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Summary report on the evaluation of the Somalia country portfolio (2012–2017)

Executive summary

The country portfolio evaluation covered all WFP activities in Somalia from 2012 to 2017. It assessed WFP's strategic positioning, the quality of and factors influencing WFP's decision making, and the performance and results of portfolio activities. The evaluation was timed to provide evidence to inform the design of the new WFP Somalia interim country strategic plan.

Since the outbreak of the civil war in 1991, Somalia has become one of the poorest countries in the world with high levels of insecurity and unstable governance.¹ Forty-six percent of the population is under 15 years of age and rates of urbanization are high.² A combination of four consecutive seasons of poor rainfall in 2016 and 2017, conflict-related population displacements and trade disruption led to a deterioration in food security, leaving 3.4 million people – 26 percent of the population – in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification 3 (crisis) or 4 (emergency).

The evaluation found that WFP strategically positioned itself well for responding in areas of its comparative advantage – emergency response, common services and preparedness activities – and nutrition. WFP's portfolio was broadly relevant to beneficiaries' needs and coherent with national policies at both the federal and state levels. Collaboration and alignment among United Nations agencies, however, were challenging given the goal of achieving integrated

¹ World Bank. 2017. Somali Poverty Profile.

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/325991506114032755/pdf/AUS19442-REVISED-PUBLIC-Somali-Poverty-Profile-Update-4-27-November-2017.pdf>.

² United Nations Population Fund. 2014. *Population estimation survey 2014 for the 18 pre-war regions of Somalia*. <https://somalia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Population-Estimation-Survey-of-Somalia-PESS-2013-2014.pdf>.

In line with the Evaluation Policy (2016–2021) (WFP/EB.2/2015/4-A/Rev.1), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.

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humanitarian, development and political objectives. Important opportunities for gender and protection analysis were missed. Limited attention was given to the longer-term needs of urban internally displaced persons. Country office leadership based strategic decisions appropriately on the national context, the food security situation, WFP's mandate, national policy frameworks, donor conditionalities and changing governance structures. Strong safeguards were established against fraud and corruption, but a fine balance was required between protecting reputational risk and maintaining operational flexibility.

WFP demonstrated an impressive ability to respond at scale to emergency needs in Somalia and could plausibly be credited with making a relevant and timely contribution to preventing famine in 2017. It was, however, not able to ensure predictable and sustained support to non-emergency activities, although it contributed – modestly but appropriately – to capacity building of national institutions in food security. Several important lessons and good practices from the Somalia portfolio deserve wider consideration and dissemination throughout WFP, including the improved timeliness of assistance provision associated with the introduction and extensive use of the Global Commodity Management Facility; the decision to pre-register potential beneficiaries in WFP's corporate beneficiary and transfer management system, SCOPE, as a preparedness measure; the successful use of cash rather than voucher transfers at scale; the feasibility of establishing a single biometric registry at scale, piloted through SCOPE; and the establishment of strategic partnerships with selected non-governmental organizations in specific thematic areas.

The evaluation makes eight recommendations for WFP: to provide technical leadership in developing and piloting a national safety net programme; to develop a long-term approach for assisting internally displaced persons; to shift the primary objective of food assistance for assets or training to the creation of productive assets and livelihoods; to strengthen the integration of gender and protection considerations in programming; to enhance the quality of targeting; to engage in broader inter-agency dialogue on approaches to capacity building; to improve implementation of the health and nutrition strategy; and to reorient the provision of school meals to an educational objective.

Draft decision*

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of the Somalia country portfolio (2012–2017) set out in document WFP/EB.2/2018/7-D and the management response set out in document WFP/EB.2/2018/7-D/Add.1 and encourages further action on the recommendations presented in the report, taking into account the considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the decisions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

Introduction

Evaluation features

1. The country portfolio evaluation covered all WFP activities in Somalia from 2012 to 2017. It assessed WFP's strategic positioning, the quality of and factors influencing WFP's decision making, and the performance and results of portfolio activities. The evaluation was timed to provide evidence to inform the design of the new WFP interim country strategic plan for Somalia.
2. The evaluation was conducted by WFP's independent Office of Evaluation together with an external evaluation team. The evaluation team carried out fieldwork in Somalia over three weeks in November and December 2017 and employed mixed methods, drawing on monitoring data, document review and semi-structured interviews of stakeholders and beneficiaries. The team did not encounter major constraints that compromised the overall validity of the evaluation.

Context

3. The Somali Democratic Republic, established after independence in 1960, collapsed in 1991 with the outbreak of civil war. In August 2012, Somalia passed a new provisional constitution, which established a federal government. A slow but continual improvement in governance capacities has occurred since then. The Government and its allies in the African Union Mission to Somalia have continued to combat radical groups, including Al-Shabaab. The Somali New Deal Compact (2014–2016) was launched in 2013 and had five peacebuilding and state-building goals. It was replaced in December 2016 by the Somalia National Development Plan (2017–2019), which introduces national targets for employment, food and nutrition security, disaster preparedness and response and national resilience building, and a social protection framework. Sector policies developed by ministries provide further substance to strategies and programmes for addressing food and nutrition insecurity.^{3,4}

TABLE 1: SOMALIA SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Year	Indicator	Value
2016–2017	Population living below the poverty line	6.3–6 million
2006–2017	Urban population (% of total)	35–42%
2013–2016	Consumer price inflation	4.5–1.5%
2013–2017	Agriculture's share in gross domestic product	65–65%
2012–2017	Employment in agriculture (% of total employment)	86.3–86.2%
2012–2015	Arable land (% of total land area)	1.6–1.8%
2012–2017	Food deficit	200,000–350,000 mt
2012–2015	Population with access to basic sanitation	17.6–16.2%
2012–2017	Primary school net enrolment rate	32–30%

³ World Bank. 2017. Somali Poverty Profile.

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/325991506114032755/pdf/AUS19442-REVISED-PUBLIC-Somali-Poverty-Profile-Update-4-27-November-2017.pdf>.

⁴ United Nations Population Fund. 2014. *Population estimation survey 2014 for the 18 pre-war regions of Somalia*.

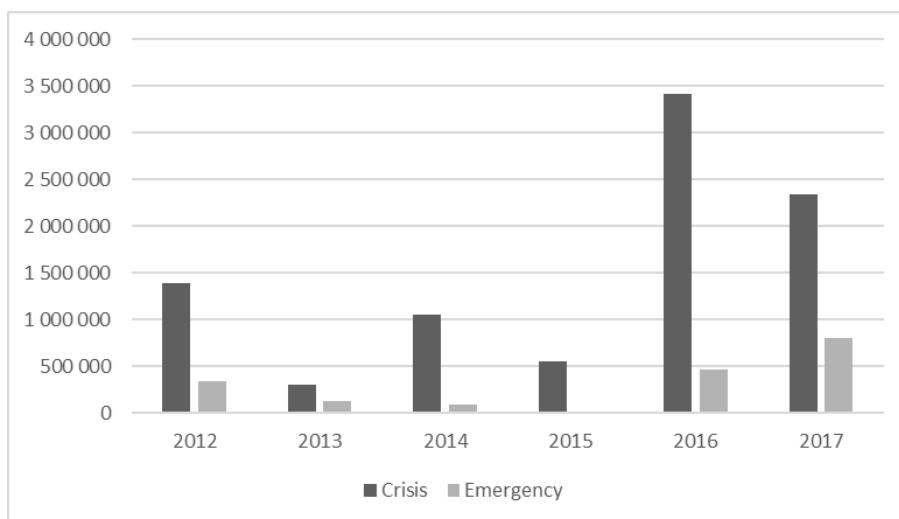
<https://somalia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Population-Estimation-Survey-of-Somalia-PESS-2013-2014.pdf>.

