

OPERATION EVALUATIONS SERIES

Regional Synthesis 2013-2017

East and Central Africa Region

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Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Policy and Institutional Context	1
1.2 Operations Evaluations	1
1.3 Purpose and Objectives	1
1.4 Context of the Operations Evaluated	2
1.5 WFP in the East and Central Africa Region	3
1.6 The Evaluated Operations	3
1.7 Methodology	7
2. FINDINGS.....	8
QUESTION 1: How appropriate were operation designs? (relevance, strategic positioning and coherence).....	8
QUESTION 2: What were the results of the operations?.....	14
QUESTION 3: What factors affected the results?	28
3: EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS	30
4. CONCLUSIONS	31
5. LESSONS.....	33
Annex 1: Partnerships per Country	35
Acronyms	42

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Policy and Institutional Context

1. Major contextual shifts, including climate change, increasing inequality, more frequent natural disasters and increasingly protracted conflicts, have influenced global policy reforms. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2016, calls for increased partnership and collective action to support country-led efforts in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2. The WFP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 signalled a major shift from WFP as a “food aid” to a “food assistance” agency. The subsequent WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021 positions WFP firmly in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and particularly in contributing to the achievement of SDG 2: “End Hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”. It focuses on reaching those in greatest need first, while ensuring that no one is left behind.¹

3. To meet the demands of new environment, WFP has launched the Integrated Road Map (IRM). This redefines the organisation’s architecture as well as its country strategic planning process under the WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

1.2 Operations Evaluations

4. The WFP series of operation evaluations support its corporate objective of accountability and learning for results. Since mid-2013, the series has generated 58 evaluations of operations across the six regions in which WFP operates. The evaluations assess the appropriateness of WFP operations, their results, and the factors explaining these results. The series will close in mid-2017.

5. Within the East and Central Africa region, seven operations were evaluated in five countries: Djibouti, Ethiopia (two operations), Kenya, Rwanda (two operations) and Somalia. The seven operations had combined requirements of over USD 3.4 billion, targeting over 8.75 million beneficiaries from 2013 to 2017.²

- Seven out of 41 operations in the East and Central Africa region were evaluated under the 2013-2016 operation evaluation series (excluding Level 3 emergencies). This corresponds to 17 percent of the regional portfolio of operations and 42 percent of the operational budget.
- Six out of seven operations evaluated were protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs). One country programme (CP) was also evaluated.³
- The five countries in which evaluations were conducted form almost two-thirds of the eight countries in which WFP is currently active in the region.

1.3 Purpose and Objectives

6. This Synthesis of Operations Evaluations for the East and Central Africa Region brings together the findings of seven operations evaluations, conducted from mid-2013 to mid-2017. The synthesis aims to:

¹ WFP (2017) Strategic Plan 2017-2021 WFP/EB.2/2016/4-A/Rev.2.

² Including all budget revisions. Source: operation evaluation factsheets; annual operation evaluation synthesis reports. 2014, 2015, 2016. Specific figures: USD requirements: 3,481,874,676 Beneficiaries targeted 8,752,450.

³ Source: operations evaluations factsheet; East and Central Africa Region, March 2017.

- Enhance efficient and effective use of evaluation evidence and learning in programme development
- Help facilitate the country strategic planning process for the regional bureau
- Create a concise, regional-friendly ‘body of evidence’ analysis to inform the upcoming development of the regional evaluation strategy.⁴

1.4 Context of the Operations Evaluated

7. Key features of the region are as follows:

- **Vulnerability to protracted political insecurity and conflict:** The East and Central Africa region features several countries which currently or potentially face escalating insecurity and violence, including Somalia, South Sudan and Burundi. In Kenya, elections planned for August 2017 are raising the risk of election-related violence.
- **Acute vulnerability to recurrent drought:** Drought in the region has devastated crop production; sharply increased the already high levels of food insecurity; increased the market price of staple commodities; and exacerbated displacement, particularly in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. As of mid-2017, Somalia is vulnerable to famine.
- **Refugee flows:** These are high in the region, in large part due to the conflict and drought-related factors above. The crisis in South Sudan has generated a vast influx of displaced persons into neighbouring countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sudan. Refugees from Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo have moved into Rwanda, and Ethiopia is receiving refugees from Somalia.
- **Acute hunger and nutrition insecurity:** The Global Hunger Index for 2016 indicates that four out of five countries evaluated in the region have “serious” hunger levels,⁵ with insufficient data for Somalia. However, recent integrated phase classification (IPC) data for Somalia finds five million people in the country facing acute food insecurity, ranging from IPC phase 2 (stressed) to IPC phase 4 (acute).⁶
- **Diverse gender inequality:** The Gender Inequality Index (GII) rates only three of the five countries where operations were evaluated, with no scores or rankings available for Djibouti or Somalia.⁷ However gender inequality in both these countries is recognised to be high.⁸ In the remaining three countries, Kenya and Ethiopia have rankings in the lower half of the index (116 and 135/186 countries respectively, whilst Rwanda has a higher gender equality score (84/186 countries).

⁴ Terms of Reference.

⁵ <http://ghi.ifpri.org>

⁶ Somalia Food Security and Nutrition Analysis, Post-Gu, December 2016 (Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit, FAO.) http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/Somalia_FoodSecurity_Nutrition_TechnicalReport_PostGu2016.pdf

⁷ Paucity of gender data in both countries is also reflected in their absence from the 2016 World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap report for 2016 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR16/WEF_Global_Gender_Gap_Report_2016.pdf

⁸ See for example https://www.unicef.org/somalia/SOM_sitrep_9_30June2017.pdf http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/DJI.pdf

1.5 WFP in the East and Central Africa Region

8. WFP has eight country offices in in the East and Central Africa region in 2017.⁹ It works through ten protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs); six country/development programmes (CP/DEVs); one emergency operation (EMOP); six special operations; one trust fund programme (TRFU); and three cooperating agreements (TRCAs).¹⁰

9. The WFP priorities in the region include an effective emergency response as a core priority, particularly given the region's vulnerability to conflict and drought conditions. It also intends to focus on quality programmes that use evidence and research to improve effectiveness and accountability to targeted populations, to continue investing in supply chain management and to optimise fundraising.¹¹

1.6 The Evaluated Operations

10. The operations evaluated in this synthesis were implemented under diverse conditions:

- **Mostly low-income levels:** Other than Djibouti, a middle-income country, all four countries in which operations were evaluated were low-income (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Somalia) at the time of operation implementation (though as of 2015, Kenya has become a middle-income country).
- **Fragile food security and vulnerability to drought:** Five of WFP operations in four countries (Djibouti, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Somalia) were responses to chronic food insecurity, exacerbated by drought. Kenya was also significantly affected by drought, but the operation focused on the refugee population.
- **Significant (and increasing) refugee/internally displaced person (IDP) populations:** In Kenya, Ethiopia and Rwanda, three operations targeted refugee populations exclusively, servicing those fleeing crises in Sudan and Somalia primarily (Kenya PRRO 200174), Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia (Ethiopia, PRRO 200700) and Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi (Rwanda PRRO 200744). The Somalia operation also served a proportion of the 1.1 million internally displaced persons in the country and the Djibouti operation also served refugee camp populations.
- **Comparatively stable governments but wider geopolitical instability:** Six of the evaluated operations were implemented in comparatively stable operating environments, in Djibouti, Rwanda (two operations), Ethiopia (two operations), and Kenya. However, wider instability and fragility in the region, particularly in South Sudan, Somalia and Burundi, as well as in neighbouring countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic, are reflected in complex inter-regional political relationships, and most tangibly in the refugee flows, as noted above.

⁹ Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda

¹⁰ Source: Supplied by Regional Bureau for East and Central Africa, July 2017

¹¹ Information supplied by the Regional Bureau, July 2017

11. To address the needs of the 8.75 million people targeted by the operations, WFP managed to raise just over 50 percent of the USD 3.41 billion requirements overall, at the time of evaluation.

12. Activities/modalities: The seven evaluated operations comprised a range of activities and modalities:

- All operations were multi-component, in all cases implementing at least three of the WFP four main activity types.
- General distribution was designed and implemented in six out of seven operations¹² in all five countries. In all cases, it was used as an instrument to respond to the needs of chronically vulnerable populations and particularly those affected by drought (in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Djibouti, and Somalia) as well as a specific instrument to respond to the needs of internally-displaced populations/refugees/returnees in Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti.
- All designs included and implemented nutrition¹³ activities, and in Djibouti and Ethiopia these supported national nutrition programmes. All other than the Rwanda PRRO implemented food assistance for assets/food assistance for training activities.
- All operations other than Ethiopia 200290 planned and implemented school feeding activities. School feeding activities were not geared, in these contexts, to support national school feeding interventions .
- Capacity development intentions were built into five out of the seven designs.¹⁴ In Kenya, the refugee operation included a component “to increase the capacity of host communities to meet their food needs”, and the Djibouti design did not include a specific capacity development intention, though activities later took place under implementation (see “Findings”, below).
- In-kind and cash and voucher modalities were planned in all seven operations, though cash and vouchers were limited in implementation to five.
- Local purchase of commodities for distribution was trialled and/or implemented in five operations, though in all cases on a very small scale.

13. Policy frameworks: The constrained operating environment of Somalia, and the refugee-focused nature of three operations, meant that policy engagement in the region within these operations was limited (see “Findings”, below). Where WFP did engage with national policy frameworks, these included refugee management; nutrition; disaster management and risk reduction; health; agriculture; and food security.

14. Strategic partnerships: Operations did, however, form a wide range of strategic partnerships in the East and Central Africa region. These included central ministries (e.g. of agriculture, health, education and refugee affairs) as well decentralised government functions, national vulnerability assessment mechanisms and disaster management authorities. Other partnerships were formed with broad spectrum of United Nations agencies and with international and national non-governmental

¹² All other than the Rwanda CP

¹³ Including HIV/AIDS activities

¹⁴ The two operations in Ethiopia, Somalia and the two Rwanda operations

organisations (NGOs). Annex 1 lists the strategic partnerships identified per country within evaluations (though recognising that these date back in some cases to 2014).

15. Table 1 below presents the operations' main features:

Table 1: Features of operations

Year of evaluation	Operation								Activities ¹⁵						Modalities	
	Country	Category	No.	Duration	Value (USD million)	% funded at evaluation	% funded overall ¹⁶	Target beneficiaries ¹⁷	General distribution	Nutrition ¹⁸	School feeding	Food assistance for assets/training	Capacity development	Local purchase	Food	Cash-based transfers
2014	Ethiopia	PRRO	200290	2012-2015	1,496,167,505	46.5	54.2	4,382,000	√	√*		√	√	√◊	√	√◊
	Kenya	PRRO	200174	2011-2014	496,705,491	78.7	78.5	616,000	√	√	√	√			√	√◊
2015	Somalia	PRRO	200443	2013-2015	788,990,181	40	56.4	2,632,500	√	√*	√	√	√	√◊	√	√
2016	Ethiopia	PRRO	200700	2015-18	493,881,829	37.8	51.7	650,000	√	√*	√	√	√	√◊	√	√
	Rwanda	PRRO	200744	2015-2016	89,672,834	46	57.8	193,900	√	√*	√		√	√◊	√	√
2017	Djibouti	PRRO	200284	2015-2017	42,827,434	38.1	57.6	80,600	√	√	√	√			√	√
	Rwanda	CP	200539	2013-2016	51,852,984	85.0	85.2	197,450		√	√	√	√	√◊	√	√
Totals					3,481,874,676			8,752,450	6	7	6	6	5	5	7	7

¹⁵ ◊ denotes planned but not implemented or √◊ denotes implemented to a very limited degree in terms of beneficiary numbers or duration.

