support all actors.

WFP announced the soft launch of the new School Meals Coalition Communication and Partner Outreach Initiative and invited partners to provide input and suggestions on the concept note available [here](#). The launch is foreseen for February 2023.

### 3. PSEA

Participants emphasized the need to focus less on zero tolerance for PSEA, but more on **zero tolerance for non-action on PSEA**. The Misconduct Disclosure initiative was presented as a tool that already prevented 140+ perpetrators of SEA moving around NGOs.

WFP announced the roll out **UN Implementing Partners PSEA Capacity Assessment Tool** in the UN Partners Portal (**UNPP**), which aims at increasing transparency and reducing processes. The capacity assessment standards, developed with UN and CSOs, intend to provide a baseline to track the progress of partners and organisations, and trigger the strengthening of organizational capacity. In addition, more than 80 partners received training on the assessment tools. WFP are working on developing many openly accessible resources.

There is a need for support at the global level to work with partners at the local levels. Some argued the assessment process may end up being a box ticking exercise to comply with requirements and access funding, highlighting the need for **further support for capacity-building**, especially of local actors.

Participants insisted on the crucial need for a **survivor-centered approach** to PSEA, considering survivors' needs, including confidentiality, psychological support and health support. Some called for further **data transparency and accountability**, including through anonymized statistics. Discussions around the need to break the cycle of revictimization, reach PSEA at community-level,

### 4. Disability Inclusion

*NB: only this session of the APC included an International Sign Language (ISL) interpreter.*

WFP presented its people-centered approach to disability inclusion and its experience establishing partnerships with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) over the past year.

Partners highlighted the need to ensure not only inclusion, but above all **meaningful participation** of people living with disability in planning, decision-making, implementation, and monitoring of humanitarian activities. Partnering with OPDs is key for representation and participation, but also as a matter of **effectiveness** of humanitarian action, as OPDs have contextualized experience, trust and accountability to communities.

Lessons from consultations with OPDs include the acknowledgment of their diversity and the need to invest in relation-building as part of crisis preparedness, the need for **innovative financing** and **flexibility in partnerships** with OPDs, and to achieve the **basics of inclusion**, e.g. physical accessibility, ISL... Further lessons were shared by OPDs including the need to work with people with disability alongside their families, and schools. The **intersectionality of needs** was also highlighted as a key consideration for programming.

Participants agreed on the need to identify local solutions through dialogue and in partnership with OPDs, to address partnership barriers, and increase work with OPDs to better address disability inclusion in humanitarian programs.

### 5. Field Level Agreement (FLA): Strengthening Partnerships

**Preliminary findings** of the **FLA Partners Survey** were presented by WFP, noting further data disaggregation is required to assess and meet the needs of local partners. Partners would like the survey to be a regular exercise.

Key issues highlighted from the survey included: budget processes, financial reporting, late payments, cost classification and budgetary flexibility, the need for multiyear agreements and for improved communications, including clear escalation pathways and contact details available.

Partners insisted on the need to move to **longer term FLAs**, to ensure enhanced budget flexibility, **timeliness continuity** between agreements, improve collaboration with **local partners**, for more **capacity-building** support from WFP.

ICVA insisted on **communications** and relationship-building as the foundation of addressing technical issues in partnerships, additional guidance and training from WFP would be welcomed.

WFP intends to formalize better communication solutions in the SOPs of WFP at country-level and invited partners to bring ideas to COs. WFP shared its ongoing work of digitalization that will streamline processes and provide a digital engagement platform for partners. WFP will distill all partners' feedback in a plan of action and shared back, but no details were provided on timeline or process.

## 6. Local production and procurement to address malnutrition

Discussion was held on strengthening food systems, encouraging **local production and procurement of specialized nutritious foods (SNF)**, and linking SNF production with malnutrition prevention. WFP presented the IASC working group that collaborates towards improvement and harmonization for SNF.

Partners highlighted the need for collective work to address **global trade rules** that disadvantage the local production of SNF, and to ensure **services are available in underreached areas**. In addition to production, partners encouraged **local formulation development**, e.g. area specific therapeutic food; WFP shared it is working on flexibilising formulas to use local ingredients. Partners also pointed out the critical need for **community management of malnutrition** and meaningful engagement in solutions.

## 7. Local Women Organization

Canada presented its progress on meaningful participation and concerted action, under its **feminist assistance policy** that puts the empowerment of women and girls at the core of its international development engagement. Lessons were shared on the need for strong political leadership and commitment, and continuous learning from partners, and challenges highlighted around **donors' low risk tolerance** and **high administrative burdens** placed on local partners.

Presentation of [CARE's Rapid Gender Analysis tool](#) that provides information about the different needs, capacities and coping strategies of women, men, boys and girls in a crisis situation, noting the added value of using RGA reports and undergoing RGA training. RGA should be very fast, as partnership decisions are usually made in the first 72h of emergencies and encompass a mixture of practical and strategic recommendations to advance gender equality.

The Ukraine Women's Fund shared the need to combine **gender policy and localization** and recommended the development of instruments of communications and coordination to reach and activate women's rights organizations and ensure their meaningful participation. **Systemic discrimination** need be acknowledged, further than sticking to a quota of participation, further attention need be given to supporting **capacity-building**. Partners also highlighted the need to have **gender transformative work in emergencies** and to engage in equitable partnerships with risk-sharing between partners, as opposed to risk transfer.