TABLE 1: SOMALIA SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS		
Year	Indicator	Value
2012–2016	Internally displaced persons	1.35–1.1 million
2012–2016	Somalian refugee population*	1–1.4 million
2009–2015	National stunting rate (moderate and severe)	25.3–26%
2014–2017	Global acute malnutrition rate	14.2–17.4%
2012–2015	Maternal mortality rate (per 100 000 live births)	791–732

* Including 308,700 in Kenya, 255,600 in Yemen and 246,700 in Ethiopia. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 2017. Horn of Africa Somalia Situation, May 2017.

4. Somalia suffers from chronic food and nutrition insecurity with periodic acute crises. An estimated 258,000 people died of famine in 2010–2011. While conditions gradually improved from 2012, the failure of four consecutive rainy seasons coupled with conflict-related population displacements resulted in a renewed food security crisis in 2017 (figure 1). The median rates of acute malnutrition were consistently classified as critical (> 15 percent) in the southwest, serious (10–14 percent) in the northeast and poor (5–9 percent) in the northwest.

Figure 1: Numbers of food-insecure people IPC 3 (crisis) or 4 (emergency),* 2012–2017

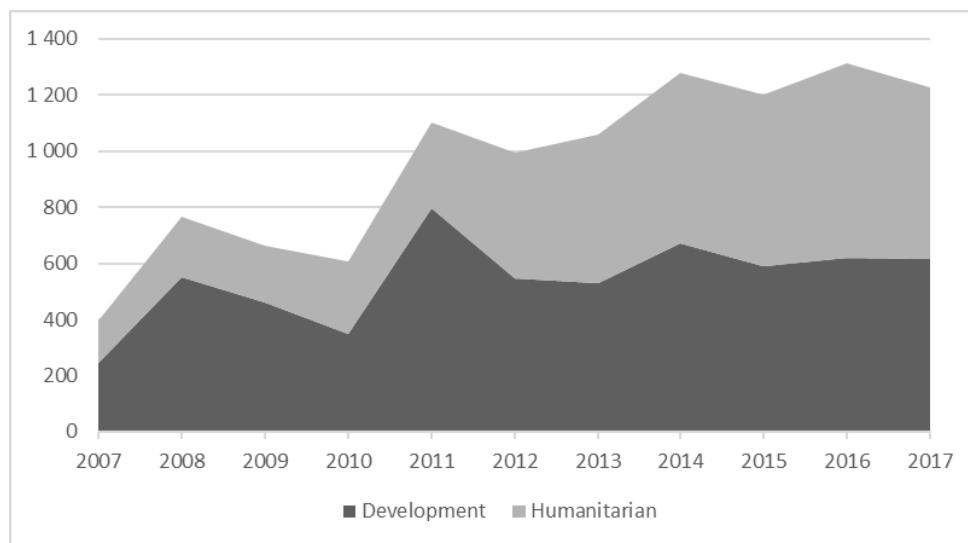


* In Integrated Food Security Phase Classification 3 (crisis) or 4 (emergency).

Source: FAO Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit, re-analysed by WFP's Somalia country office.

5. Gender disparities in Somalia are among the most pronounced in the world. Somalia is the sixth worst performing country globally for gender equality.⁵ Early marriage and lack of education are major contributors to malnutrition. Gender-based violence is widespread and conflict has seriously exacerbated the problem, with an estimated 76 percent of survivors of gender-based violence coming from the internally displaced population.⁶
6. Poor tax collection capacity, a narrow tax base, the shortage of legal and regulatory frameworks and the Government's lack of full territorial control hinder revenue mobilization, leaving the Government dependent on foreign assistance. Flows of humanitarian and development aid have been roughly comparable (figure 2).

Figure 2: Official development assistance to Somalia (million USD per year)



Source: Aid Coordination Unit, Office of Prime Minister, Somalia.

WFP portfolio

7. WFP's portfolio in Somalia for 2012–2017 comprised emergency operation (EMOP) 200281 (2011–2012), protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) 200443 (2012–2015) and PRRO 200844 (2016–2018). Special operations supported the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), the rehabilitation of transport infrastructure, and cluster initiatives. There was no formal WFP country strategy document for Somalia covering the evaluation period. WFP planned to assist between 1.34 and 3.58 million people a year, representing between 11 and 29 percent of the population. General food assistance and nutrition activities dominated the portfolio, together accounting for 75 percent of planned beneficiaries. A map and summary of the evolution of WFP's portfolio in Somalia are shown in figures 3 and 4. Country office operations received donor contributions of USD 995,466,428 – 50 percent of the USD 1,978,048,196 required.⁷ The top five donors have been the United States of America, which contributed 56 percent of the total received, the United Kingdom with 10 percent, Germany with 8 percent, Canada with 5 percent and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund with 3 percent.

⁵ OECD 2014. Social Institution and Gender Index. <https://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/BrochureSIGI2015-web.pdf>.

⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2017. *2017 Somalia Humanitarian Needs Overview*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/2017-somalia-humanitarian-needs-overview>.

⁷ These are the figures and requirements for 2012–2017 extracted from WFP's corporate platform for contribution statistics, the "FACTory", on 10 April 2018. The FACTory retrieves its data from the WFP Information Network and Global System (WINGS).

8. The main thematic components of the WFP portfolio included:

- *emergency preparedness and response*: general food assistance targeting drought- and conflict-affected communities, internally displaced persons and returnees, and delivered as food, cash-based transfers (CBTs) and pre-cooked meals;
- *nutrition and health*: targeted supplementary feeding (TSF) programmes, blanket supplementary feeding (BSF) programmes, support to pregnant and lactating women and girls through mother-and-child health and nutrition services, social and behaviour change communication, “delivery incentives” to mothers for giving birth under medical supervision, and support to people receiving anti-retroviral therapy and/or tuberculosis (TB) directly observed treatment, short course (DOTS);
- *food security, livelihoods and resilience*: food assistance for assets (FFA), food assistance for training (FFT), school meals, including take-home rations for girls, and local food purchases; and
- *special operations*: support to UNHAS, infrastructure development, and aspects of humanitarian coordination.

9. References to gender issues were limited under EMOP 200281 and PRRO 200443 but increased markedly under PRRO 200844, which was approved after the 2015 Gender Policy was launched.