¹⁶ As at the time of this synthesis for ongoing operations or as at the end of the operation for already completed operations. Note that some of the operations may have had budget revisions after the evaluation was completed. This information is therefore intended to illustrate the volatility of funding environment. The source of this information is Resource Updates found in the WFP Operations Database. (<http://www.wfp.org/operations/database>).

¹⁷ Planned beneficiaries throughout the project's lifetime.

¹⁸ *Denotes HIV/AIDS activities that are analysed/reported under nutrition.

1.7 Methodology

16. The individual evaluations analysed her applied mixed-methods approaches, including documentary analysis, review of financial data and statistics, interviews and focus groups with key informants, and other relevant methods. All methodologies were checked for quality and reliability through the operations evaluations process.

17. This regional operations evaluations synthesis applies a structured analytical framework and systematic data extraction. Evidence was rated for validity and reliability on a scale of 1 (low) to 4 (high), with only reliable evidence – scoring at least 2 – included. Findings were validated by the WFP Office of Evaluation and checked by the Regional Evaluation Officer for East and Central Africa.

18. Limitations of this regional synthesis are as follows.

- Six of the seven evaluations were mid-term, limiting final results data available.
- Two of the seven evaluations reported in 2014 (Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Kenya), two in 2015 (Ethiopia PRRO 200700, Somalia), one in 2016 (the Rwanda PRRO) and two in 2017 (Djibouti and the Rwanda CP). Evidence is therefore mixed between recent and earlier periods.
- The evidence arises from five countries in the East and Central Africa region. Although themes identified here may have wider relevance, they cannot be robustly extrapolated to the WFP wider portfolio in the region, which comprises three additional countries.

19. Nonetheless, the breadth and depth of the information presented in this synthesis constitutes a relevant, and hopefully useful, evidence base to inform the Integrated Road Map and country strategic planning processes in the East and Central Africa region going forward.

2. FINDINGS

QUESTION 1: How appropriate were operation designs?

(relevance, strategic positioning and coherence)

Summary findings: relevance/appropriateness

Overall, evaluations found WFP playing a major role in the collective humanitarian response to chronic and acute crises in the region, designing large-scale operations to target acute vulnerability and/or to respond to refugee needs. Designs were developed in strong partnership with national and other international actors. Given operating conditions and beneficiary needs, the role of WFP remained a largely implementing one within the operations, though with efforts to move from “food aid” to “food assistance” where feasible.

Designs were of comparatively good quality, applying relevant evidence, including from evaluations. Internal synergies were strong in refugee operations and weaker in large-scale, more geographically-dispersed operations. Gender was mostly understood as ‘equal numbers.’ Coverage intentions were realistic, and targeting appropriate at geographical level, but with weaknesses within individual activities.

2.1 How appropriate was WFP strategic positioning in the region?

Overall, evaluations found WFP playing a major role in the collective humanitarian response in the region, designing large-scale operations to target acute vulnerability and/or to respond to refugee needs. Designs were developed in strong partnership with national actors and formed part of an international response to crises. The role of WFP in the region appropriately remained a largely implementing one within the seven operations evaluated, though efforts were made to move from “food aid” to “food assistance” where feasible. Social protection and safety nets frameworks were only available to a limited extent within the five countries of evaluation; WFP partly aligned with these, but some opportunities were missed.

20. Evaluations found WFP playing a major role in the humanitarian response for populations in need in the region. The scale of operations was significant: in Rwanda and Kenya refugee operations, WFP targeted 100 percent of refugees in camps and in Ethiopia (PRRO 200700), it aimed to provide a ration basket to over 600,000 refugees, out of an estimated 730,000 refugees in the country at the time. In Somalia, the operation targeted 1.6 million beneficiaries out of 2.1 million considered food insecure.

21. Designs in Djibouti and Ethiopia were also explicitly geared to help implement government programmes.¹⁹ In Djibouti, WFP supported the delivery of the Government’s nutrition programme and social protection strategy; in Ethiopia, it supported the Government in the implementation of nutrition programmes and the productive safety net programme (PSNP).

22. In common with operations in other regions reviewed through this series,²⁰ evaluations also found WFP operations aiming for implementation as part of a coherent (national and international) response to the identified problem. All seven designs aligned with the relevant United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and all three refugee operations were designed within the framework of the

¹⁹ Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290.

²⁰ See Regional Operation Evaluation Syntheses for Asia and the Pacific; Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe; Southern Africa; Latin America and the Caribbean; and West Africa.

broader international and United Nations responses to needs. Box 1 provides examples.

Box 1: Designing in partnership

In Rwanda, the common country programme is the WFP component of *the Rwanda Common Country Programme Document (CCPD) 2013-2018*, a joint product of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, and WFP

In Ethiopia, PRRO 200290 is a critical component of higher-level development and humanitarian programmes pursued by WFP and partners in the country

In Somalia, WFP collaborated with FAO and UNICEF to implement their “Joint Resilience Strategy”

23. As in most other regions, no evaluations in the East and Central Africa region signal areas where partnerships could have been improved at design stage, reflecting consistently strong collaboration.

24. In contrast to findings from elsewhere in this series,²¹ however, the role of WFP within these evaluated operations in the East and Central Africa region has remained a largely implementing one in response to acute humanitarian needs. Six out of seven operations, all PRROs, focused on food delivery to vulnerable populations. However, in Rwanda, under the CP, WFP placed partnership, capacity strengthening and innovation at the heart of its operation design.

25. Four more evaluations²² found efforts to shift from “food aid” to “food assistance” by introducing aspects of capacity strengthening and innovation. For example:

- In Ethiopia (within PRRO 200290), the work of WFP on the large-scale national PSNP, alongside government, reflected its corporate mandate to become a food assistance organisation.
- In Somalia, the operation included elements of capacity building and partnership with government and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

26. Also in Rwanda, however, WFP missed the opportunity to re-orient the design of its refugee operation, to build in approaches to self-reliance.

27. For the five evaluations building in capacity-strengthening intentions, even to a limited degree, activities (as for operations in other regions) were mainly specific and targeted. The exception was the Rwanda CP, which adopted a more strategic approach, where a main objective of the CP was to “enhance the Rwandan government capacity to design nationally-owned hunger solutions”, and activities were geared to support this. Likewise, in the refugee PRRO, capacity strengthening for non-governmental organisations was built into design.

28. Other areas of capacity strengthening were early-warning and assessment capability plus disaster risk management in Ethiopia, and government health and education capacity in Somalia.

29. Reflecting wider findings from this series, none of the seven operations, however, had conducted capacity analysis as part of design. Although the Rwanda CP had developed “something in the line of a capacity development vision”, this lacked a clear

²¹ See Regional Syntheses for Latin America and the Caribbean; and Asia and the Pacific particularly.

²² Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290, Kenya.

strategy with its own overall objectives, results, indicators and performance measurement apparatus.

30. Social protection/safety net frameworks were available/relevant to operations to a more limited extent than for other regions in this series (in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Rwanda). Operation designs were aligned with those in Djibouti and Ethiopia (PRRO 200290), but missed available opportunities in Rwanda.

2.2 How rigorous was the operation design?

Evaluations found comparatively strong quality of designs in the region, with evidence consistently generated and applied, including that from evaluations. However, weaknesses in causal chains still existed, in all cases related to school feeding. Internal synergies were mixed, being stronger in refugee operations and weaker in large-scale, more geographically-dispersed operations. Gender sensitivity was a weakness, with few operations applying gender analysis and the prevailing understanding of gender being ‘equal participation.’

31. All seven operations were continuations of a previous design. The five evaluations commenting²³ found that WFP had adequately revisited the previous design to meet current needs, using approaches such as dialogue with governments and partners and the application of evidence to help maximise effectiveness and efficiency.

32. In common with wider findings from this series, six evaluations reporting²⁴ found that strong partnership and dialogue informed the operation’s design. Specifically:

- All three refugee operations²⁵ were developed in partnership with government under international commitments to refugees.
- In Ethiopia, both the relief and safety net components of PRRO 200290 were devised in strong consultation with government and humanitarian partners, and explicitly geared to support the PSNP as part of the collective national and international response to needs.
- The underlying strategy of the Rwanda refugee operation was formulated over the years through a series of consultative meetings with the Government of Rwanda, United Nations agencies, cooperating partners and beneficiaries.
- In Kenya, extensive consultation took place to ensure that the PRRO design was based on an adequate assessment of the changing reality on the ground.

33. In common with three other regions reviewed through this series,²⁶ all seven evaluations in the region found the evidence-base, underlying design to be strong and robust. Evidence sources applied are listed in Box 2.

Box 2: Sources of evidence applied for operation design

- Evidence from evaluations and reviews
- Baseline studies
- Caseload data provided by UNHCR

²³ Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda (both operations), Somalia. No comment in Ethiopia (both operations).

²⁴ Ethiopia (both operations), Kenya, Rwanda (both operations). Somalia no comment.

²⁵ Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda.

²⁶ See Regional Operation Evaluation Syntheses for Asia and the Pacific; Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe; Southern Africa.

- Integrated phase classification data
- SMART data
- National food security and vulnerability surveys and, for example, demographic and health surveys
- Vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) data, including trend analysis
- Cost analyses
- Joint assessment missions with partner United Nations agencies
- Research and pilot studies
- Market and agricultural assessment bulletins

34. Box 3 highlights examples of evidence-based designs.

Box 3: Evidence-based designs

- In Rwanda, the evaluation found the identification of the priorities for the operation was based on a country context analysis, which drew extensively on available studies and reports
- In Ethiopia, the design of PRRO 200290 was based on WFP-owned analysis and on a national government-led, multi-agency assessment that produces the seasonal Humanitarian Requirements Document. WFP also used historical data, price analyses, and rainfall projections to inform its internal determination of relief requirements and related funding needs
- In Kenya, the design and implementation of the refugee operation was based on a context analysis derived from multiple sources: vulnerability analysis and mapping reports, joint assessment missions focusing on food security, the Kenyan household survey, in-house monitoring and evaluation systems, and non-governmental organisation partner consultations

35. Similar to findings from two other regions in the series,²⁷ five operations²⁸ explicitly applied evidence from evaluations and reviews to inform design (Box 4).