Figure 3: Map of WFP activities in Somalia

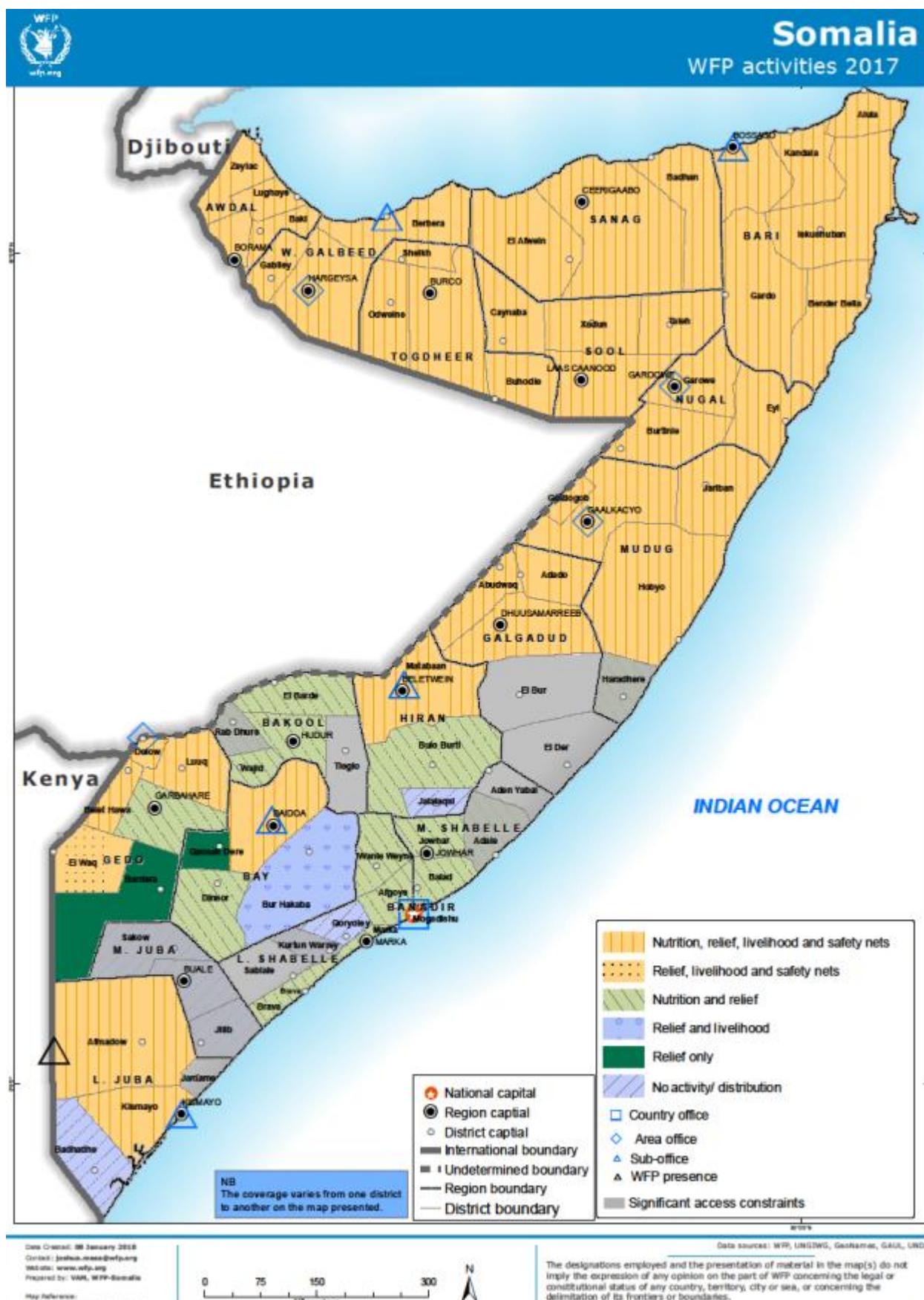


Figure 4: Overview of WFP's Somalia portfolio, 2012–2017

	Pre-2012	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Somalia relevant events	<p>August 2012: First Federal Government of Somalia</p> <p>September 2012: Hassan Sheikh Mohamud became president. First presidential election in Somalia since 1967</p> <p>Cholera and measles outbreaks</p> <p>2016 – 2017 Drought</p> <p>February 2017: Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed became president</p>						
WFP response main phases	FAMINE RESPONSE	BUILDING FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND RESILIENCE				FAMINE RESPONSE	
WFP operations in Somalia	EMOP 200281 (July 2011–Dec 2012) Tackling hunger and food insecurity in Somalia		PRRO 200443 (Jan 2013–Dec 2015) Strengthening Food and Nutrition Security and Enhancing Resilience				PRRO 200844 (Jan 2016–Dec 2018) Reducing Malnutrition and Strengthening Resilience to Shocks for a Food-Secure Somalia
	SOP 105780 (Feb 2007–Mar 2013) Emergency Rehabilitation Works for Logistics Infrastructure in Somalia		SOP 200475 (Apr 2013–Nov 2014) Logistical Infrastructure for Somalia and the Horn of Africa Corridor	SOP 200637 (Jun 2014–May 2016) Security Augmentation			SOP 201051 (Jun 2017–May 2018) Emergency Rehabilitation Work and Capacity strengthening at the Port of Kismayo
	SOP 106810 (Aug 2007–Dec 2012) Humanitarian Air Service in Support of Relief Operations in Somalia and Kenya		SOP 200507 (Jan 2013–Dec 2015) Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Somalia and in Kenya			SOP 200924 (Jan 2016–Dec 2017) Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Somalia and in Kenya	
	SOP 200344 (Aug 2011–Dec 2012) Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Augmentation in Response to the Humanitarian Situation in Somalia		SOP 200440 (Sep 2012–Jun 2016) Food Security Cluster Augmentation in Response to the continued Humanitarian Situation in Somalia				
	2008–2013 WFP Strategic Plan Shift from food aid to food assistance			2014–2017 (ended 2016) WFP Strategic Plan Framework for WFP's efforts towards achieving a world with Zero Hunger. Focus on food assistance reaffirmed			WFP Strategic Plan 2017–2021 , focus on Integrated Road Map introduced to achieve the SDGs
WFP policies and evaluations	Somalia CPE (2006–2011)		Mid-term operation evaluation of PRRO 200844 in Somalia (mid 2012–2015)				School meal review

Evaluation findings

Alignment and strategic positioning of WFP's country strategy and portfolio

10. As reflected in the EMOP and PRRO documents, WFP aligned its strategy and activities with Somalia's overarching national policies. WFP has established good relationships to ensure coherence between its own activities and programmes and those of ministries at the state and national levels. However, the depth of collaboration varied considerably.
11. In 2012, WFP planned to address the shift from food aid to food assistance by enhancing nutrition, relief activities, livelihoods and social safety nets through the provision of school meals. Working as part of the Scaling Up Nutrition network, WFP was particularly well aligned to provide structured support for the design and implementation of national nutrition policies and programmes. In the education sector, WFP was committed to implementing school meals interventions directly through government structures in Somaliland and Puntland. Education is a major national priority with the potential to break intergenerational negative behaviours. In 2012, the ministry responsible for crisis preparedness and response had only recently been established.
12. The portfolio remained broadly relevant to beneficiaries' needs throughout the evaluation period. Beneficiaries demonstrated a strong preference for CBTs, particularly unconditional cash, which gave them greater flexibility in meeting diverse needs. There was, however, limited evidence of the differentiation of programming by age, gender and diversity beyond the traditional efforts in nutrition and education interventions. There was also inadequate strategic attention to the post-emergency needs of internally displaced persons in urban areas.
13. Prior to 2012, the WFP country office had been criticized for its lack of engagement in the United Nations system and the insular management of its emergency response. The country office subsequently improved its relationships with other United Nations agencies, including by establishing close partnerships with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
14. WFP adopted an innovative approach to partnerships by formalizing strategic partnerships with three non-governmental organizations: the Danish Refugee Council, contributing expertise on age, gender, protection and diversity issues; Save the Children, on nutrition; and World Vision, on livelihoods and HIV/TB care and treatment activities. The evaluation found that this approach was starting to yield positive results.
15. However, significant fault lines continued between humanitarian and development agencies. First, perceived as being led by predominantly humanitarian United Nations agencies, the resilience agenda has not effectively bridged the humanitarian–development divide at the political level. Other United Nations agencies advocated for a more inclusive approach to building resilience that includes development agencies. Second, regarding the durable solutions framework – which was established to contribute to building the resilience of internally displaced persons and supporting their resettlement – the evaluation team found that despite its work with internally displaced persons and returnees and its leadership in resilience building interventions, WFP had limited visibility in the durable solutions initiative and working group of the United Nations country team.⁸
16. Differences were apparent in the strategic positions adopted by individual donors, which made it difficult for WFP to identify and align with a consensus among donors. In general,

⁸ In the Somalia National Development Plan (2017–2019), WFP is not mentioned among the stakeholders contributing to durable solutions for assisted population in Somalia. <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/som169866.pdf>.

donors have shown an increasing appetite for the use of CBTs in Somalia and have welcomed WFP's shift to using this modality and supporting resilience building, although conceptual and programmatic approaches differ.

17. With WFP's support, the cluster system provided an important platform for operational coordination, although it was less effective as a strategic coordination platform. WFP contributed to the operations of the food security, nutrition and logistics clusters by providing staff for secretariat positions.
18. WFP has positioned itself to lead responses to acute food and nutrition emergencies. This role was aligned with WFP's comparative advantages, including its widespread field presence; extensive network of cooperating partners facilitating community engagement and the implementation of operations; strong analytical capacities; and unique expertise and capacity in supply chain management. However, WFP had a less preeminent role in supporting recovery and building resilience.
19. The country portfolio was well aligned with WFP's corporate policies and strategies. In accordance with its policies on humanitarian principles, WFP maintained overall impartiality and sought to respond to needs in a non-discriminatory manner, where it had access, while preserving its operational independence.

Factors influencing and quality of strategic decision making

20. The country office vulnerability analysis and mapping unit collaborated with FSNAU on assessments. Geographical targeting of WFP's assistance was transparently linked to the findings of these assessments, through seasonal analysis response plans, and to many other studies and assessments, including a causal analysis of malnutrition carried out in 2015. WFP started to provide capacity strengthening in food security analysis to the staff of state-level governments and partners in 2013. As this work is still in progress, its relationships to the larger-scale capacity building efforts of FSNAU are unclear.
21. WFP's decision making took into appropriate consideration the food security situation, WFP's mandate and policies, national policy frameworks, the conditions imposed by donors, and the changing governance context. The quality of leadership provided by the WFP senior management team was another important factor in strategic decision making.
22. WFP's difficult experiences before and during the famine of 2011 influenced the decision to invest heavily in preparedness measures with a view to averting future famines. A variety of risk management and mitigation measures were adopted, including a strict policy of carrying out physical monitoring of operations and the establishment of an effective, easily accessible and robust complaint and feedback mechanism. No major diversions of WFP food assistance were reported over the period evaluated.

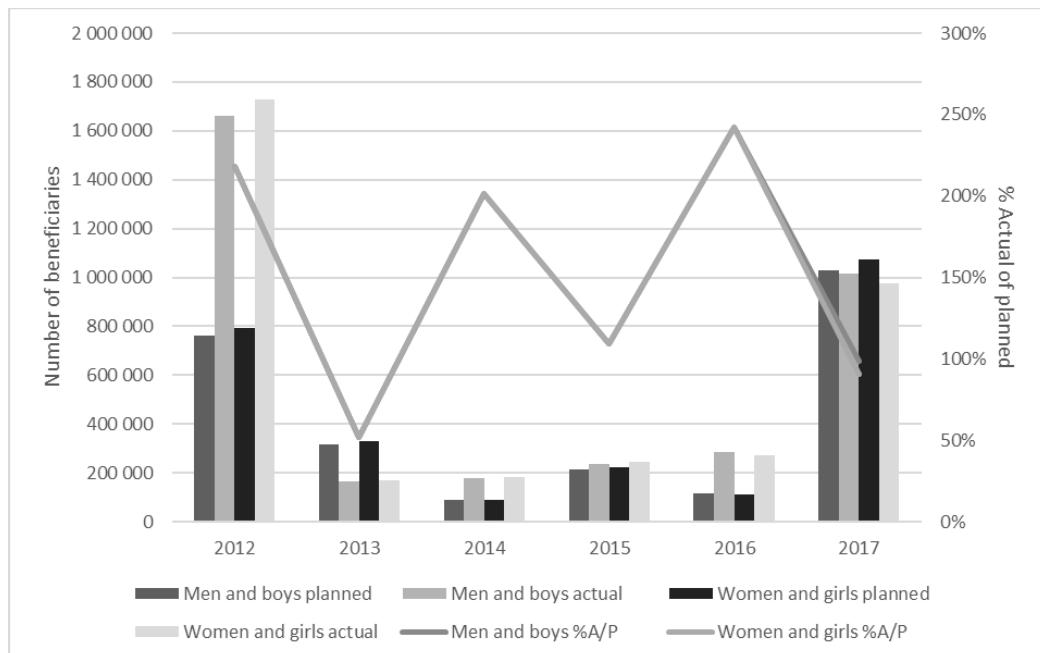
Portfolio performance and results

23. While the evaluation generally found strong capacity for geographical targeting, there were concerns regarding the community-based targeting of households because social exclusion and marginalization were known to have affected the distribution and redistribution of entitlements in Somalia. Important gaps were identified in understanding of the comparative positions of beneficiary women and girls versus men and boys in rural and urban communities and differences between internally displaced persons who had arrived recently and longer-term residents in and around camps and settlements of internally displaced persons. Insufficient attention was given to the influence of clan systems and

"gatekeepers" on social exclusion and marginalization affecting distribution of entitlements in Somalia.⁹

24. Planned output targets for general food assistance were generally exceeded (figure 5); and 55 percent of WFP food assistance reached women. CBTs have become the predominant transfer modality. While initially slow to employ CBTs, WFP increased the use of CBTs dramatically from 2016 onwards. Cash started to replace voucher transfers in late 2016 and accounted for an estimated 10 percent of CBTs in October 2016.

Figure 5: Beneficiaries of WFP's general food assistance in Somalia, actual versus planned, 2012–2017



Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

25. While WFP has progressively expanded coverage in areas of south-central, as of late 2017, security concerns continued to prevent it from reaching 600,000 people classified as extremely food insecure. Reports of the food security outcomes of general food assistance are inconsistent for the period from 2012 to 2014, but from 2015 onwards, improvements in diet diversity scores (table 2) and food consumption scores (table 3) were visible within a year. In contrast to 2011, WFP has been plausibly credited with making an important contribution to preventing famine in 2017. While the levels of the shocks in 2011 and 2017 were arguably comparable, there was no evidence of widespread mortality in 2017.

⁹ "Gatekeepers" are self-appointed intermediaries who negotiate between internally displaced persons and the humanitarian sector. Bryld, E., Kamau, C. and Sinigallia, D. 2013. *Gatekeepers in Mogadishu*. The Somalia Cash Consortium. www.cashlearning.org/downloads/1376766704.pdf; and Yarnell, M. and Thomas, A. 2017. *On the Edge of Disaster: Somalis Forced to Flee Drought and Near Famine Conditions*. Refugees International. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/506c8ea1e4b01d9450dd53f5/t/59a72c71f5e2319b70268cdc/1504128127041/2017+Somalia+Report+Updated+Final.pdf>.

TABLE 2: AVERAGE DIET DIVERSITY SCORES IN SOMALIA UNDER WFP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1, 2014–2017

	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Base value	Follow-up						
All households	5.6	5.6	3.2	4.8	3.99	4.46	3.57	4.33
Woman-headed households	5.1	5.7	2.9	4.7	3.82	4.6	3.60	3.87
Man-headed households	4.8	5.8	3.2	4.9	4.07	4.43	3.50	4.47

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2014–2017.