Box 4: Use of evaluations to inform design

- In Rwanda, the design of the CP was informed by: evaluation findings and recommendations, which included greater focusing of the portfolio; integrating WFP analytical work on vulnerability analysis more into government processes; and developing a capacity development strategy to transition from traditional assistance to national ownership
- In Kenya, the PRRO design applied recommendations from previous evaluations/stakeholder consultations, for example, the introduction of biometrics
- In Somalia, the PRRO was formulated after the evaluation of the WFP Country Portfolio 2006-2011. The evaluation provided findings on transfer modalities, needs analysis, local accountability, contingency plans and capacity strengthening, to which the PRRO design responded

²⁷ See Regional Operation Evaluation Syntheses for the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe; and Eastern and Central Africa.

²⁸ Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda (both operations), Somalia.

36. Weak causal chains/design flaws have been a repeated finding in the operation evaluations series.²⁹ These were similarly identified in three operations in the region,³⁰ all related to school feeding. Specifically: in refugee operations in Rwanda and Kenya, the design lacked the evidence base that school feeding (in Kenya, take-home rations) would lead to increase enrolment/retention in schools. The CP in Rwanda assumed that school feeding interventions would benefit from complementary inputs from government and other partners, which did not subsequently materialise.

37. Five evaluations comment on internal synergies in design,³¹ also a consistent weakness identified by evaluations in this series:

- Three³² found strong internal synergies at design stage. In Kenya, for example, general distribution, supplementary feeding and school snacks were designed to inter-relate, to help build the resilience of refugee population.
- In Ethiopia PRRO 200290, and Somalia - both large-scale operations aimed at covering wide geographical areas – internal synergies were lacking. In Somalia, for example, programming did not take account of the relationships between the different components and activities of the design.

38. In common with wider findings from the series, the use of gender analysis to inform design was limited, only being applied in Kenya and Rwanda CP to help build a more gender-sensitive design.

Box 5: Gender analysis and design

In Kenya, each intervention within the PRRO was informed by prior gender and cultural analysis. This analysis then supported operation design. Interventions such as food assistance for assets and firewood distribution were explicitly designed to offer protection to women and girls. General distribution organized separate distribution lines for women, and explicit governance roles were reserved for women in camps.

In the Rwanda CP, community consultation processes explicitly sought to enhance women and most vulnerable households' participation in planning and decision-making. The design of interventions applied findings from consultations in design, resulting mainstreaming of gender across interventions. The CP also partnered with the joint United Nations/Government of Rwanda Rural Women Economic Empowerment initiative, which aimed to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development.

39. The remaining five evaluations³³ found some attention to gender within design, but mainly from an 'including women' perspective. For example, in Somalia, gender activities mainly aimed to promote women's opportunities in terms of access to training and health activities, i.e. focusing on equal participation.

2.3 How responsive were operations to needs?

Overall, WFP operations in the region were fit for context to respond to target population needs, with realistic coverage intentions and appropriate objectives and overall intent. There were some weaknesses of relevance at activity level, however. Targeting was

²⁹ Operations Evaluations Syntheses 2014, 2015 and 2016.

³⁰ Kenya, Rwanda (both operations).

³¹ No comment in Djibouti or the Rwanda refugee operation.

³² Refugee operations in Kenya and Ethiopia plus the Rwanda CP.

³³ Djibouti, Ethiopia both operations, Rwanda refugee operation, Somalia.

appropriate at geographical level, though with limitations in nutrition and general distributions. Transfer modalities were appropriate overall.

40. In line with findings from across this series, WFP operation types in the East and Central Africa region were largely fit for context. All seven evaluations found operation types appropriate for needs.

41. WFP's intended coverage for humanitarian needs was also found appropriate in all seven operations, based on data available at the time. Coverage intentions were realistic, being based on detailed needs assessments and a solid evidence base, as per Section 2.2 above.

42. Operations' objectives and overall intent were found well-aligned with the needs of food insecure populations in all seven operations. In Somalia, for example, the PRRO was characterized by a flexible approach, incorporating both relief and recovery interventions, which was appropriate for the varied implementation locations and the volatility of food emergencies.

43. Relevance at activity level was more consistent than in some other regions evaluated through this series. Just two evaluations found relevance concerns at activity level. Specifically:

- In the Rwanda refugee operation, the evaluation noted differences in opportunities and capacities between longstanding Congolese refugees, who have more employment or access to land, and the newly-arrived Burundians. It suggests that a more nuanced approach would be useful within general food/cash assistance support.
- In Somalia, the operation applied pre-defined operational responses, meaning that, whilst activities met the needs of the beneficiaries, they did not necessarily meet their priorities.⁴²

44. Additionally, the design of food assistance for assets interventions affected relevance in Kenya and Ethiopia PRRO 200290,³⁴ with models copied from highland areas being inappropriately applied in lowland areas in Ethiopia.

45. Evaluations identified generally appropriate operation-level geographical targeting. In the three refugee operations, camp locations were set by government (Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia). In Djibouti, Rwanda (for the CP) and Somalia, operations appropriately focused on areas of the country most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition. However, in Ethiopia (PRRO 200290), geographical targeting criteria for site selection within lowland areas required improvement, due to the different conditions in these areas.

46. Four evaluations³⁵ found specific activity-level targeting concerns, for example:

- Nutrition interventions raised risks of inclusion/exclusion error, including the potential exclusion of vulnerable groups in Djibouti, and inclusion error in the Rwanda CP and Ethiopia PRRO 200290.
- General distribution raised concerns regarding refugee registration in Ethiopia and Rwanda, with some potentially eligible refugees unregistered and therefore not eligible to receive rations, whilst some non-refugees did access rations.

³⁴ Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Kenya.

³⁵ Djibouti, Ethiopia both operations, Rwanda CP.

47. Targeting modalities aligned with national guidelines or approaches in all five countries.

48. Finally, and in common with other regions assessed through this series, the WFP choice of transfer modalities, whether cash and voucher or in-kind, were assessed as fully or mostly appropriate in six out of seven evaluations.³⁶ In Somalia, WFP had not adopted cash approaches, despite cash being a well-utilised modality by other actors, and only limited assistance was provided through vouchers.

QUESTION 2: What were the results of the operations?

Summary findings: results

Evaluations found continued weaknesses in monitoring systems over time. Both output and outcome data suffered from limited availability, quality and reliability concerns. Performance was variable across activity areas, and dependent on contextual factors, particularly in refugee operations.

Evaluations also identified some additional results, reflecting WFP efforts to apply an ‘enabling’ role adopted where feasible, though due to the profile of the evaluated operations, these were more limited than in other regions. The most prominent results were in enhanced national capacities and resilience. Gender approaches focused mainly on ‘including women’, with results geared to quantitative ‘numbers participating’.

WFP engaged in close and collaborative partnerships with governments in the region, with its contributions to food security and nutrition highly valued by government agencies. Relationships with partner United Nations agencies were generally positive. The willingness of WFP to adapt under changing conditions was praised, though operations experienced mixed timeliness. Operations had limited scope for transition and sustainability.

2.4 What evidence of results is available?

Evaluations in the region found continued weaknesses in monitoring systems over time. Both output and outcome data suffered from limited availability, with outcome and nutrition data particularly scant. Five evaluations raised data quality and reliability concerns and four found insufficient use of available data to inform programme planning and implementation.

37. **Monitoring systems:** Operations evaluations in this series have consistently found shortcomings in WFP monitoring systems, though with improvements in output data availability over time. Evaluations in the East and Central Africa region, however, continue to report limited data availability and quality for both output and outcome results.

38. Positively, three evaluations, two in Rwanda and that in Somalia, found comparatively strong monitoring systems overall (Box 6).

Box 6: Monitoring systems

The monitoring system for the Rwanda refugee operation was assessed as comprehensive. It had pursued innovations, for example, monthly checklist questionnaires uploaded wirelessly for rapid analysis to inform management. It also conducted food security outcome

³⁶ Djibouti, Rwanda both operations, Ethiopia both operations, Kenya.

monitoring through a rigorous procedure. The system allowed field monitors to verify receipt of their entitlement, and continuously gather information on beneficiary knowledge of programme aspects and satisfaction.

In Somalia, monthly monitoring reports, quarterly and annual donor reports, and annual standard project reports provided a “good tool” for promoting efficiency and effectiveness.

39. However, four out of seven evaluations, spanning the period 2014 to 2017, identified gaps or limitations in monitoring systems.³⁷ Specific weaknesses included:

- Insufficient resources to ensure monitoring requirements under WFP minimum monitoring standards³⁸
- Inefficient/cumbersome/over-sampled data-gathering systems, whose required time and effort was not commensurate with the quality and utility of data produced³⁹
- Incomplete post-distribution monitoring⁴⁰
- Delays in the production of monitoring data.⁴¹

40. Additional gaps included a lack of corporate indicators available to measure innovation in Rwanda (the CP evaluation) and the need for more, integrated monitoring across operation components in Somalia.

41. **Data availability:** Three evaluations found gaps in output data in the region, even in the later period.⁴² Gaps in outcome data within individual activities were also noted in six out of seven evaluations.⁴³ Nutrition output and outcome data was particularly scant, with gaps identified in five evaluations.⁴⁴

42. Data quality and reliability issues were also raised in five evaluations.⁴⁵ Concerns included:

- Discrepancies or errors identified in the data, for example, between information presented in standard project reports and that gathered by evaluation teams⁴⁶
- The use of formulae rather than actual counts, which led to potential discrepancies in data⁴⁷
- Lack of baselines⁴⁸
- Challenges in measuring the national capacity index⁴⁹
- Claims made for improvements in outcome data which lacked rigour⁵⁰ – for example attributing improved food consumption scores to WFP food transfers that only supplied a small percentage of a household’s food entitlements, or

³⁷ Djibouti, both Ethiopia operations, Kenya.

³⁸ Djibouti, Ethiopia both operation.

³⁹ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya.

⁴⁰ Djibouti.

⁴¹ Ethiopia PRRO 200290.

⁴² Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290, Rwanda CP.

⁴³ Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290, Kenya, Rwanda both operations, Somalia.

⁴⁴ Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290, Kenya, Rwanda refugee operation, Somalia.

⁴⁵ Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290, Kenya, Rwanda refugee operation, Somalia.

⁴⁶ Djibouti, Kenya.

⁴⁷ Somalia.

⁴⁸ Rwanda CP.

⁴⁹ Rwanda CP.

⁵⁰ Ethiopia 200290, Kenya, Rwanda both operations.

conducting measurements close to times when food consumption levels were high.

43. Data management, analysis and use was a weakness, in common with wider findings from the series, with four evaluations finding limited analysis and use of data generated to improve programme planning and implementation.⁵¹ Gaps included:

- Weak data management systems, including the use of multiple spreadsheets/databases without sufficient harmonization⁵²
- Presentation of raw data, without efforts to analyse it, particularly over time⁵³
- Limited or no feedback loops from data gathered to informing programme design or adjustment, or to inform external stakeholders/donors.⁵⁴

44. However, the Rwanda CP was an exception (Box 7).

Box 7: A learning approach

Ongoing learning in the Rwanda CP was supported by a conducive external environment, with the Government of Rwanda placing a high emphasis on evidence-based learning. Consequently, the CP included a strong focus on the production and use of evidence. In addition to standard monitoring procedures, this included the production of research programmes and lesson learning papers. Additionally, for each of the main activities, steering committees were put in place to facilitate monitoring and decision-making

45. Finally, WFP indicator target-setting was generally found satisfactory in the region's operations. Only the evaluation of Ethiopia 200290 identified weaknesses, with detailed and comprehensive food security assessments conducted in highland areas also used to set targets for the very different operating conditions of lowland regions.

2.5 What output and outcome results have been achieved, per theme/sector?

Performance was variable across activity areas, and highly dependent on contextual factors, including refugee flows and funding. Outcome data particularly was limited in availability and reliability.

- **General distribution:** General distribution was used in the East and Central Africa region operations to target refugees and specific vulnerable populations. Planned output targets were only met in one operation, with five others missing targets mainly due to external circumstances. Only one operation fully met outcome targets, with mixed performance in others.
- **Nutrition:** All seven operations implemented a nutrition response. Two operations fully met output targets across all nutrition intervention types, whilst five showed mixed performance or did not achieve any output targets. However, interventions showed some positive outcome results, with three operations fully meeting targets and two more showing largely positive performance.
- **Education:** Activities were implemented in six out of seven operations, including the three refugee operations. Only one operation met its output targets. However,

⁵¹ Djibouti, Ethiopia 200290, Kenya, Somalia.

⁵² Djibouti, Somalia.

⁵³ Djibouti, Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Kenya.

⁵⁴ Ethiopia PRRO 200290.

outcome level results were positive across enrolment, attendance and retention indicators.

- **Livelihoods:** Six operations implemented food assistance for asset/training activities, with smaller planned beneficiary numbers than for other activity areas. Only one evaluation found that activities were on track or had met/exceeded output targets, with the remainder showing mixed performance or under-achieving. Data on outcomes was limited, and performance was variable across operations.

46. All operations contained multiple components (Table 1). All operations also experienced at least some variation against planned targets, with reasons including: changes in refugee caseloads (all three refugee operations plus Djibouti); adjustments in line with changing food security situations; (Ethiopia, Somalia), and additional funding permitting expansion (Rwanda CP).

47. Results against activity areas were as follows:

General distribution

48. Six operations (all PRROs) implemented general distribution activities over the evaluation period, in all cases to target refugees/internally displaced persons, and/or chronically food-insecure populations at critical times of the year. Operations were generally large-scale: in Ethiopia, PRRO 200290 targeted 1.9 to 5 million people annually, depending on the food security conditions of the year, whilst the refugee operation targeted caseloads of over 600,000 in both 2014 and 2015. The Somalia operation targeted 645,000 beneficiaries in 2013 and 180,000 in 2014 and the Kenya refugee operation targeted just under 440,000 people in 2013.

49. **Output results:** The realisation of general distribution targets against plan is highly dependent on contextual factors, particularly variations in refugee caseloads. Only one operation, the Ethiopia PRRO 200290, met or almost met planned output targets in the reference years, despite challenges in the timing of food security information available. The remaining five operations missed targets in at least one year, mostly due to changing external circumstances such as, lower than anticipated refugee caseloads (Rwanda refugee operation), the introduction of biometric targeting (Kenya), changing food security conditions (Somalia) and funding shortfalls (Ethiopia refugee operation, Djibouti).

50. **Outcome results:** Data limitations prevented comprehensive assessment, but information available showed mixed achievement against different outcome indicators:

- Food consumption score targets were met in three operations (Ethiopia 200290, Ethiopia and Rwanda refugee operations) but not in Djibouti and Somalia, partly due to the effects of *El Niño*
- Dietary diversity scores were met or almost met in two operations (Somalia, Ethiopia refugee operation) but were not achieved in other operations, with mixed performance between locations in Djibouti and the Rwanda refugee operation
- Use of coping strategies targets were met in the Rwanda refugee operation but missed in Djibouti and in Ethiopia PRRO 200290.

51. In Kenya, incomplete data prevented the assessment of achievement against planned outcomes, but overall, the evaluation concluded that food security and nutritional status in camps had improved in part due to general distribution transfers.

Nutrition

52. All seven operations implemented nutrition interventions, reflecting its importance as a strategic priority in the region. Four operations contained activities to target stunting.⁵⁵

53. The largest numbers of nutrition beneficiaries were intended in Ethiopia (PRRO 200290), targeting just over a million beneficiaries in 2012 and 2013 respectively, and Somalia, where nutrition was the major focus of the operation and which targeted 1.5 million beneficiaries overall.

54. **Output results:** Output performance for nutrition activities varied across activity types:

- Only nutrition activities in the Rwanda CP and Kenya fully met output targets across all nutrition intervention types.
- In Djibouti and Somalia, nutrition activities either did not meet output targets in specific interventions, or showed mixed performance across them. For example, in Somalia, varying caseloads, due to changing food security conditions, meant that planning figures for mother and child health and nutrition interventions were not reached, whilst planning figures of blanket supplementary feeding programme interventions were exceeded.
- Operations in Rwanda, and both Ethiopia operations, did not reach any of the planned nutrition targets across intervention types, for reasons including: changing caseloads (all), over-estimated planning figures (Ethiopia) and improvements in malnutrition rates in camps (Rwanda).

55. **Outcome results:** Evaluations note limited availability, quality and reliability of nutrition outcome data. However, despite these data shortcomings and mixed output level performance, interventions showed some positive outcome results:

- Three operations, both those in Ethiopia and that in Somalia, found targets in recovery, death and defaulter rates achieved and in line with the SPHERE standards.
- Largely positive performances were reported in Kenya refugee operation and Djibouti, where operations met targets in recovery rates, default rates, mortality rates and non-response rates in line with Sphere standards.
- Mixed performance was reported in Rwanda (both operations). For the CP, outcome indicators were not reached although progress was made in “the proportion of children who consume a minimum acceptable diet” and “the proportion of eligible population who participate in the programme”. In the refugee operation, malnutrition rates improved but stunting and anaemia rates remained high, and few children consumed a minimal acceptable diet.

⁵⁵ Kenya, both Rwanda operations, Somalia

Education (school feeding)

56. Six out of seven operations implemented school feeding initiatives, though in Djibouti this was limited to a take-home ration for girls.⁵⁶ The largest scale activities were: Somalia, where just over 200,000 children were targeted in 2014; the Ethiopia refugee programme, which targeted 110,500 children in 2015; and Rwanda, where the home-grown school feeding programme targeted 82,000 primary school children until 2016.

57. **Output results:** Output-level achievement was mixed across the six operations:

- In Djibouti, WFP met its planned targets of distributing a take-home ration for girls in both years of implementation.
- In the Rwanda CP and the Kenya and Somalia operations, targets were not met consistently over the years. For example, in the Rwanda CP, targets were met in the first and fourth year of the intervention, but underachieved in years 2 and 3, due to funding challenges.
- In the Ethiopia and Rwanda refugee programmes, targets were not met in either year, in Ethiopia due to a partner's unwillingness to support school feeding in a particular region, and in Rwanda due to a lower-than-planned number of Burundian refugees.

58. **Outcome results:** Results were available, for all six school feeding interventions and largely positive, though evaluations raised some concerns about the attribution of results to WFP interventions:

- Attendance rates met or exceeded targets in all three operations that applied them,⁵⁷ though the Kenya evaluation raises concerns about attribution.
- Retention rate targets were met or exceeded in all four operations that measured them,⁵⁸ though in Somalia, retention was relatively low in higher classes.
- Enrolment rates were met or exceeded in all three operations that applied the indicator.⁵⁹ Enrolment rates in the Rwanda refugee operation were below target, though, since the majority of children were already in school, limited improvement was possible.

Livelihoods (food assistance for assets/training)

59. Six out of seven operations⁶⁰ implemented food assistance for assets or training (FFA/FFT) activities. The largest volumes targeted were in Ethiopia, where WFP targeted just over a million beneficiaries in 2012 and 2013 under the PSNP; and Somalia, where WFP targeted 165,000 beneficiaries for FFA/ FFT in 2013 and 2014 combined.

60. **Output results:** Data was only available for five operations:⁶¹

- Only the Somalia operation was on track to meet planned output targets over two years.

⁵⁶ All other than Ethiopia PRRO 200290

⁵⁷ Djibouti, the Kenya and Rwanda refugee operations

⁵⁸ Ethiopia refugee operation, Rwanda both operations, Somalia

⁵⁹ Ethiopia refugee operation, Rwanda CP, Somalia

⁶⁰ All other than the Rwanda refugee operation

⁶¹ Data for the Ethiopia refugee operation was not available

- Four operations⁶² did not meet participant, beneficiary or asset creation targets over the reference years. Reasons included resource constraints, as in Djibouti, and competition for beneficiaries created by similar activities operating in the area (Rwanda CP).
- The Kenya evaluation found mixed performance, with food assistance for assets participant targets met but food assistance for training underachieving for women participants.

61. **Outcome results:** Data was available for four operations, with the Kenya and Ethiopia refugee operations lacking sufficiently reliable data. Findings were mixed at best:

- Food consumption scores were measured in three operations; these improved in Djibouti and Ethiopia PRRO 200290 but declined in the Rwanda CP.
- Community asset scores were measured in Ethiopia PRRO 200290 and in Somalia; these improved in Ethiopia but experienced variable performance in Somalia over the operation's duration.
- Dietary diversity scores were measured in the Rwanda CP, with no change noted.

62. The quality and sustainability of assets under food assistance for assets activities created have been repeatedly raised as concerns within the operations evaluations series, along with a lack of links to resilience objectives. In the East and Central Africa region, only the Djibouti and Ethiopia PRRO 200290 evaluations commented on this. The Djibouti evaluation found that assets were of good quality and likely to be maintained. However, in Ethiopia, the design, construction, and maintenance of public works were lower than the expected standard.

2.6 What other results have been generated, beyond outputs and outcomes?

Evaluations identify additional results that were not consistently captured in corporate reporting at the time. However, due to the profile of the evaluated operations, these were more limited than in other regions. The most prominent results reflected enhanced national capacities and resilience, with some limited gains in improving the policy environment in Rwanda, and in social protection/safety nets in Djibouti and Ethiopia.

2.6.1 Improved policy environments

63. Contributions made to enhanced national policy environments have been a significant feature of this series, with results not captured in the WFP Strategic Results Framework 2014-2017. However, in the East and Central Africa region, such results were only observed in the two Rwanda evaluations. The reasons for this gap included: strong existing government frameworks for refugee management (all three refugee operations); a highly constrained governance and policy environment in Somalia; and policy influence focused on social protection and resilience in Ethiopia, addressed in Section 2.6.4, below.