TABLE 3: FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORES IN SOMALIA UNDER WFP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 1–3, 2012–2017*

Strategic objective	Food consumption score	% of households									
		2012		2013		2015		2016		2017	
		Base value	Follow-up	Base value	Follow-up	Base value	Follow-up	Base value	Follow-up	Base value	Follow-up
1	Poor	8	9	n.a.	10	87.5	13.8	29	11.3	56.6	46.2
1	Acceptable	56	69	n.a.	76	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	13.1	34.9
1	Borderline	36	22	n.a.	14	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	30.4	18.9
2	Borderline	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	18	26.35	34.8	14.5
2	Poor	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	40.3	22.16	34.2	34.8
3	Borderline	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	24.5	26.6	20.4	30.3	n.r.	n.r.
3	Poor	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	n.r.	30.3	34	48.1	24.24	n.r.	n.r.

* Available food consumption score data were found to be patchy and inconsistent throughout the evaluation period. No data on aggregate food consumption scores in 2014 were available, but gender-disaggregated scores were reported: under strategic objective 1, the base value for woman-headed households with poor scores was 1.6 percent with a follow-up value of 1.58 percent, and the base value for man-headed households with poor scores was 9.4 percent with a follow-up value of 5.38 percent; under strategic objective 3 the base value for woman-headed households with poor scores was 3.2 percent with a follow-up value of 0, and the base value for man-headed households with poor scores was 13.3 percent with a follow-up value of 12.53 percent.

Food consumption score thresholds: poor = 0–21; borderline = 21.5–35; acceptable = > 35.

n.a. = not applicable; n.r. = not reported.

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

26. *Nutrition and health.* Targets for TSF beneficiaries were exceeded in 2012, 2016 and 2017, but results fell short in other years because of changing needs and access constraints (figure 6). BSF distributions were either close to or comfortably exceeded targets (figure 7). The numbers of social and behaviour change communication beneficiaries and of mother-and-child health and nutrition centres assisted fluctuated but came close to targets in most years. Support to the recipients of anti-retroviral therapy and TB-DOTS reached targets only in 2012 and then progressively declined because of funding constraints.

Figure 6: TSF beneficiaries, actual versus planned, 2012–2017

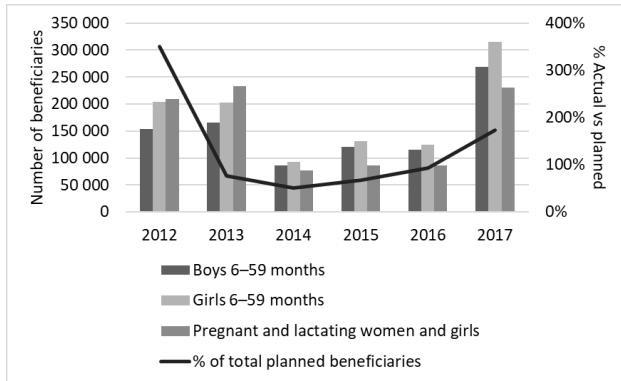
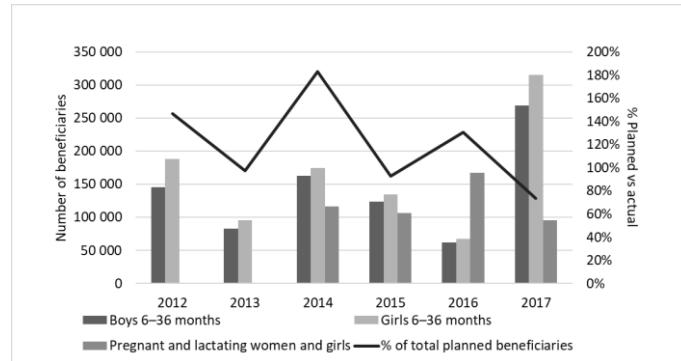


Figure 7: BSF beneficiaries, actual versus planned, 2012–2017



Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

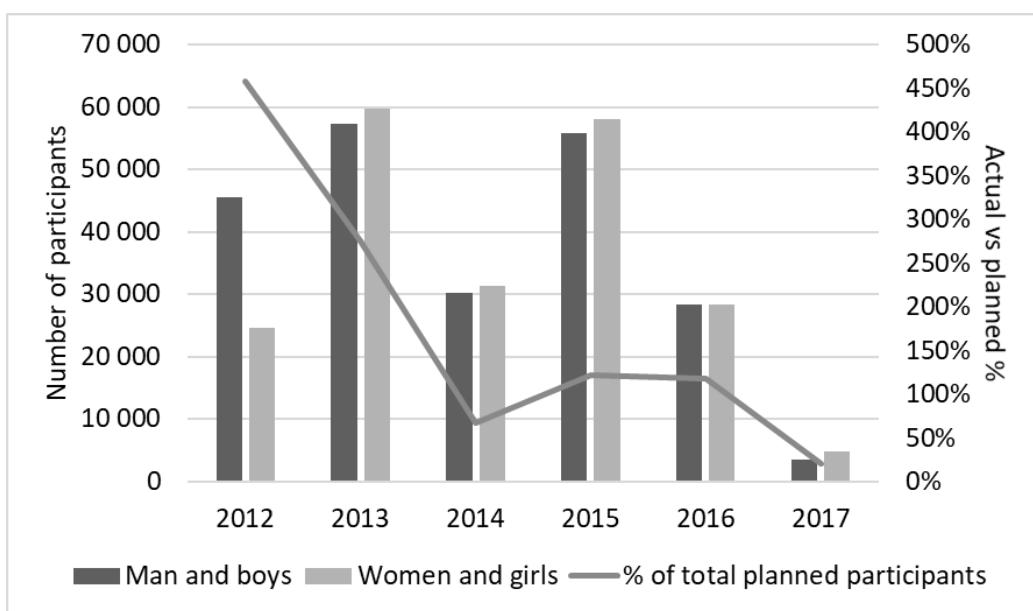
27. Nutrition outcomes broadly met targets for coverage, recovery, default and mortality rates. The TSF programme met Sphere minimum standards for performance in humanitarian response in all the key indicators (table 4).¹⁰ The coverage of adequate BSF distributions increased dramatically from 20 to 81.3 percent between 2014 and 2017, with 100 percent of beneficiaries receiving adequate distributions in 2016 because of improved outreach. The coverage rates of mother-and-child health and nutrition interventions, however, were low and consistently below WFP's own target of > 70 percent.

TABLE 4: TSF PROGRAMME OUTCOMES, 2014–2017

Coverage rate	Recovery rate	Default rate	Mortality rate
48.4–75.2% against a WFP target of 50%	Exceeded the Sphere threshold of 75%	Met the Sphere threshold of < 15%	0–1% against a WFP target of < 15%

28. There is anecdotal evidence that the one-off delivery incentive ration increased the number of women and girls attending health centres to give birth. Despite inconsistent food supplies, TB-DOTS patients receiving rations had very good treatment success and nutrition recovery rates. Among the clients of anti-retroviral therapy, nutrition recovery rates were similarly high until 2015, when default rates became very high because of the lack of food for this activity.
29. *Food assistance for assets.* Numbers of FFA beneficiaries exceeded the target in 2012 and 2013, remained close to the target in 2015–2016 and dropped significantly in 2017 (figure 8) because donors earmarked their contributions for emergency activities. WFP's ability to create or rehabilitate the planned livelihood assets was variable.

¹⁰ Sphere Project. 2011. *The Sphere Handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response*. www.spheredproject.org/resources/?search=1&keywords=&language=English&category=22&subcat-22=23&subcat-29=0&subcat-31=0&subcat-35=0&subcat-49=0.

Figure 8: FFA participants, planned versus actual, 2012–2017*

* Numbers of FFA participants. In standard project reports, the numbers of FFA participants were provided in 2012–2014, but were multiplied by 6, to include participants' household members, in 2015–2017.