64. The few results observed are found in Table 2.

⁶² Djibouti, both Ethiopia operations, Rwanda CP

Table 2: Policy environment results

<i>Education</i>	Supporting the development of policy/legislative frameworks and national systems for school feeding (Rwanda CP)
<i>Nutrition</i>	Supporting the development of food security and nutrition policies, strategies, protocols and programmes (Rwanda CP, refugee operation)
<i>Disaster preparedness and response</i>	National contingency plan and disaster risk reduction strategy supported (Rwanda CP)

2.6.2 Enhanced national capacities

65. Results in capacity strengthening were however, more prominent, occurring in six evaluations.⁶³ Key achievements are recorded in Table 3.

Table 3: Capacity development results

<i>Nutrition</i>	Training health centre and national nutrition programme staff in nutrition protocols (Djibouti)
<i>Food security and nutrition analysis/management/targeting</i>	Building local/national capacity for food management and targeting, including of cooperating partners (Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia) Building the capacity of government and cooperating partners for vulnerability assessment and monitoring (Rwanda)
<i>Food production</i>	Strengthening the capacity of agricultural cooperatives for production and business management (Rwanda)

66. However, three evaluations⁶⁴ point to weak capacity-strengthening approaches, with gaps including: the lack of an overarching strategic approach and no intended results (Ethiopia PRRO 200290); no such activities intended despite an obvious need (Kenya); and the need to seek alternative measures for capacity development, for instance through local organizations (Somalia).

2.6.3 Results in social protection/social safety nets

67. The limited availability of social protection/safety nets frameworks in the region (see section 2.1 above) meant that results in this area were limited. Specifically:

- In Djibouti and Ethiopia 200290, WFP played a critical role in social protection and safety nets for vulnerable populations, helping to directly implement the Government's social protection strategy.
- However, in the Rwanda CP, WFP was relatively absent from the social protection dialogue, although many WFP activities had a social protection angle, and partners perceived the potential to address social protection needs as one of WFP main comparative advantages.

⁶³ Djibouti, both Ethiopia operations, both Rwanda operations, Somalia

⁶⁴ Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Kenya, Somalia

2.6.4 Results in resilience

68. Five evaluations⁶⁵ comment on WFP contributions to resilience in the region. Three found positive results,⁶⁶ with activities in food assistance for assets in Djibouti and Rwanda contributing to building resilience at community level; and nascent, but positive, results emerging in Somalia. In Djibouti and Rwanda, resilience activities were supported by conducive policy frameworks and complementary partnerships with the relevant ministry.

69. In Ethiopia and Kenya, however, evaluations found gaps in the WFP approach. In Ethiopia, PRRO 200290 lacked a comprehensive approach to building resilience-capacity, particularly in lowland areas. In Kenya, whilst infrastructure developed through food assistance for assets projects increased immediate food security resilience in target communities, activities were assessed as too limited to make a difference in the medium term.

2.6.5 Results in disaster risk reduction/management

70. Within the East and Central Africa region, four evaluations⁶⁷ observed results arising from WFP efforts to support national governments in building disaster risk reduction/management systems. Box 8 provides examples.

Box 8: Disaster risk reduction/management

In Somalia and Djibouti, WFP engagement with responsible government institutions, including at decentralised level, resulted in improved capacities for disaster risk preparedness, management and response

In Ethiopia, WFP support to disaster risk management (DRM) involved assisting with the development and implementation of new national guidelines on targeting food relief assistance, which reflect a change in government policy from emergency response to disaster risk reduction and management

In Rwanda, WFP support to disaster preparedness provided support to upgrade disaster communication systems and to improve linkages from local affected areas to central level in all 30 districts of the country

2.6.6 Innovation

70. Four evaluations in the region,⁶⁸ including the three refugee evaluations, also signalled WFP use of innovation to improve results.

Box 9: Innovation

In the Ethiopia refugee operation, innovations in cash and food distribution modalities included the introduction of the biometric targeting system and a grinding allowance to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation

In Kenya, the WFP innovations team critically questioned existing practice and developed initiatives for the introduction of new technologies and ideas such as fresh food vouchers, which pilot tested the new corporate cash and voucher IT solution

⁶⁵ Djibouti, Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Kenya, Rwanda CP, Somalia.

⁶⁶ Djibouti, Rwanda CP and Somalia.

⁶⁷ Djibouti, Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Rwanda CP, Somalia.

⁶⁸ Ethiopia PRRO 200070, Kenya, Rwanda CP and refugee operation.

In the Rwanda CP, WFP successfully modelled innovations and provided lessons relevant to its own and partners' work to improve national food security solutions. The evaluation found that the Government of Rwanda, United Nations, and others were uniformly positive about the role of WFP in modelling innovations across its portfolio. There was evidence of take-up of innovation pilots by government

Within the Rwanda refugee operation, WFP implemented an innovative electronic cash transfer modality, which aimed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of distributions. This worked through "mVisa", an interoperable mobile phone-based payment system, and allowed beneficiaries to either trade directly with registered mVisa merchants or withdraw their entitlement as cash

2.7 Gender, protection and accountability to affected populations

Gender approaches in the operations focused mainly on 'including women'. Three evaluations found more qualitative achievements, from operations that adopted more progressive models of gender. Five evaluations reported on protection concerns, with all five finding positively against corporate targets, but with other protection issues arising that required attention. Achievements on accountability to affected populations were mixed, with three evaluations finding targets met, and three finding weaknesses.

71. **Gender:** All seven evaluations found at least partial attention to gender in implementation modalities, though in common with wider findings from the series, a largely quantitative 'including women' approach prevailed in five. The exceptions were the Rwanda CP, where the operation launched several gender-oriented activities during implementation, including engagement with women-led cooperatives and "steady and repeated sensitization" within cash transfer food assistance for assets activities; and Kenya, where gender was effectively mainstreamed into programming and implementation, with a particular emphasis on reducing gender based violence.

72. Results achieved were mostly quantitative against corporate targets, focused on parity of inclusion in activities. Targets were achieved or mostly achieved in five operations;⁶⁹ but missed in at least one activity in Djibouti and Somalia. Both these evaluations, in common with several others in this series, critiqued the corporate gender indicators for mainly involving quantifying the participation of women but not capturing aspects related to power structures, or changes in gender-based social roles.

73. Three evaluations, of the Somalia and both Rwanda operations, reported qualitative gender results, that reflected more progressive approaches to gender equality. Achievements included: increased self-reliance for women; better relations between spouses; improved access to markets for women; and a stronger role for women in household decision-making over food and cash. However, in Rwanda, unanticipated negative effects included a loss of dignity for women, when shortfalls in rations were blamed on them.

74. **Protection:** Five evaluations reported on protection.⁷⁰ WFP corporate targets were met or exceeded in all, with few safety concerns encountered at delivery sites. However, three evaluations identified protection issues arising that were not captured in corporate reporting. These included persistent gender based violence in Djibouti and Somalia, and child labour in the Ethiopia refugee operation.

⁶⁹ Ethiopia both operations, Kenya, Rwanda both operations

⁷⁰ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya, Rwanda refugee operation, Somalia Rwanda refugee operation

75. Accountability to affected populations (AAP): Of six evaluations reporting,⁷¹ three assessed WFP performance positively,⁷² with beneficiaries mostly aware of their entitlements and/or of access to the programme. Complaints processes were established in Djibouti, the Rwanda refugee operation and Somalia (though in Djibouti and Somalia, evaluations found some lack of awareness of, or confidence in, the system by beneficiaries). Protection zones were established in Kenya. In Djibouti, none of the corporate targets on accountability to affected populations were met and weaknesses were also identified in both Rwanda operations, with no specific complaints mechanisms for beneficiaries set up under any of the CP activities.

2.8 WFP partnerships in East and Central Africa region

Evaluations found WFP engaged in close and collaborative partnerships with governments in the region, with the organisation's contributions to food security and nutrition highly valued by government agencies. Relationships with partner United Nations agencies were generally positive, with opportunities for coordination missed in just two operations.

76. Government partners: All seven evaluations praised the strength and collaborative nature of WFP partnerships with government in the region. Box 10 provides examples.

Box 10: Partnerships with government

In Kenya, the close working relationship between WFP field office management and the Department for Refugee Affairs contributed directly to a safe and enabling operating environment for WFP food assistance in a complex, protracted refugee setting

In Somalia, the PRRO strengthened the relationship with government and local administration for all activities, which promoted the relevance and effectiveness of activities

In Ethiopia, the government body responsible for refugees worked closely with WFP and considered WFP its most essential and reliable partner. In PRRO 200290, partnerships were strong, and WFP actively engaged in transparent communication, trying to involve government partners in assessments, surveys, review meetings, joint monitoring and provision of resources

In Rwanda, WFP enjoyed a strong working relationship with the Government for the refugee operation, based on mutual respect and constructive collaboration. Under the CP, planning of activities was systematically carried out jointly with Government, ensuring partnership and a spirit of cooperation across the operation

77. United Nation partners: Relationships with partner United Nations agencies were generally positive in the region's operations, in contrast to wider findings from this series. All seven evaluations found strategic alignment with the main policy frameworks at country level, such as UNDAF, and five evaluations also found mostly positive operational coordination.⁷³

Box 11: WFP and United Nations coordination in Rwanda

Rwanda CP: In the Rwandan context of strong United Nations coordination, supported by government demands for donor and United Nation harmonization, WFP invested in partnership mechanisms and in regular review and dialogue among partners. In some fora,

⁷¹ All other than Ethiopia PRRO 200290

⁷² Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya, Somalia

⁷³ Rwanda both operations, Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Kenya, Somalia

WFP adopted a leadership role which gave it leverage and influence within the wider partnerships

Refugee operation: The relationship of WFP with UNHCR was found to be consistent and positive, grounded in an ongoing series of joint assessment missions and regular coordination meetings

78. However, in two operations, Djibouti and Ethiopia PRRO 200290, evaluations found limited coordination, and/or missed opportunities to partner on the ground.⁷⁴ These related to differences in coverage in nutrition activities between UNICEF and WFP in Ethiopia and the non-realisation of intentions in Djibouti.

2.10 Efficiency and agility in implementation

Timeliness was variable across the operations, with inputs delivered in a timely way within the three refugee operations, but other operations experiencing delays. Operations' costs were mostly appropriate for the operating context. WFP flexibility and willingness to adapt to changing conditions was explicitly praised across all seven evaluations. Transfer modalities were appropriate, with benefits noted for cash transfers particularly. Local purchase was mostly small-scale in nature.

79. Timeliness was variable in the region's operations. In all three refugee operations, WFP delivered mostly uninterrupted food and cash assistance to beneficiaries, reflecting efficient logistics operations in settings in which WFP has long experience. The remaining four operations all encountered delays in one or more activities, with causes including delayed funding arrangements, slow food management processes, pipeline breaks and supply chain challenges.