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

30. FFT activities were largely concentrated in urban areas and were tailored to the needs of displaced women and men seeking new skills for employment and small business development. Recovery activities did not achieve targets for improvements in food consumption scores, diet diversity scores and coping strategy index scores (table 5). However, as the related data are patchy, influenced by wider variables and reported on consistently only from 2016, it is questionable whether WFP's outcome targets were appropriate to the context. The quality of the assets created and the training delivered through FFA and FFT could not be assessed by the evaluation.

TABLE 5: LIVELIHOOD RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE ACTIVITY OUTCOMES				
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Average diet diversity scores at FFA/FFT sites				
Recovery programme				
All households	n.r.	n.r.	4.6	4.8
Woman-headed households	n.r.	n.r.	4.2	4.4
Man-headed households	n.r.	n.r.	4.7	4.9
Resilience programme (Gedo, Toghdeer, Bari)				
All households	n.r.	4.2	4.2	n.r.
Woman-headed households	5.72	3.9	4.9	n.r.
Man-headed households	6	4.3	4.1	n.r.
Average annual food consumption scores at FFA/FFT sites				
Recovery programme ("other" districts)				
% of households with <i>borderline</i> scores	n.r.	n.r.	26.4	14.5
% of woman-headed households with <i>borderline</i> scores	n.r.	n.r.	24	18.5
% of man-headed households with <i>borderline</i> scores	n.r.	n.r.	27.3	13.1
% of households with <i>poor</i> scores	n.r.	n.r.	22.2	34.8
% of woman-headed households with <i>poor</i> scores	n.r.	n.r.	30.8	49.7
% of man-headed households with <i>poor</i> scores	n.r.	n.r.	18.6	30.9
Resilience programme (Gedo, Toghdeer, Bari)				
% of households with <i>borderline</i> scores	n.r.	26.6	30.3	n.r.
% of woman-headed households with <i>borderline</i> scores	29.8	30	24	n.r.
% of man-headed households with <i>borderline</i> scores	35.6	17.6	31.2	n.r.
% of households with <i>poor</i> scores	n.r.	34	24.2	n.r.
% of woman-headed households with <i>poor</i> scores	0	49.5	8	n.r.
% of man-headed households with <i>poor</i> scores	12.53	28.1	26.6	n.r.
Average annual coping strategy index at FFA/FFT sites				
Resilience programme (Gedo, Toghdeer, Bari)				
% of households with reduced/stabilized index (asset depletion)	n.a.	35.5	56.6	n.r.
% of households with reduced/stabilized index (food)	43.7	13.2	19.6	n.r.

Dark grey boxes indicate targets achieved. Light grey, targets not achieved.

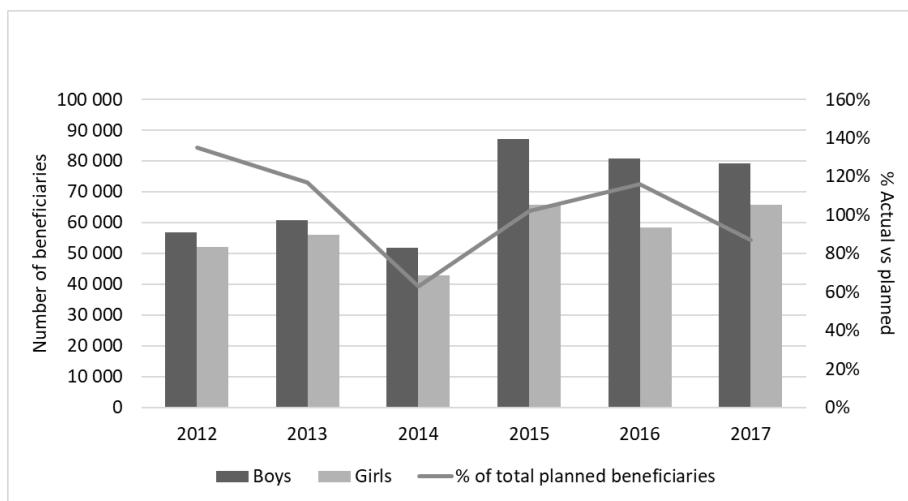
n.a. = not applicable; n.r. = not reported.

Source: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017 and CO data. No data on these outcomes in 2012 and 2013.

31. **WFP school meals programmes** are planned and implemented to address food security, rather than educational goals. WFP's school meals programme successfully exceeded planned target beneficiary numbers in all years except 2014 and 2017, when there were resource constraints (figure 9). Schools indicated a preference to be supplied with vouchers

rather than in-kind food, as the basket of commodities did not always meet local preferences. There was little evidence of positive effects of school meals on food security, but retention of girls and boys and overall attendance and education outcomes did improve. The suspension of take-home rations in 2017 has not had a significant impact on girls' attendance.

Figure 9: School meals beneficiaries, actual versus planned, 2012–2017



Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

TABLE 6: SCHOOL MEALS OUTCOMES IN WFP-ASSISTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS

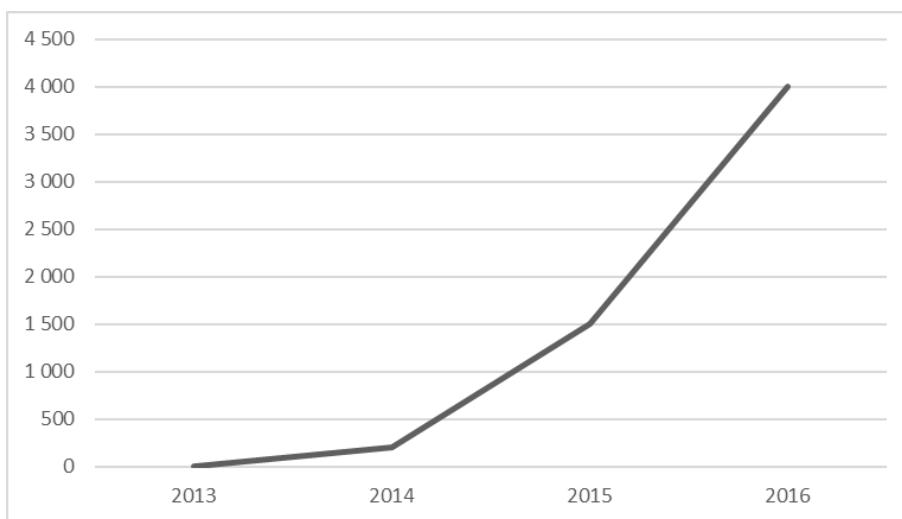
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Change in enrolment rate in WFP-assisted primary schools (%)	n.a.	n.a.	6.1	13.3	1.3	0.34
Change in enrolment rate among boys (%)	n.a.	n.a.	7.2	13.1	0.9	0.34
Change in enrolment rate among girls (%)	n.a.	n.a.	4.9	13.5	1.7	0.34
Retention rate in WFP-assisted primary schools (%)	94.5	95.2	97	n.r.	99	95.00
Retention rate among boys (%)	94.5	95.2	97	n.r.	98.5	95.00
Retention rate among girls (%)	94.4	95.5	97	n.r.	99.7	94.50
Gender ratio of girls to boys enrolled in WFP-assisted schools	0.81	0.8	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.81

Dark grey boxes indicate targets achieved. Light grey, targets not achieved.

n.a. = not applicable; n.r. = not reported.

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2012–2017.

32. Between 2013 and 2016, a total of 5,700 mt of cereals were purchased through local in-country procurement (figure 10).

Figure 10: Local purchases 2013–2016 (*mt per year*)

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2013–2016.