Box 12: Addressing timeliness in Kenya and Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, timeliness was a stated output indicator for WFP support to the PSNP. It was addressed via the hub and spoke operation, whose main objective was to address logistical and implementation challenges in the Somali region to improve food deliveries and distributions. Hub and spoke improved food delivery regarding timeliness, beneficiary targeting and by diminishing food misuse

In Kenya, the food supply chain, from donors to beneficiaries, was well managed and followed WFP standards - leading to only two pipeline breaks in the five years prior to the evaluation. Effective logistics management was a major contributing factor to the effective implementation of the PRRO

80. Six evaluations,⁷⁵ comment on cost-efficiency. They found five operations incurring appropriate costs for the implementing environment.⁷⁶ Cost efficiency measures included mobilizing contributions for school feeding funding from parents in the Rwanda CP; and biometric targeting systems in Kenya and Ethiopia refugee operations, which reduced inclusion error and the monetisation of food. However, in Somalia, the evaluation found cost inefficiencies in the voucher programme and in high numbers of field level agreements with partners.

⁷⁴ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Rwanda CP

⁷⁵ All other than Djibouti.

⁷⁶ Ethiopia both operations, Kenya, Rwanda CP school feeding and cash transfers in the refugee operation.

81. Reflecting a common theme identified through this series, internal synergies in implementation were varied in the region, although all operations were multi-component. Of six evaluations commenting:⁷⁷

- Internal synergies were strong in the Kenya and Rwanda refugee operations and these enhanced results.
- Two operations, the Ethiopia refugee operation and the Rwanda CP, found missed opportunities. For example, in the Rwanda CP, the nutrition intervention missed the opportunity to align with school feeding.
- The Ethiopia PRRO 200290 and the Somalia operation - both large-scale, multi-component interventions across broad geographical areas – did not compensate in implementation for the gaps in internal synergies in design.⁷⁸

82. **Adaptive capacity:** In common with wider findings from this series, the flexible and proactive approach of WFP to adapting to changing conditions was praised in all seven evaluations (Box 13):

- In the Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya and Somalia, WFP allowed for dynamic adjustment between relief and recovery activities in different regions as needs required.
- In Djibouti, Kenya and the two Rwanda operations, the close engagement of WFP with government allowed for continual joint review of context and updating of the response, for example, in relation to refugee flows.
- In Kenya, both Rwanda operations and Somalia, the WFP detailed beneficiary mapping/production of food security data allowed for rapid adjustment to context.

Box 13: Agility

The evaluation of the Kenya refugee programme found that over the long life of the refugee camps in Kenya, WFP had established a highly effective and efficient internal system to provide food assistance within camps. The system was complex and dynamic, demonstrating the flexibility to adjust to changes in internal and external context and to derive innovative solutions processed from the regular flow of information

83. **Beneficiary entitlements:** All six evaluations commenting⁷⁹ found WFP delivering less food or cash than intended to beneficiaries, and/or transfers carried out for a shorter duration or with less frequency than planned.⁸⁰ Shortfalls were significant in some countries – for example, less than one-third of planned distribution in 2014 in the Ethiopia PRRO. Funding was the main reason for limited distribution, through external factors, such as changing needs and/or refugee caseloads, also played a role.

84. **Transfer modalities:** All five operations implementing cash and/or voucher transfers found positive effects. Benefits included:⁸¹

⁷⁷ All other than Djibouti.

⁷⁸ Ethiopia PRRO 200290, Somalia.

⁷⁹ All other than Kenya.

⁸⁰ Djibouti, Rwanda CP, Ethiopia both operations, Somalia.

⁸¹ Pilot initiatives on cash in Ethiopia PRRO 200290 and vouchers in Kenya, did not report effects, but the implementation of the cash and voucher systems at the time of evaluation was reported to be smooth.

- Increased flexibility in purchasing power, allowing beneficiaries to purchase a range of commodities and/or items to cover basic needs⁸²
- Stimulation of the local economy⁸³
- Purchasing at lower prices due to bulk purchasing⁸⁴
- Reduced monetisation of commodities distributed⁸⁵
- Increased food consumption.⁸⁶

85. Results on dietary diversity were mixed, being positive in the Rwanda CP, but with limited effects in the Rwanda refugee and Ethiopia refugee operations.

86. WFP adopted a voucher-based transfer modality in Somalia. However, the evaluation found that whilst this choice reflected WFP area of expertise, it provided less flexibility for beneficiaries, incurred a higher administrative burden and did not align with the broad consensus that cash-based modalities were appropriate in much of Somalia.

87. In-kind transfers met with mixed acceptability from beneficiaries, with high levels of commodity suitability in the Rwanda CP and in Somalia, but more limited acceptability in four operations.⁸⁷ These concerned lentils in Djibouti, sorghum in Kenya and the Ethiopia refugee operation, and maize in the Rwanda refugee operation. Ration sizes, linked to the reduced distribution quantity above, were a source of complaint in three operations.⁸⁸

88. Finally, local purchase of commodities was trialled and/or implemented in five operations, though in all countries on a very small scale.⁸⁹ The purchase for progress initiative allowed for small quantities of local purchase in both operations in Rwanda, and Ethiopia PRRO 200290. WFP trialled local purchase in Ethiopia and Somalia, but met with challenges including quality constraints, comparatively high costs and pest infections.

2.11 Sustainability/transition.

Operations in the East and Central Africa region had limited scope for transition and sustainability. Only the Rwanda CP had significant potential to be sustainable. The three refugee operations realistically required the ongoing involvement of the international community, though evaluations recommended an increased focus on self-reliance and financial sustainability.

89. Transition strategies towards government takeover of operations was only relevant to four operations in the East and Central Africa region, with self-reliance a more appropriate consideration for the three refugee operations.

90. The four non-refugee operations faced some highly challenging environments, but also reflect wider inconsistencies identified through this series. Operations in Rwanda and Djibouti both had significant potential for sustainability; WFP implemented transition strategies in Rwanda, and made efforts to strengthen capacity in Djibouti,

⁸² Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee programme, Somalia, Rwanda refugee operation.

⁸³ Rwanda CP.

⁸⁴ Somalia.

⁸⁵ Ethiopia refugee operation.

⁸⁶ Ethiopia and Rwanda refugee operations.

⁸⁷ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya, Rwanda refugee operation.

⁸⁸ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Rwanda refugee operation.

⁸⁹ All other than Djibouti and Kenya.

but without an explicit vision for transition. Somalia and Ethiopia were un conducive contexts for transition; here, operations focused on incrementally strengthening the capacities of local authorities.

91. Consequently, the potential for sustainability in these four operations was mixed, with high potential overall in Rwanda, and some potential in Djibouti. In Ethiopia and Somalia, potential was low.

92. The three refugee operation evaluations note limited potential for sustainability, with ongoing support wholly dependent on the international community. In Kenya and Ethiopia, the environment for self-reliance was un conducive, due to government policies restricting employment options for refugees outside camps. All three evaluations recommend a shift of focus to (i) self-reliance of refugees, and, given the inevitability of continuation, (ii) financial sustainability for the operation.

QUESTION 3: What factors affected the results?

Summary findings: factors

External factors affecting results included climate-related challenges, such as drought challenging operating terrain and security issues. Funding-related concerns, particularly the restrictions imposed by in-kind contributions, also hindered efficiency and effectiveness.

Internal barriers to effectiveness in the region were design flaws, targeting weaknesses, and limited human resources. However, strong and frequent external communication with partners, including governments, regional bureau support and WFP logistics expertise, supported the achievement of results.

2.12 Internal and external factors

93. Evaluations identified a combination of internal and external factors affecting results. The external factors were as follows:

- A wide range of external challenges in the East and Central Africa region impeded operations' effectiveness and efficiency. These include: climate-related challenges, and specifically those arising from El Niño; increasing drought conditions in several countries; and access barriers due to challenging geographical terrain and security issues, for example in Kenya and Somalia. Positively, conducive policy frameworks supported implementation in some countries, as did strong government leadership and United Nations coordination in Rwanda. However national capacity limitations prove a barrier in all countries other than Rwanda, including government change or staff turnover.
- The refugee operations faced specific challenges including: the lack of a clear outlook for refugee sustainability solutions (integration, relocation, return); government policies and frameworks for the management of refugees that constrain their ability to seek employment; and variability in refugee caseloads due to regional volatility, which required extremely adaptive camp management.
- Funding was an important constraint for the region's operations. Volumes ranged from 37.8 percent in the Ethiopia PRRO at mid-term evaluation stage,

to 85 percent in the Rwanda CP (see Table 1). As well as limited funding volumes in themselves, most operations received primarily in-kind contributions, with cash contributions limited. Evaluations raise significant challenges with the nature of this funding including:

- late arrival of some contributions
- reduced scope for alignment with government preferences for transfer modalities
- diverging donor earmarking and conditions for their in-kind contributions.
- However, in Kenya, the evaluation found strong contributions management, with WFP adapting its more flexible cash donations around in-kind contributions.

Internal factors were as follows:

- Design flaws, including specific technical limitations and insufficient consultation with beneficiaries; as well as a largely quantitative approach to gender
- Targeting challenges, including insufficiently nuanced targeting criteria; inclusion/exclusion errors; and poor implementation/manipulation of targeting approaches as designed
- Human resources – in all cases due to funding restrictions – with effects including: delays in the start-up of activities; limited monitoring capability; inability to dedicate adequate time and effort to capacity strengthening activities; and restricted technical expertise, for example, in nutrition. Nonetheless, evaluations in Kenya and of the Rwanda refugee operation particularly praise the expertise, dedication and professionalism of WFP staff, with the Kenya innovations team cited for their critical role in improving food assistance
- External communication with governments, donors, cooperating partners and other humanitarian actors, reported as ‘transparent’ and ‘conscientious’ in Ethiopia and ‘proactive’ in Kenya
- Regional bureau support, provided to three operations⁹⁰ in protection, accountability to affected populations, gender, nutrition and HIV, innovation and on cash transfers
- WFP logistics capacity, praised in four evaluations⁹¹ for supporting efficient and effective delivery across highly challenging and often insecure terrain.

⁹⁰ Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda refugee operation

⁹¹ Djibouti, Ethiopia both operations, Rwanda refugee operation

3: EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

94. Over the period 2013 to 2017, evaluations presented WFP country offices in the region with a series of recommendations for improvement. The most frequently-occurring themes are shown in Table 4 (occurring in three evaluations or more). All recommendations in the region’s operations evaluations were accepted or partially accepted by country offices.

Table 4: Evaluation recommendations

1. Improve monitoring approaches, including stronger alignment with national systems and the development of new indicators, e.g. to assess innovation and capacity strengthening	6 operations ⁹²
2. Improve technical approaches to specific activities, including nutrition (four operations), food assistance for assets (three operations) and school feeding (one operation)	5 operations ⁹³
3. Maintain or expand specific activities for improved coverage of needs, with a focus on nutrition (four operations) and general distribution (one operation)	5 operations ⁹⁴
4. Develop and apply a capacity-strengthening strategy and associated results framework, including in specific areas such as emergency response capacity	4 operations ⁹⁵
5. Strengthen strategic partnerships and/or harmonise activities with partners	4 operations ⁹⁶
6. Explore the scope for adaptation of transfer modalities, particularly from in-kind to cash and vouchers, where the context is conducive	3 operations ⁹⁷
7. Conduct vulnerability/drivers of under-nutrition assessments among target populations	3 operations ⁹⁸

95. The most frequently occurring recommendations therefore related to the need to improve monitoring data, a concern also raised by the evaluations synthesised here. Evaluations also recommended revision to technical elements of WFP activities in the region, reflecting the strongly implementation-focused nature of this set of operations. The importance of working in partnership, both strategically and operationally, and the need to upscale and improve approaches to capacity strengthening, were also signalled. Finally, and continuing the strongly operational focus of the role of WFP in these operations, vulnerability assessments and transfer modality adaptation were also signalled as areas requiring attention.

⁹² Somalia, both Rwanda operations, both Ethiopia operations, Kenya.

⁹³ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, both Rwanda operations, Somalia.

⁹⁴ Djibouti, both Ethiopia operations, Kenya, Somalia.

⁹⁵ Ethiopia PRRO 20290, both Rwanda operations, Somalia.

⁹⁶ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya, Somalia.

⁹⁷ Somalia, Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya.

⁹⁸ Djibouti, Ethiopia refugee operation, Kenya.

4. CONCLUSIONS

96. The seven operations evaluations undertaken in the East and Central Africa region have provided some valuable insights and lessons from four years of operational implementation in the region. The conclusions can be drawn are detailed in this section.

97. In operations evaluated in the East and Central Africa region, the role of WFP has focused on large-scale implementation. Given vast food security and nutrition needs in the region, alongside refugee populations requiring ongoing food assistance, the role of WFP in the seven operations evaluated here has focused mainly on delivery. Where feasible – as for example in Rwanda – a more enabling role, focused on partnerships with government and including capacity strengthening and innovation dimensions, has been adopted, but contextual demands have required a focus on continued delivery in response to needs. The scale of WFP operations – serving millions of the hungry poor in the region – is brought to the fore in these operations, alongside the need for increasingly adaptive and high-quality technical designs.

98. Despite a focus on delivery, the shift from “food aid” to “food assistance” is evident. Whilst operations have necessarily focused on delivery, efforts to ensure that WFP support is ‘assistance’ rather than ‘aid’ are prominent within the operations evaluated here. The use of vulnerability targeting approaches in several operations; the piloting of cash transfers; alignment with government safety nets in Ethiopia; efforts at capacity development; and the use of innovations in Kenya all reflect efforts to move assistance forward from more limited and traditional models of delivery.

99. Operational effectiveness has faced external constraints. The forward trajectory of WFP in some countries has been constrained by external factors – not least by challenging operating terrain. More strategically, WFP has been constrained at times by national policy frameworks, for example relating to refugee livelihoods, and by the nature of its donations provided. In-kind contributions to these seven operations have limited efficiency and restricted WFP in being able to adapt to more appropriate transfer modalities for needs.

100. Despite external operating constraints, the partnerships revealed by these evaluations in the East and Central Africa region are strong and collective. Operations reflect strong collaboration in design, including in refugee operations; ongoing dialogue which has shaped adaptation in practice; and joint efforts to monitor and review in some countries. Partnerships reflect the joint nature of humanitarian responses in the region, for example in Ethiopia, Rwanda and the three refugee operations.

101. Policy engagement has been limited. Policy engagement in several countries has been constrained by external factors, as for example in Somalia, or in refugee operations. In some cases, opportunities have been missed, for example, in relation to social protection in Rwanda. However, WFP close partnerships with government, alongside its technical capacity and credibility with partners, hold strong potential for more strategic dialogue where conditions permit.

102. Capacity strengthening has been responsively applied, but is lacking a clear analytical basis and is approached in a largely piecemeal and unsystematic way. A clear-sighted view of intended results has not been articulated, and opportunities have not been maximised across activities. New WFP strategic emphasis and policy

frameworks on capacity strengthening may provide a valuable opportunity to reformulate approaches to capacity strengthening in the region.

103. Designs are evidence based, but monitoring data is a continued weakness. In comparison to findings from other regions, designs in the East and Central Africa region have more systematically applied available evidence, including from evaluations and reviews. However, during implementation, the production and use of monitoring data remains a weakness. Data is not consistently available – including in more current/recent operations - and that produced, particularly at outcome level, lacks rigour, reliability and accuracy. Analysis to inform operational planning and adjustment is limited, with several evaluations questioning the cost of the data produced versus its benefits to operations. Where operations have been able to adopt a more progressive approach to food security, as in Rwanda, they have found their intentions not reflected, and therefore not reportable, in corporate performance frameworks of the time.

104. Gender is ‘behind the curve’. In line with the overall findings from this series, gender has retained a largely quantitative, ‘including women’ approach in these operations in the East and Central Africa region, with little systematic recognition to anything beyond “equal participation”. Despite limited corporate frameworks and intended result, this approach might well be characterised as ‘hitting the target’ (of equal numbers) but ‘missing the point.’

105. Conclusions drawn for individual activity areas are as follows:

- **General Distribution:** This was a critical instrument in the region, being deployed at scale in six out of seven operations to target refugees and specific vulnerable populations. External constraints, such as shifting caseloads, limited performance, with output and outcome targets largely unachieved.
- **Nutrition:** Nutrition was a crucial tool in the WFP humanitarian arsenal in the region, reflecting its strategic importance to address the needs of large-scale vulnerable populations. Data constraints were significant for nutrition activities. Performance against targets was mixed, with output targets missed, but more positive outcome level results.
- **Education:** School feeding was implemented in six out of seven operations, including in refugee settings. Little opportunity existed to link with country social protection frameworks. Across the operations, few output targets were met, but there was evidence of achievement against outcome targets.
- **Livelihoods:** FFA/FFT activities were also deployed in six out of seven operations, particularly as a tool to support refugee self-reliance. However, performance here was weak, with only one operation meeting output targets, and outcome performance either variable or with insufficient evidence to show effects.

106. Finally, despite the use of FFA/FFT, as detailed above, as a tool to support self-reliance in refugees and improved livelihoods in vulnerable populations, the WFP approaches to resilience across these operations have been inconsistent at best. Even where national frameworks do not exist, or are nascent in their development, evaluations show that WFP has the opportunity, credibility and technical capacity to engage strategically in resilience policy dialogue, and/or to shape its own operational planning around a clear resilience framework. A clearer strategic statement in this area would benefit operations going forward.

5. LESSONS

107. Lessons arising from these seven operations in the East and Central Africa region are:

1. **Leverage evidence to map strategic entry points.** Extreme vulnerability to climate change and recurrent crises in the region require continued swift responses to emergency conditions. Balancing WFP emergency response-capacity with identifying opportunities for more strategic engagement in partnerships is a priority for country strategic plans going forward. WFP strong evidence-generation capacity in the region could be leveraged here, to (i) help identify entry points for engagement at a more strategic level, (for example within national strategic reviews), and (ii) support the wider diagnostic of the food security and nutrition situation in the region, and particularly gaps arising in the humanitarian-development nexus.
2. **Improve capacity analysis and strengthening.** As part of the country strategic planning process, WFP offices could complement the region's strong use of evidence in design through a robust analysis of national capacities in the country. This analysis would form the information base to prepare capacity-strengthening plans, including clear intended results, implementation plans and strategies for transition, at both activity and country level. It would also support later monitoring and evaluation.
3. **Clarify resilience and self-reliance.** Whilst funding and external constraints exist, a clearer articulation of how WFP envisages its operational activity supporting self-reliance and resilience, would enhance its advocacy basis. This would require a sound understanding of national frameworks, identified in national strategic review processes, and the prioritisation of partnerships with other actors working on the same agenda. It would also require the development of appropriate monitoring indicators.
4. **Expand approaches to gender.** Despite considerable corporate action in recent years, the WFP approach to gender in these regional operations remains focused on an "equal participation" understanding. It requires a revised conceptualisation, more in tune with current approaches to gender equality and the empowerment of women, which go beyond the "equal numbers" to seek transformational change. Once this understanding has been developed, its operationalisation requires a regional/country office level 'push', in line with the WFP corporate gender policy, to be mainstreamed into needs assessments and analyses (the gender-related causes of food insecurity), target group selection, programme design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
5. **Improve and adapt operation monitoring.** Monitoring data requires improvement, even in more recent operations. The revised corporate results framework under the new WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021 provides an opportunity here, with greater diversity of indicators which may enable more of WFP country office-specific results to be captured in the region. Attention to data availability, quality and reliability will continue to require regional oversight, but nuanced programme monitoring, geared to operational decision-making, is key to ensuring that WFP achievements in the region – which are

considerable – are made visible to its stakeholders, and that WFP itself can use its own information to learn from, and improve, its own performance.

6. **Articulate added value.** Fundraising is a major challenge in the region, particularly for operations addressing protracted or chronic crises – including refugee situations. At the same time, WFP has strong partnerships in the region, and is a highly credible and respected actor. Increasing the evidence and visibility of WFP added value in the region is key to receiving contributions that will enable more strategic approaches. The revised corporate results frameworks of the WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021 offers opportunities here, but WFP advocacy should emphasise its shift from “emergency responder” to “strategic partner for food security and nutrition” of national governments in the region.