33. UNHAS met targets for the movement of personnel, medical and security evacuations and the movement of light cargo. The demand for air services increased in 2017 because of the escalation of relief activities. For common services, reporting was at the output rather than the outcome level, but the evaluation confirmed that UNHAS responded rapidly, efficiently and flexibly to the fast-changing needs of the humanitarian community.
34. WFP has contributed to the development of logistics infrastructure in Somalia by investing in port rehabilitation and the capacity strengthening of port staff. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there have been positive economic effects, expanding market opportunities in both national and international trade. However, outcomes related to capacity building were poorly monitored or reported.
35. Few linkages were observed among emergency, nutrition, livelihood recovery, resilience and school meals interventions. However, the introduction of WFP's corporate beneficiary and transfer management platform, SCOPE, with a "multi-wallet" distribution facility provided an innovative mechanism for integrating the delivery of transfers and services at the household level.
36. *Efficiency.* The country office has sought to control costs through various initiatives, including reducing delays and demurrage costs in ports through investments in port infrastructure and handling capacities; regional cost-sharing agreements on the use of the Berbera logistics hub; the consolidation of WFP nutrition activities around mother-and-child health and nutrition centres; and the establishment of a single registry to reduce overlaps in targeting. The country office's choice of modality relied heavily on qualitative considerations. Although alpha analyses¹¹ for most planned distributions indicated greater cost efficiency for in-kind food assistance, consideration of timeliness and the importance of meeting beneficiary preferences have increasingly led to a preference for CBTs over in-kind food distributions.
37. Use of the Rome-based Global Commodity Management Facility has reduced delivery lead times by 62 percent. A mass registration of beneficiaries, the distribution of SCOPE cards and the equipping of retailers with point-of-sale devices started in 2015 and facilitated the rapid response to the 2017 crisis. The capacity for rapid response was enhanced further by the strategic shift to CBTs, which reduced the time taken from the confirmation of a

¹¹ Alpha analyses measure the cost efficiency of a food assistance modality.

contribution to the dispatch of the assistance by nearly 50 percent compared with in-kind food assistance.

38. *Sustainability.* Work on integrating the services provided by WFP with those of UNICEF, and consolidating them in mother-and-child health and nutrition centres and programmes, coupled with capacity building of federal and state ministries of health, enabled a more sustainable approach to the provision of nutrition services. With the handover of the management of major ports to private sector operators, improvements in port infrastructure are likely to be sustained.
39. National partners are making initial moves towards establishing a national social safety net. Important contributions of WFP included demonstrating the feasibility of establishing a national-level biometric identity system and linking it to a single registry of beneficiaries and national agency interventions. Through the social protection sub-working group, WFP and UNICEF have also begun to work with the Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development on developing a policy framework with the cooperation of federal and state governments. Work has also started on identifying strategies for reaching the most vulnerable populations; establishing a multi-agency nationwide registration and assistance delivery platform; and strengthening the capacities of government partners, including their capacities to develop and use social protection indicators linked to Sustainable Development Goal targets.¹²
40. There is little evidence of the extent to which WFP activities have contributed to rebuilding post-disaster livelihoods through sustained benefits from the assets created and increased employment opportunities, or to building resilience to future shocks and reducing risk. WFP, with FAO and UNICEF, played a prominent role in formulating a strategic approach with the introduction of a joint resilience strategy, but the strategy failed to result in programmatic innovation because of WFP's declining engagement in rural livelihoods and a reduction in FAO's field presence and because the strategy is a loose affiliation of reformulated activities confounded mainly with its FFA activities.
41. Gender inequalities have been a significant concern in Somalia. However, staff capacity in and responsibility for addressing gender issues were limited, and a lag was apparent in the operationalization of the most recent WFP gender policy. The capacity of staff to consider and address gender issues is still rather limited, and the potential support in this area from the regional bureau was at times left unused. Opportunities were missed for developing a more profound analysis of gender dynamics at the household and community levels, and for fully engaging with other United Nations initiatives in this area.
42. Despite WFP's well-defined data protection and privacy policies, doubts remain about the application of these policies in the field when handling sensitive data such as biometrics – phone numbers, photos and fingerprints – and in relation to the issue of informed consent from beneficiaries on the use of their data and to difficulties in managing overcrowding at registration and CBT redemption and top-up sites. A planned analysis of protection considerations in relation to SCOPE implementation was not carried out because of competing priorities and security concerns. The 2016 SCOPE guiding principles for protection do not mention protection concerns. The extent of partners' knowledge and understanding of WFP policies regarding beneficiary identities and information was also unclear.

¹² WFP. 2017. *WFP and Social Protection: Somalia Case Study.* <https://www.wfp.org/content/2017-wfp-and-social-protection-somalia-case-study>.

43. *Monitoring and evaluation (M&E).* In the early part of the period evaluated, major data gaps and weaknesses existed in the country office's M&E system. An M&E strategy was drafted in 2014 and the reach of post-distribution monitoring improved with the introduction of third-party monitoring and telephone surveys. As a consequence, outcome reporting has improved since 2015, although challenges remain, including in capturing capacity building results. The introduction of a complaints hotline has established a degree of accountability to affected populations. In 2017, monitoring and reporting systems were further enhanced through the introduction of a digital dashboard that draws together information from SCOPE, mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping, and other WFP data systems.

Conclusions

44. Considering the complex and challenging circumstances in Somalia, WFP has strategically positioned itself well for responding to the needs of the population. The depth of collaboration and coherence with partners varied considerably, however, and broadly constrained opportunities to capitalize on internal and external synergies.
45. The relevance and effectiveness of the portfolio were especially high. During the latter part of the period evaluated, WFP demonstrated an impressive ability to respond effectively and at scale to acute emergencies in Somalia. As a result, WFP was plausibly credited with making a key contribution to preventing famine in 2017. This was a major achievement and a dramatic improvement compared with the shortcomings in responding to the previous famine of 2011.
46. The emergency preparedness and response component was built on WFP's core comparative advantages at both the corporate and country levels, including its strong field presence, large network of cooperating partners, strong analytical capacities and proven capacities in supply chain management. In addition to building on these foundations, the country office leadership had the foresight to invest in innovative preparedness measures. The advanced registration of beneficiaries, along with the establishment of the infrastructure and agreements needed for rolling out CBTs at scale, proved critical to the timely mobilization of assistance as the food security situation deteriorated. In addition, the biometric registration system, in conjunction with reinforced monitoring systems, enabled the establishment and maintenance of strong risk management and safeguards against potential fraud and corruption.
47. Targeting of general food assistance remained challenging, however, with a need to guard against the exclusion of marginalized groups who had little understanding of or ability to claim their entitlements. The understanding and analysis of gender and protection issues in the country office were limited and the response was largely undifferentiated according to age, gender and ability.
48. Populations that were internally displaced by conflict and drought often failed to re-establish viable pastoral livelihoods. Many displaced people have instead joined the ranks of the urban poor and become increasingly reliant on long-term humanitarian aid. To address this gap, WFP responded through support for livelihoods, but there is little evidence that these activities have resulted in sustained improvements in household incomes.
49. As well as offering pathways out of dependency, WFP sought to establish a robust approach to building resilience to future crises. In partnership with FAO and UNICEF, a useful conceptual framework was developed with the aim of coordinating the delivery of safety nets, basic services and livelihoods. The operationalization of this framework was limited, however, with limitations in the livelihood approach adopted and little progress made throughout the system towards establishing a social safety net.