Annex 1: Partnerships per Country⁹⁹

Country	Government	United Nations Agencies	NGOs/others
Djibouti	<p>Project Management Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture</p> <p>Ministère de la Santé</p> <p>Secrétariat d'Etat pour la Solidarité Nationale (SESN)</p> <p>L'Agence Djiboutienne de Développement et le Ministère de l'intérieur à travers l'Office National pour l'Assistance aux Réfugiés (ONARS)</p> <p>L'Union Nationale pour les Femmes Djiboutiennes (UNFD)</p>	<p>UNHCR</p> <p>UNICEF</p> <p>FAO</p> <p>IFAD</p> <p>UNFPA</p> <p>IOM</p>	<p>Lutheran World Federation</p> <p>Norwegian Refugee Council</p> <p>African Humanitarian Action (AHA)</p> <p>Association Djiboutienne Pour l'Équilibre et le Planning Familial (ADEPF)</p> <p>ARREY, Union nationale des femmes djiboutiennes, Adailou Eco-Village</p> <p>Charity organizations from Arab Gulf States, etc</p> <p>World Bank</p>
Ethiopia (200700)	<p>Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA)</p>	<p>UNHCR</p> <p>UNICEF</p>	<p>Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)</p> <p>Action Contre La Faim (ACF)</p> <p>GOAL</p> <p>International Mercy Corps (IMC)</p> <p>Concern World Wide</p> <p>Save the Children International (SCI)</p> <p>Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)</p> <p>Organisation for Sustainable Development (OSD), Mother and Child Development Organisation</p> <p>Save the Environment Ethiopia (SEE)</p>

⁹⁹ Source: operational factsheet of each operation evaluation report

Ethiopia (200290)	Ministry of Agriculture, Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) Ministry of Health	UNICEF	Save the Children Mercy Corps MSF Spain Islamic Relief International Medical Corps CONCERN Care International Plan International Ethiopia Merlin Ethiopia
Kenya (200174)	The Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) Ministry of Finance Kenya Roads Board Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Office of the President (Arid Lands Resource Management Project)	UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP	Cooperative Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) Lutheran World Federation (LWF) German Agency for International Cooperation (GAIC) Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) International Rescue Committee (IRC) Médecins Sans Frontières – Switzerland (MSFCH) Médecins Sans Frontières – Spain (MSFS) Don Bosco Food for the Hungry Kenya St. Claire of Assisi Homecraft Centre Kakuma National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCKK) Kenya Red Cross Society

Rwanda (200539)	<p>Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)</p> <p>Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR)</p> <p>Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), Ministry of Health (MoH)</p> <p>Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC)</p> <p>Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) Rwanda Standards Board (RSB)</p>	<p>UNICEF WHO</p> <p>FAO</p> <p>IFAD</p> <p>UN Women,</p> <p>UNDP</p>	<p>Good Neighbors Rwanda (GRI)</p> <p>Unity Club, World Vision</p> <p>Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)</p> <p>Turkish Red Crescent</p>
Rwanda (200744)	<p>Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs</p>	<p>UNHCR UNICEF</p> <p>WHO</p>	<p>Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)</p> <p>Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)</p> <p>American Refugee Committee (ARC)</p> <p>Plan International</p> <p>World Vision International</p> <p>Rwanda Red Cross (RRC)</p>
Somalia (200443)	<p>Ministry of Education (Somaliland, Puntland)</p> <p>Ministry of Environment, wildlife, and tourism</p> <p>Puntland Highway Authority</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture (Somaliland), Ministry of Livestock (Somaliland)</p> <p>Ministry of civil aviation</p> <p>Ministry of Health (Mogadishu, Puntland, Somaliland)</p> <p>Ministry of Interior (Mogadishu, Puntland)</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation Puntland (MOAI)</p> <p>Puntland Local Authority</p> <p>Food Assistance Coordination Agency Somaliland (FACA)</p> <p>Humanitarian Aid Disaster Management Agency (HADMA),</p> <p>National Environment Research and Drought (NERAD)</p>	<p>UNICEF, FAO,</p> <p>WHO, UNHCR</p> <p>UNDP</p> <p>UNON UNDSS</p>	<p>Somalia Red Crescent Society, over 160 national NGOs and over 20 international NGOs</p>

Annex 2 - Findings by Evaluation Criteria Against 'Refugee' Operations

'Refugee' operations within the 2017 Regional Synthesis for RBN were:

- Kenya – PRRO 200174
- Ethiopia – PRRO 200700
- Rwanda – PRRO 200700¹⁰⁰

Findings per evaluation criteria are as follows:

Relevance
<p>All three operations were relevant to needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The scale of operations was significant: In Rwanda and Kenya, WFP targeted 100 percent of refugees in camps; and in Ethiopia (PRRO 200700), it aimed to provide a ration basket to over 600,000 refugees, out of an estimated 730,000 refugees in the country at the time.• All three refugee operations were designed within the framework of the broader international and United Nations responses to needs. All three were developed in partnership with government, under international commitments to refugees. (Example: The underlying strategy of the Rwanda refugee operation was formulated over the years through a series of consultative meetings with the Government of Rwanda, United Nations agencies, cooperating partners and beneficiaries.)• The evidence basis underlying design was strong and robust in all three operations. (Example: In Kenya, the design and implementation of the refugee operation was based on a context analysis derived from multiple sources: vulnerability analysis and mapping reports, joint assessment missions focusing on food security, the Kenyan household survey, in-house monitoring and evaluation systems, and non-governmental organisation partner consultations).• Two operations suffered from weak causal chains in design: in Rwanda and Kenya, the design lacked the evidence base that school feeding (in Kenya, take home rations) would lead to increase enrolment/retention in schools.

¹⁰⁰ Operations in Somalia and Djibouti operations also contained components targeting refugee/IDP populations – but findings specific to these aspects of the operation would not be feasible to disaggregate at this stage.

- Internal synergies were strong at design stage in Ethiopia and Kenya (no comment in Rwanda). (Example: In Kenya, distribution, supplementary feeding and school snacks were designed to inter-relate, to help build the resilience of refugee population.)
- Use of gender analysis only occurred in Kenya (In Kenya, each intervention within the PRRO was informed by prior gender and cultural analysis. This analysis then supported operation design. Interventions such as food assistance for assets and firewood distribution were explicitly designed to offer protection to women and girls. General distribution organized separate distribution lines for women, and explicit governance roles were reserved for women in camps.)
- Overall objectives and intent were relevant to needs in all three operations, but weaknesses at activity level was identified in Rwanda and Kenya. (In the Rwanda refugee operation, the evaluation noted differences in opportunities and capacities between longstanding Congolese refugees, who have more employment or access to land, and the newly-arrived Burundians. It suggests that a more nuanced approach would be useful within general food/cash assistance support. Weak design of food assistance for assets interventions affected relevance in Kenya.)
- Targeting was appropriate in all three operations since camp locations were set by government. But there were concerns regarding refugee registration in Ethiopia/Rwanda, with some potentially eligible refugees unregistered and therefore not eligible to receive rations, whilst some non-refugees did access rations.

Effectiveness

All three operations experienced changes in refugee caseloads.

General distribution:

- **Outputs:** All three operations missed output targets in at least one year, due to changing external circumstances, such as lower than anticipated refugee caseloads (Rwanda) the introduction of biometric targeting (Kenya) and funding shortfalls (Ethiopia).
- **Outcomes:** Food consumption score targets were met in Ethiopia and Rwanda. Dietary diversity scores were met or almost met in Ethiopia and there was a mixed performance between locations in the Rwanda refugee operation. In Kenya, incomplete data prevented the assessment of achievement against planned outcomes, but overall, the evaluation concluded that food security and nutritional status in camps had improved in part due to general distribution transfers.

Nutrition:

- **Outputs:** Outputs were only met in Kenya.
- **Outcomes:** Targets in recovery, death and defaulter rates were achieved and in line with the SPHERE standards in Ethiopia; and were mostly met in Kenya. There was a mixed performance in Rwanda (malnutrition rates improved but stunting and anaemia rates remained high, and few children consumed a minimal acceptable diet).

Education (school feeding):

- **Outputs:** Kenya did not meet targets consistently over the years. In Ethiopia and Rwanda, targets were not met in either year, in Ethiopia this was due to a partner's unwillingness to support school feeding in a particular region, and in Rwanda, to a lower-than-planned number of Burundian refugees.
- **Outcomes:** Targets were met or exceeded in attendance rates, retention rate, and enrolment rates as measured by the different operations.

Livelihoods:

- **Outputs:** Participant, beneficiary or asset-creation targets were not met in Ethiopia; there was mixed performance in Kenya, with food assistance for assets participant targets met but food assistance for training targets underachieving for women participants.
- **Outcomes:** no data was available.

Innovation: All three operations present examples of innovation:

- Ethiopia - innovations in cash and food distribution modalities included the introduction of the biometric targeting system and a grinding allowance to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation.
- Kenya - The WFP innovations team critically questioned existing practice and developed initiatives for the introduction of new technologies and ideas such as fresh food vouchers, which pilot tested the new corporate cash and voucher IT solution.
- Rwanda - WFP implemented an innovative electronic cash transfer modality, which aimed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of distributions. This worked through mVisa, an interoperable mobile phone-based payment system, and allowed beneficiaries to either trade directly with registered mVisa merchants or withdraw their entitlement as cash.

Gender: There was weak integration other than in Kenya, where gender was effectively mainstreamed into programming and implementation, with a particular emphasis on reducing gender based violence.

Protection: WFP corporate targets were met or exceeded in all, with few safety concerns encountered at delivery sites, though child labour concerns remained in Ethiopia.

Accountability to affected populations: There were positive assessments in Ethiopia and Kenya, with beneficiaries mostly aware of their entitlements and/or of access to the programme. Complaints processes were established in Rwanda and protection zones in Kenya.

Partnerships:

There were strong partnerships with government in all three operations:

- In Kenya, the close working relationship between WFP field office management and the Department for Refugee Affairs contributed directly to a safe and enabling operating environment for WFP food assistance in a complex protracted refugee setting.

- In Ethiopia, the government body responsible for refugees worked closely with WFP and considered WFP its most essential and reliable partner.
- In Rwanda, WFP enjoyed a strong working relationship with the Government for the refugee operation, based on mutual respect and constructive collaboration. Under the CP, planning of activities was systematically carried out jointly with the Government, ensuring partnership and a spirit of cooperation across the operation.

Relationships with United Nations agencies: These were generally positive (Example: Rwanda – the WFP relationship with UNHCR was found to be consistent and positive, grounded in an ongoing series of joint assessment missions and regular coordination meetings)

Efficiency

High levels of timeliness: In all three refugee operations, WFP delivered mostly uninterrupted food and cash assistance to beneficiaries, reflecting efficient logistics operations in settings in which WFP has long experience.

Strong efforts at cost efficiency: All three evaluations found positively. (Example: Biometric targeting systems in Kenya and Ethiopia refugee operations, which reduced inclusion error and the monetisation of food.)

Mixed internal synergies: Internal synergies were strong in the Kenya and Rwanda refugee operations, and these enhanced results; but opportunities were missed in Ethiopia.

High levels of agility: In Ethiopia and Kenya, WFP allowed for dynamic adjustment between relief and recovery activities in different regions as needs required. In Kenya and Rwanda the close engagement of WFP with government allowed for continual joint review of context and updating of the response, for example, in relation to refugee flows and WFP detailed beneficiary mapping/production of food security data allowed for rapid adjustment to context. (Example: The evaluation of the Kenya refugee programme found that over the long life of the refugee camps in Kenya, WFP had established a highly effective and efficient internal system to provide food assistance within camps. The system was complex and dynamic, demonstrating the flexibility to adjust to changes in internal and external context and to derive innovative solutions processed from the regular flow of information.)

Sustainability

All three operations had limited potential for sustainability, with ongoing support wholly dependent on the international community. In Kenya and Ethiopia, the environment for self-reliance was un conducive, due to government policies restricting employment options for refugees outside camps. All three evaluations recommend a shift of focus to (i) self-reliance of refugees, and, given the inevitability of continuation, (ii) financial sustainability for the operation.

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Programme
DEV	Development Programme
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMOP	Emergency operation
FFA	Food Assistance for Assets Creation
FFT	Food Assistance for Training
GD	General Distribution
OEV	Office of Evaluation
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery operation
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
WFP	World Food Programme

Office of Evaluation
www.wfp.org/evaluation



World Food Programme