50. The challenging circumstances in Somalia evolved, with increased opportunities arising for engagement with emerging national authorities at both the federal and state levels with a view to supporting their capacities to meet the food and nutrition needs of the population. In some sectors, important advances were made, most notably in collaboration on the delivery of strategies, capacities and services for nutrition. More could be done, however, including maximizing the relevance of school meals as part of a coordinated education strategy. Access to education remains severely constrained and is an under-recognized means of positive social change, including by facilitating the adoption of behaviours that underlie long-term food security. Overall, ensuring the sustainability of results has been challenging.
51. Several important lessons and good practices from the Somalia portfolio deserve wider consideration and dissemination throughout WFP, including the improved timeliness of assistance provision associated with the introduction and extensive use of the Global Commodity Management Facility; the pre-registration of potential beneficiaries in SCOPE as a preparedness measure; the successful use of cash rather than voucher transfers at scale; the feasibility of establishing a single biometric registry at scale, piloted through SCOPE; and the establishment of strategic partnerships with selected non-governmental organizations in specific thematic areas.

Recommendations

No.	Issue	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
1	National safety net programme	<p>Repeated crises and continuing chronic needs are highly probable.</p> <p>Adequate preparedness is essential to delivering a timely, life-saving emergency response.</p> <p>Despite stakeholder interest, no agency has yet taken the lead.</p> <p>The programme is well aligned with WFP's comparative advantages.</p>	<p>WFP should provide technical leadership in developing and piloting a national safety net programme – Somali Safety Net Programme – for addressing chronic, seasonal and acute needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Partner with both humanitarian and development donors. b) Consult closely with federal and state authorities on the design of the programme from the outset. c) Draw on experiences from other safety net programmes in the region in order to inform the design. d) Establish a single registry for beneficiaries, based on the interoperability of established systems. e) Ensure that mobile cash is used as a delivery modality. f) Ensure that referral pathways for protection cases are included. 	<p>Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters.</p> <p>2018-2019</p>

No.	Issue	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
2	Strategy for assisting internally displaced persons	<p>The majority of internally displaced persons intend to remain and settle in urban areas.</p> <p>There are insufficient resources to support sustainable urban livelihoods and prevent rising urban poverty.</p> <p>Humanitarian resources may be used for the survival needs of urban poor people and internally displaced persons.</p>	<p>WFP should develop a longer-term approach to assisting internally displaced persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Include internally displaced persons as a target group in the national safety net programme. b) Tighten the definition and targeting of internally displaced persons in emergency assistance programmes. c) Expand urban livelihood programmes based on evidence of effectiveness. d) Explore new partnerships for promoting the integration of internally displaced persons in urban communities. 	<p>Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters.</p> <p>2018–2019</p>
3	Livelihoods	<p>Livelihoods are an important pillar of an integrated approach to building resilience.</p> <p>Evidence of the outcomes or sustainability of food security is weak.</p> <p>Planning and implementing FFA within annual programming cycles does not ensure sustained community engagement or sustainable outcomes.</p>	<p>WFP should shift the primary objective of FFA and FFT activities to creating productive assets and livelihoods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Plan and implement FFA and FFT activities within a three-year planning cycle and strengthen coherence with national strategies and programmes. b) Ring-fence resources in order to ensure continuity. c) Develop an M&E framework for assessing both the short- and longer-term results of FFA and FFT. 	<p>Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters.</p> <p>2018–2019</p>
4	Gender and protection issues	<p>Analysis and understanding of gender and protection issues are insufficient.</p> <p>Capacities and skills for gender and protection assessments are limited.</p> <p>Programming approaches are relatively undifferentiated by age, gender and ability.</p>	<p>WFP should strengthen the integration of gender and protection considerations in programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review the existing terms of reference for the policy officer position with a view to ensuring a more equal and visible integration of responsibilities for addressing gender and protection concerns, or establish a dedicated position for gender and protection issues. b) Request a standby gender and protection officer and capitalize on the regional protection and gender adviser through more regular collaboration and exchange. c) Assess the impact of various transfer modalities on intra-household and community dynamics, including gender and protection dynamics, and use the results to inform programme design. 	<p>Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters.</p> <p>2018–2019</p>

No.	Issue	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
			d) Strengthen the capacities of cooperating partners in gender and protection analysis.	
5	Targeting	In community-based targeting mechanisms, there is potential for significant exclusion of marginalized groups. Beneficiaries were unaware of the criteria for enrolment and of their entitlements.	<p>WFP should improve the targeting of beneficiaries, including internally displaced persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote the equal and active participation of women and girls using participatory methodologies to ensure the participation of communities, including internally displaced persons, in the design of targeting criteria and entitlements. b) Improve communication with beneficiaries on targeting criteria and entitlements. c) Continue to closely monitor the distribution of programme benefits. 	Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters. 2018–2019
6	Capacity building	Conditions in Somalia are increasingly conducive to the capacity building of national institutions. WFP has demonstrated potential to contribute in specific thematic areas, but capacity building efforts are insufficiently coordinated with other stakeholders. Results are poorly monitored and reported, with limited visibility of WFP's efforts.	<p>WFP should engage in broader inter-agency dialogue for coordinating approaches to planning and implementing capacity building efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Work in partnership with relevant United Nations agencies on conducting thorough capacity assessments of selected partner ministries to provide the basis for identifying specific areas where WFP has a comparative advantage for capacity building, such as food security analysis. b) In consultation with the monitoring unit at headquarters, strengthen tools and capacities for monitoring and evaluating capacity building activities. 	Country office, with support from regional bureau, headquarters. 2018–2019
7	Nutrition and health	There is a sound strategy for nutrition and health programmes rooted in strong collaboration with UNICEF as a co-implementing partner. However, opportunities for strengthening implementation and sustaining outcomes were identified.	<p>WFP should engage with the Ministry of Health on annual strategic planning and provide support to the integration of nutrition monitoring data into the Ministry's existing health management information system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Work with FSNAU and other nutrition cluster partners with a view to deepening analysis of the causes of food and nutrition insecurity. b) Ensure that nutrition centres have a contingency plan for treating all malnourished children. c) Disaggregate coverage figures to identify the differences in coverage among urban areas, rural areas and settlements of internally displaced 	Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters. 2018–2019

No.	Issue	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
			<p>persons, and closely monitor re-admissions to TSF programmes to ensure that stopping family rations has not resulted in children being readmitted to TSF programmes for treating malnutrition.</p> <p>d) Change the transfer modality for the delivery incentive from food to CBTs and consider whether to continue providing it to mothers or switch to providing it to traditional birth attendants.</p> <p>e) Reinvigorate anti-retroviral therapy and TB-DOTS programmes by providing appropriate support for both clients and their households.</p> <p>f) Expand social and behaviour change communication to communities and the wider public, targeting men and change agents such as community leaders.</p>	
8	School meals	<p>Education is a strong national priority with the potential to break intergenerational negative behaviours.</p> <p>Education has the potential to address structural causes of food and nutrition insecurity.</p> <p>WFP school meals are planned and implemented to address food security rather than educational goals.</p> <p>School meals have a proved positive impact on enrolment and retention (particularly of girls), rather than on food security indicators.</p>	<p>WFP should position and evaluate the contribution of school meals as part of an inter-agency education strategy:</p> <p>a) Coordinate and report on school meals as part of the education cluster rather than the food security cluster.</p> <p>b) Align operational decision making with an education objective, such as the selection of participating schools.</p> <p>c) Implement the postponed Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) diagnostic with the Ministry of Education.</p>	<p>Country office, with support from regional bureau and headquarters.</p> <p>2018–2019</p>

Acronyms used in the document

BSF	blanket supplementary feeding
CBT	cash-based transfer
DOTS	directly observed treatment, short course
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	food assistance for assets
FFT	food assistance for training
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
SCOPE	WFP's corporate digital beneficiary and transfer management platform
TB	tuberculosis
TSF	targeted supplementary feeding
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund