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Summary evaluation report of Cambodia country portfolio (2011–2017)

Executive summary

The evaluation of WFP's Cambodia portfolio covered the period from 2011 to 2017 and will inform the drafting of the new country strategic plan. The evaluation assessed the country office's alignment and strategic positioning, its strategic decision-making and the performance and results of activities included in the portfolio.

Strong economic growth enabled Cambodia to attain lower-middle-income status in 2016. Donor funding has decreased as a result, although 14 percent of people still live in poverty and 32 percent of children under 5 are stunted. Employment opportunities remain limited and there is significant cross-border migration, increasingly by women. The country is highly vulnerable to natural shocks.

In 2011–2017, WFP's interventions consisted of a country programme, two emergency operations, a trust fund activity to develop a humanitarian response forum, and bilateral research on rice fortification. The country programme supported school meals – including cash and food scholarships and home-grown school meals – nutrition, productive assets, livelihoods and capacity development. WFP operations prioritize communities in the Tonle Sap basin in the flood-prone centre of the country.

Despite the absence of a country strategy, the portfolio has been highly strategic and supports the Government's priority development sectors. Despite a challenging funding and political environment, country office interventions have been effective and efficient, aligned with corporate guidance and compliant with international development and humanitarian standards. Strong partnerships with the Government and other stakeholders have enhanced results.

Country office operations reached 67 percent of planned beneficiaries in 2011–2016, but declining resources have resulted in a gradual reduction in beneficiary numbers. Targets for gender equality have been attained but progress is hindered by persistent adherence to traditional roles and low public awareness of gender issues. WFP's direct implementation of the nutrition component ended in 2014 because of underfunding and changes in the Government's priorities, but the country office has subsequently made strategic investments in nutrition research, policy development and technical assistance. Food assistance for assets has been reduced because of resource constraints. The

In line with the Evaluation Policy (2016–2021) (WFP/EB.2/2015/4-A/Rev.1), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings some language contained in this report may not be standard WFP terminology; please direct any requests for clarification to the WFP Director of Evaluation.

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Government is slowly assuming ownership of the school meals programme although it has not yet committed significant budgetary support. Almost all outcome targets for school meals have been met or exceeded.

The current transitional interim country strategic plan places the country office in a capacity development and technical assistance role. This “upstream” role is appropriate for the upcoming country strategic plan, but the regional bureau and headquarters will need to assist country office staff in transitioning from operational to technical roles and rationalizing the workforce.

The six recommendations arising from the evaluation are: organize a sense-making workshop to clarify and consolidate the results of numerous assessments and studies for integration into the strategic review and country strategic plan process; develop information products and knowledge management strategies that consolidate the country office’s technical and financial contributions; strengthen support to the decentralization process by examining a variety of models for strengthening subnational capacities; rationalize the country office’s staff capacity and ensure that it is the optimal size for its new institutional role; right-size the portfolio to fit country office capacity and resource outlook; and define the support required from headquarters and the regional bureau for the country office’s programmatic and institutional transition.

A table summarizing WFP’s portfolio in Cambodia is set out in the annex to the present report.

Draft decision*

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of the Cambodia country portfolio for the years 2011–2017 set out in document WFP/EB.1/2018/5-B and the management response set out in document WFP/EB.1/2018/5-B/Add.1 and encourages further action on the recommendations presented in the report, taking into account the considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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

Introduction

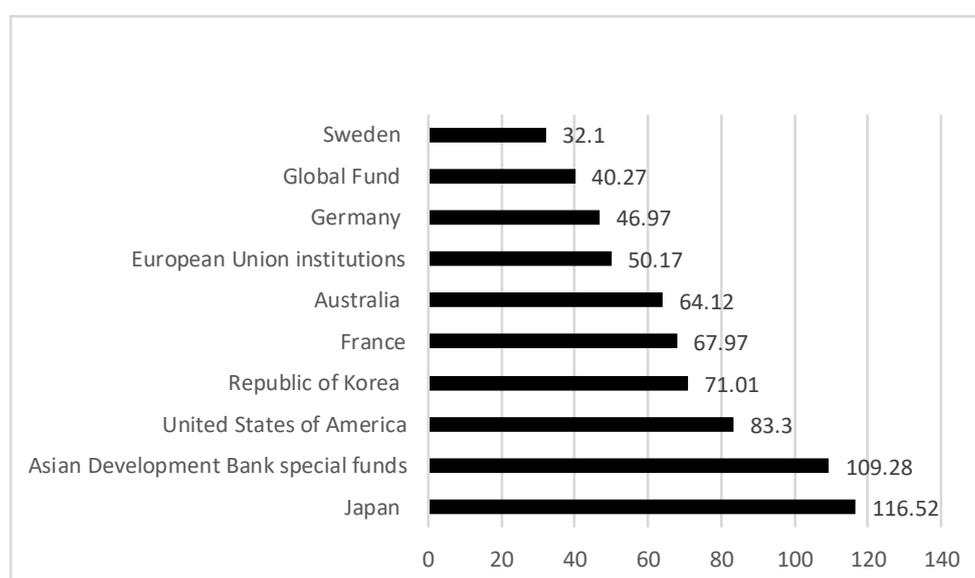
Evaluation features

1. This country portfolio evaluation covered six years of WFP operations in Cambodia, from July 2011 to July 2017, and will inform the drafting of a new country strategic plan (CSP). An independent evaluation team assessed WFP's strategic alignment and positioning in Cambodia, the quality of strategic decision-making, including the factors considered, and the performance and results of portfolio activities. Field work included visits to project sites and interviews and focus group discussions with more than 400 stakeholders.

Context

2. Following the civil war of 1975–1982, Cambodia had a regular influx of external funding with official development assistance exceeding USD 677 million in 2015¹ (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Top donors of gross official development assistance, 2014–2015 (USD million)



3. In 2016, the World Bank upgraded Cambodia to lower-middle-income country status. This led to decreased development aid and will likely lead to reductions in official development assistance.² Despite economic growth, limited employment opportunities and low wages are driving international migration,³ while increasing international demand for manufacturing and domestic workers is contributing to the “feminization” of migration with increasing numbers of women migrating. Fourteen percent of the country’s population lives below the national poverty line.⁴
4. The Government is pursuing a decentralization and deconcentration policy intended to promote democratic development and build the capacity of local government organizations.

¹ OECD. 2017. Aid at a glance charts.

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/aid-at-a-glance.htm>

² Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board and Council for the Development of Cambodia. 2017. *Cambodia development finance assessment*.

http://www.cdc-crdb.gov.kh/cdc/twg_network/twg_network_february_2017/documents/session_7_dfa.pdf

³ International Labour Organization. 2013. *Cross-border labour migration in Cambodia: Considerations for the national employment policy*. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_228484.pdf

⁴ Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2017. *Basic statistics 2017*. <https://www.adb.org/publications/basic-statistics-2017>.

5. Children's access to education has increased in recent years resulting in a net enrolment rate in primary education of 97 percent in 2015. There is gender parity in enrolment rates in both primary and secondary schools,⁵ but poor rural families, ethnic minorities and children with disabilities are more likely than others to be excluded from primary school.⁶
6. With incomes increasing in the last two decades, more households can afford sufficient food. According to the 2013 agriculture census, however, 16 percent of households had experienced food insecurity and shortages in the previous 12 months and 80 percent of agricultural households had experienced food insecurity and shortages caused by low crop yields. In 2014, about 32 percent of children under 5 were stunted.⁷ Table 1 provides additional data on nutrition. The prevalence of undernourishment is 14 percent (2014–2016), and mother and child anaemia rates are high.⁸ Following decreases in HIV prevalence since 1998,⁹ the rate of new infections was 0.05 per 1,000 people in 2015.¹⁰

TABLE 1: NUTRITION INDICATORS			
Risk group	Nutrition indicator	Prevalence (%)	Risk
Pregnant women	Anaemia	53	Infant and maternal mortality
Children under 5	Low weight for height (wasting)	10	Mortality
Children under 5	Low weight for age (undernutrition)	24	Mortality
Children under 5	Low height for age (stunting)	32.4	Decreased growth, development and productivity
Children under 5	Zinc deficiency	67.5	Mortality and morbidity
Children under 5	Iodine deficiency	12.8	Decreased growth, development and productivity
Children under 5	Iron deficiency	7	
15–64 years	Iron deficiency: women and girls	2.9	Strength, endurance and productivity
15–64 years	Iron deficiency: men and boys	1.1	

Source: Moench-Pfanner, R. *et al.* 2016. The economic burden of malnutrition in pregnant women and children under 5 years of age in Cambodia. *Nutrients* 8(5): 292. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4882705/>.

⁵ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. 2015.

⁶ United Nations Children's Fund. 2014. *Inclusive quality education. UNICEF country programme 2016–2018*. https://www.unicef.org/cambodia/Country_Kit_Education_Final_A4.pdf

⁷ ADB. 2017. *Basic statistics 2017*. <https://www.adb.org/publications/basic-statistics-2017>.

⁸ Cambodia Development Research Institute. 2014. *Cambodia: Strategic review of food and nutrition security issues for an emerging middle income country (2014–2018)*.

⁹ United Nations Joint Programme on AIDS and National AIDS Authority. 2015. *Cambodia country progress report. Monitoring progress towards the 2011 UN Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS*. <https://www.medbox.org/cambodia/cambodia-country-progress-report-monitoring-progress-towards-the-2011-un-political-declaration-on-hiv-and-aids/preview?q=>

¹⁰ ADB. 2017. *Basic statistics 2017*. <https://www.adb.org/publications/basic-statistics-2017>.

7. Cambodia is highly vulnerable to natural shocks, with regular monsoon flooding and droughts nearly every year since 1991. The impacts of drought are expected to worsen as climate change accelerates. Rural populations dependent on agriculture and natural resources are most at risk.¹¹

WFP portfolio

8. The portfolio covered operations under WFP's strategic plans for 2008–2013 and 2014–2017: the country programme (CP); an immediate-response emergency operation (IR-EMOP); an emergency operation (EMOP); a trust fund activity; and a bilateral operation with the Programme for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) to provide technical assistance. Figure 2 presents the percentages of planned funding actually received for portfolio interventions, alongside major national events. Figure 3 shows WFP's programme areas in 2016–2017.

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¹¹ Cambodia Development Research Institute. 2014. *Cambodia: Strategic review of food and nutrition security issues for an emerging middle income country (2014–2018)*.

Figure 2: Context of WFP's Cambodia portfolio

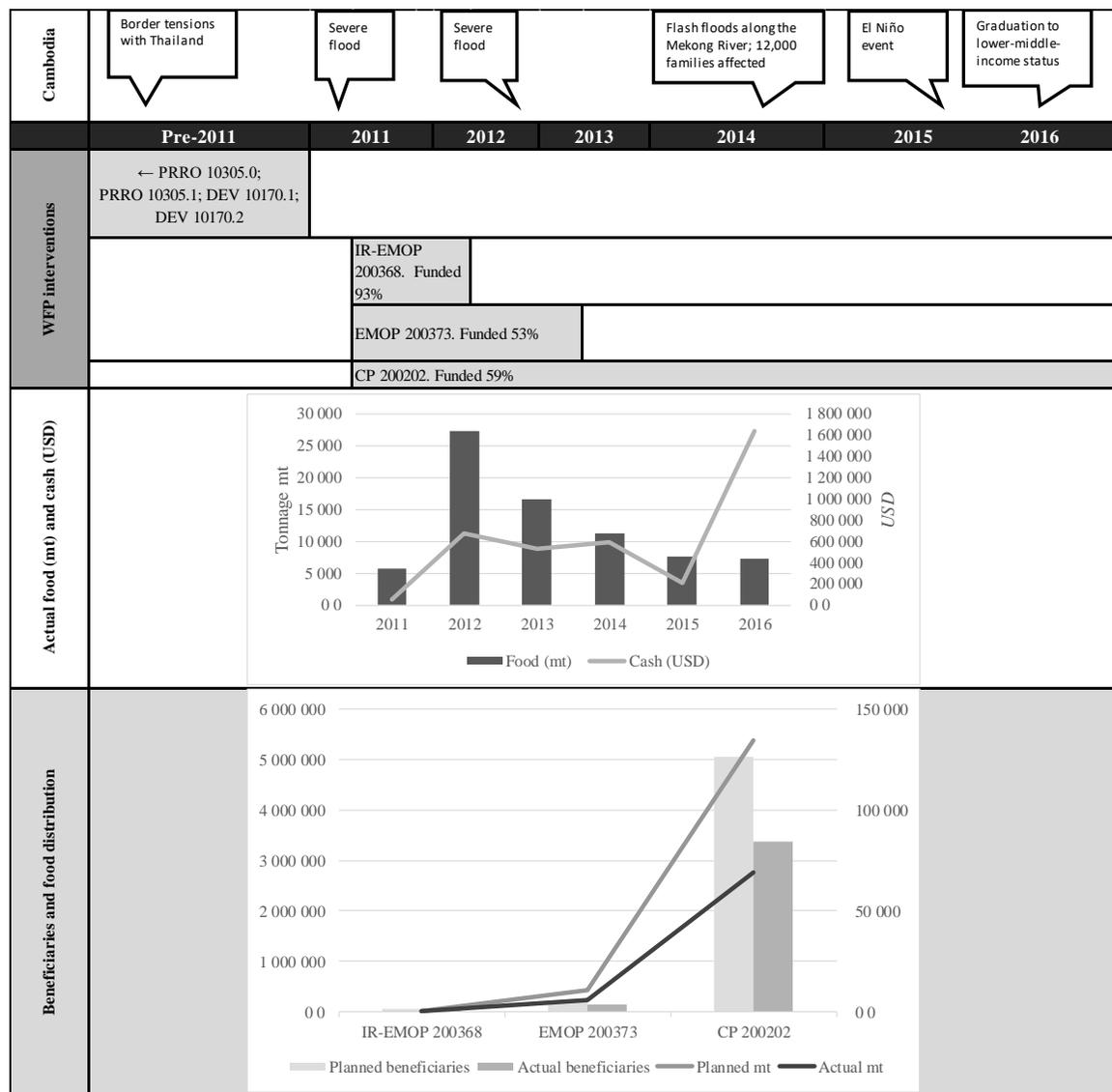
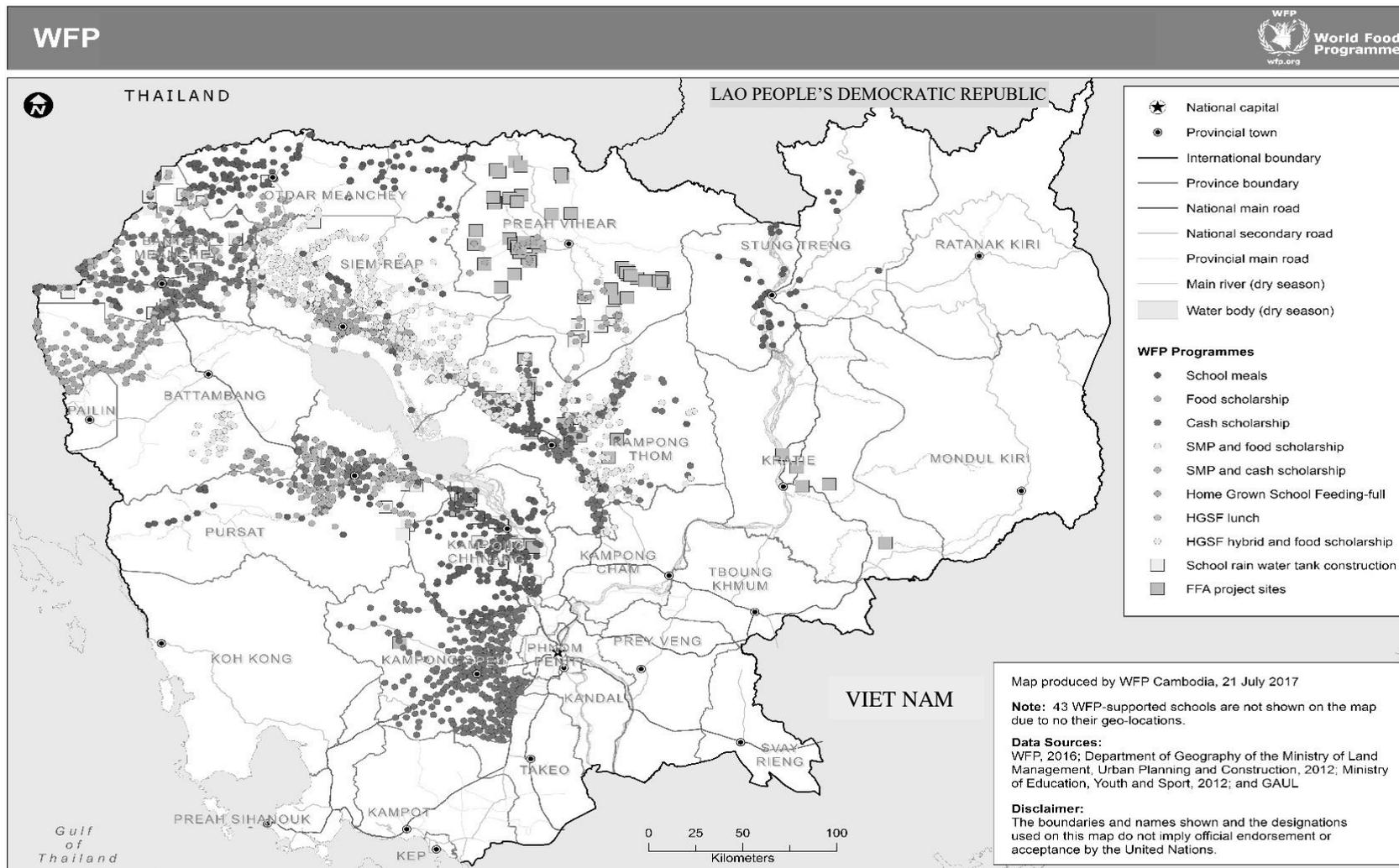


Figure 3: WFP’s target areas for programmes in Cambodia, 2016–2017



Source: country office.
 SMP: school meals programme

9. The CP included school meals, nutrition, and productive assets and livelihood support. Nutrition activities – distributions of imported fortified food to pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 – were phased out in mid-2014 because of resource constraints and the Government’s prioritization of treatment of severe acute malnutrition.
10. The United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance granted USD 967,000 to WFP as a trust fund for the coordination and information management activities of the Humanitarian Response Forum (HRF) in 2013–2017.
11. The planned budget for all portfolio operations in 2011–2016 was USD 203,757,000,¹² most of which – USD 191,532,000 – was allocated to the CP through June 2016. The CP budget spent by December 2016 was USD 89,227,000. Figure 2 shows the percentages of funding received for different operations.

Evaluation findings

Portfolio alignment and strategic positioning

12. *Alignment with government policies.* WFP’s portfolio interventions were well aligned with the national needs outlined in the Government’s strategic plans and policies. Regarding Cambodia’s work towards Millennium Development Goal 3 – “Promote gender equality and empower women” – although the CP project document does not describe WFP’s approach to gender issues, WFP promoted women’s inclusion in portfolio activities.
13. *Government processes.* The country office has strong partnerships with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; the Ministry of Rural Development; the National Committee for Disaster Management; the National Council for Democratic Development; the Ministry of Planning; the Ministry of Health; the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD); national committees, and departments at the provincial, district and commune levels. The country office participates in major national decision making fora, including CARD and multiple technical working groups¹³ that support the implementation of sector strategies.
14. *Government ownership.* In 2015, the Government signed the school meals programme road map, which includes action for implementing home-grown school meals as a potential model for a national school meals programme. The cash pilot for productive assets and livelihood support was fully integrated into subnational governance systems and implemented through local authorities. WFP collaborated with the Ministry of Planning on developing and improving stakeholders’ access to the data management system of the Identification of Poor Households Programme (IDPoor) by linking the database to online platforms for data compilation and decision support, such as the Precision Real-time Information System Manager (PRISM) platform.
15. *United Nations and other partners.* The portfolio was strategically aligned with the objectives of the United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF), but was not fully aligned with the Zero Hunger Challenge objective of establishing sustainable food systems, which requires that sustainably grown commodities be prioritized in sourcing decisions. The portfolio was aligned with the strategic objectives of the Scaling Up Nutrition initiative and 2025 targets for mother, infant and young child nutrition, and Sustainable Development Goal 2.

¹² This figure refers to the combined budgets of CP 200202, EMOP 200373 and IR-EMOP 2002368. The total budget, including the trust fund and the bilateral operation is USD 204,160,000.

¹³ Ballard, B.M. 2015. *Technical working group performance review*. http://www.cdc-crdp.gov.kh/cdc/documents/TWG_Performance_Report_FINAL.pdf; Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board and Council for the Development of Cambodia. 2017. *Government–development partner joint technical working groups list*. http://www.cdc-crdp.gov.kh/cdc/joint_TWG/joint_TWG.htm

16. *WFP's corporate strategy.* The portfolio contributed to Strategic Objectives 3 and 4 of WFP's strategic plans for 2008–2013 and 2014–2017 and was in line with core corporate policies. The country office is shifting its approach from direct implementation of food assistance programmes to capacity development for national partners and local stakeholders in establishing and managing programmes autonomously. This is consistent with WFP's 2004 capacity development policy and the 2009 policy update.
17. WFP had no country strategy for the period covered by the evaluation, but the evaluation team found that the country portfolio has been integrated into a transitional interim CSP (T-ICSP) for 2018, aligning WFP's activities with the UNDAF cycle and the National Strategic Development Plan (2014–2018). The T-ICSP reflects ongoing efforts to establish national ownership – especially of school meals and relief activities – positions the country office in a capacity development and technical assistance role, and focuses on generating evidence to inform the CSP for 2019–2023.
18. *Humanitarian and international development cooperation principles.* The portfolio was consistent with the humanitarian principle of humanity¹⁴ through its emergency operations, investments in the HRF and the country office's beneficiary targeting strategy. Although a lack of sufficient resources for interventions led to trade-offs in geographic targeting, beneficiary targeting remained consistent with this principle and did not distinguish on the basis of ethnicity, class, religious belief or political opinion. The portfolio was also consistent with the principle of promoting self-reliance, evident in WFP's transition from being an implementer to becoming an enabler of nationally owned, long-term food security solutions, and with the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and operational independence. The country office's selection of partners and operational decision making were evidence-based and not influenced by stakeholder agendas. The country office demonstrated satisfactory accountability to partners and beneficiaries via informal and formal feedback mechanisms.

Factors in and quality of strategic decision making

19. *Generation and use of analytical information.* The country office collaborated closely with the Government on numerous assessments and studies to inform government policy, planning and goals and the design and implementation of components of the country portfolio. The country office's increased focus on evidence was catalysed by the 2014 national strategic review and is reinforced in the T-ICSP. Examples of the generation and use of evidence include WFP's collaboration with the Programme for Appropriate Technology in Health, which supported the introduction of fortified rice in the school meals programme in 2016, a 2016 assessment of school facilities and the improvement of a database on resilience after El Niño (2015–2016).¹⁵ In 2014, WFP mapped the finance sector to determine its capacity to support cash-based transfer (CBT) modalities under the CP, with findings informing dialogue with the Government on using CBTs for social assistance.
20. *Developing response strategies.* Response strategies based on available evidence were developed through stakeholder consultation and are supported by stakeholders in the Government and civil society. In the portfolio's education component, WFP's assessment informed hand-over of the management of cash scholarships, while a review of nutrition resulted in the country office shifting from direct implementation of activities to coordination and technical guidance for national nutrition programmes. The consolidated livelihood exercise for analysing resilience carried out in 2014 informed the country office's 2015 shift to smaller-scale collaboration with civil society organizations, which was also motivated by the need to align food assistance for assets (FFA) activities with national social protection strategy objective 3, thus maximizing the impacts and benefits of the traditional FFA model.

¹⁴ This states "Human suffering must be addressed whenever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings". Buchanan-Smith, M., T. Beck and D. Podems. 2017. *Guidance for evaluating humanitarian principles*. Draft for discussion at United Nations Development Programme/Humanitarian Evaluation Interest Group meeting.

¹⁵ WFP. 2017. *Country programme Cambodia (2011–2018). Standard project report 2016*. <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/7e58ffb899ba4801a2df25277545c730/download/>.

21. Following endorsement of the school meals road map by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in 2015, progress towards handover of the school meals programme has accelerated. The Government is supportive of the country office's handover strategies but budgetary support and investments in subnational capacities for continuing school meals still require strengthening.
22. *WFP's programme priorities and operating model.* Despite resource constraints, the country office was able to maintain its focus on core intervention areas. While the country office's priorities are clear, the optimal operating model for addressing them remains unclear. Much will depend on the Government's policy revisions and budget allocations in 2017–2018.
23. WFP is increasing its work as a strategic partner by strengthening information management for national decision making, including through greater technical collaboration with decentralized government offices and communes.¹⁶ These new roles are challenging the country office's traditional operational model, which focuses on direct implementation.

Portfolio performance and results

24. *Targeting.* Communities in the Tonle Sap basin, the most flood-prone area of the country, were prioritized in targeting. WFP did not cover the northeast region, which is also characterized by high poverty and malnutrition. This decision was justified by WFP based on funding constraints and a priority on demonstrating results to encourage government ownership and transition. District targeting was appropriate to country office resources and country needs.¹⁷ Beneficiary targeting was appropriate and reached the most vulnerable people and households.
25. *Beneficiaries reached.* Table 2 shows beneficiary numbers as of 31 December 2016, with operations reaching 67 percent of planned beneficiaries overall. The EMOP and CP did not exceed this figure because of resource shortfalls.¹⁸ The portfolio reached balanced numbers of males and females (Figure 4).

¹⁶ WFP. 2017. Cambodia transitional interim country strategic plan (2018). https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/012de5aba3d74cc29c24036271c6106b/download/?_ga=2.177072620.892560489.1514295136-99698773.1514295136.

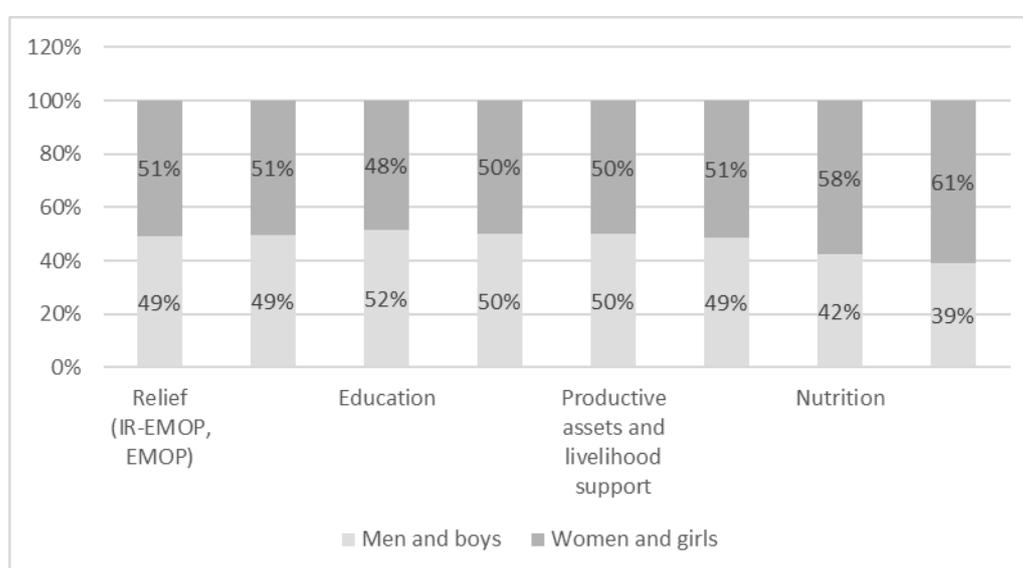
¹⁷ Targeting of the portfolio is in line with the prioritization of provinces in the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition (2014–2020), the findings of the Small-Area Estimation of Poverty and Malnutrition in Cambodia and the national strategy for food security and nutrition.

¹⁸ WFP. 2013. EMOP 200373 SPR 2012. See also SPRs for CP 200202 (2011–2016).

TABLE 2: PLANNED VERSUS ACTUAL BENEFICIARIES BY OPERATION, 2011–2016

Operation	Planned			Actual			Actual as % of planned
	Men and boys	Women and girls	Total	Men and boys	Women and girls	Total	
CP 200202	2 574 418	2 482 112	5 056 530	1 668 333	1 715 998	3 384 331	66.9
IR-EMOP 200368	29 400	30 600	60 000	26 916	28 014	54 930	91.6
EMOP 200373	102 832	105 833	208 665	70 178	71 297	141 475	67.8
Total	2 706 650	2 618 545	5 325 195	1 765 427	1 815 309	3 580 736	67.2

Sources: SPRs for CP 200202 (2016), EMOP 200373 (2013) and IR-EMOP 200368 (2012). CP figures have not been adjusted to account for the overlap from year to year.

Figure 4: Proportions of beneficiaries by sex and activity, 2011–2016

Sources: SPRs for CP 200202 (2016), EMOP 200373 (2013) and IR-EMOP 200368 (2012).

26. *Overall distribution.* Table 3 presents food and CBT distributions by operation. Figures 5 and 6 show annual distributions at the portfolio level. Several factors explain the failure to meet food distribution targets in 2011: resource constraints; late start of the school year in flood-affected areas; limited capacity for distribution in some areas; and geographic retargeting of the mother-and-child health and nutrition (MCHN) programme.¹⁹ Only one major post-delivery loss was reported of 80 mt of commodities in 2013 because of an incorrect expiry date.²⁰

¹⁹ WFP. 2012. *Standard project report 2012. Cambodia. Country programme Cambodia (2011–2016)*. <http://cn.wfp.org/sites/default/files/zh-hans/file/spr-2012-cambodia.pdf>.

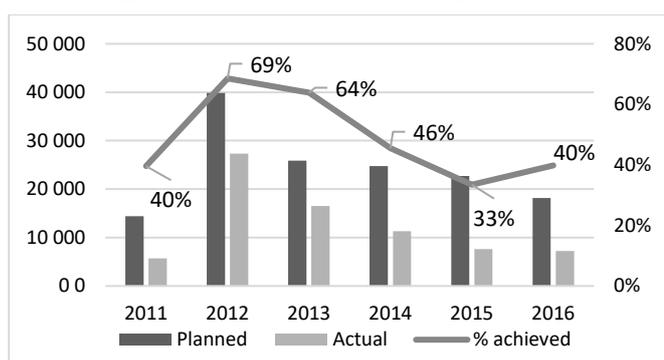
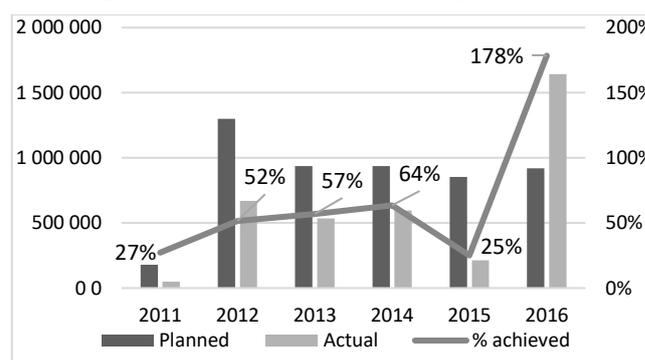
²⁰ Corn-soya blend, sugar and Supercereal Plus. SPR for CP 200202 (2013).

TABLE 3: PLANNED AND ACTUAL FOOD AND CBT DISTRIBUTIONS BY OPERATION

Operation	Planned		Actual		Actual as % of planned	
	Food (mt)	CBTs (USD)	Food (mt)	CBTs (USD)	Food (mt)	CBTs (USD)
CP 200202	134 690	4 428 794	69 159	3 202 460	51.3	72.3
IR-EMOP 200368	600	No cash	549	No cash	91.5	No cash
EMOP 200373	10 552	699 930	5 991	50 747.01	56.8	72.1
Total	145 842	5 128 724	75 699	3 253 207.01	66.5	72.2

Sources: SPRs for CP 200202 (2016), EMOP 200373 (2012) and IR-EMOP 200368 (2012).

27. In 2011, CBT distributions were low because the cash scholarship pilot started late.²¹ From 2012 to 2015, fewer CBTs were distributed than planned because of resource constraints, expansion into new project areas for the education component, and the productive assets and livelihood support cash pilot.²² The reduction in CBT distributions in 2015 resulted from resource constraints in the education component (in 2013/14 and 2014/15) and the handover of 2,102 schools to the Government.²³ Following increased availability of resources for CBT programming, cash scholarships were prioritized over take-home rations in line with the Government's cash scholarship programme, while provision of home-grown school meals was expanded from two pilot schools in 2015 to 59 schools in 2016.²⁴

Figure 5: Food distributions by year (mt)**Figure 6: CBT distributions by year (USD)**

Sources: SPRs for CP 200202 (2011–2016), IR-EMOP 200368 (2011–2012) and EMOP 200373 (2011–2012).

28. *Relief – Strategic Objective 1.* IR-EMOP 200368 and EMOP 200373 responded to the 2011 floods. The country office also managed funding for the HRF and supported the development of an emergency information platform using PRISM to strengthen knowledge management and inform decisions regarding emergency response.²⁵
29. The number of IR-EMOP beneficiaries was slightly lower than planned because of fluctuations in market prices. Planned beneficiary numbers, commodity amounts and CBT distributions in the EMOP were not met because of limited capacities among partners and resource shortfalls. Assessment of IR-EMOP outcomes and the effectiveness of the HRF and PRISM was limited because indicators were not set. No analysis of EMOP results was possible because target and baseline values were lacking.

²¹ SPR for CP 200202 (2011).

²² SPRs for CP 200202 (2012–2014).

²³ SPR for CP 200202 (2015).

²⁴ SPR for CP 200202 (2016).

²⁵ WFP. 2016. Factsheet.

30. *Education – Strategic Objective 4.* WFP provided scholarships in the form of a monthly cash or take-home ration and a daily hot breakfast for vulnerable, food-insecure girls and boys in 2,281 primary schools in ten provinces: 783 of the schools offer pre-primary education.²⁶ The Government's cash scholarship is USD 6 per month, which sets the standard for WFP's food and cash scholarships.²⁷ From November 2016, the take-home ration was 10 kg of rice and one litre of oil.
31. The home-grown school meals programme piloted in 2015 is now implemented in 84 schools in four provinces. It uses local fresh commodities and serves as a model to inform transition of the school meals programme to national ownership while also providing more diverse school meals.
32. Outcome targets for education in WFP-assisted schools were nearly met or exceeded. Retention rates in 2016 were 97 percent for girls and 96 percent for boys against the 2014 baseline values of 88 percent for girls and 85 percent for boys. Promotion rates of 88 percent overall and 88 percent for girls in 2013 exceeded baseline values of 86 percent overall and 88 percent for girls.²⁸
33. Targets for technical assistance and training projects for government staff were 100 percent achieved, with 98 percent of planned women staff members and 75 percent of men reached.²⁹
34. *Nutrition and HIV – Strategic Objective 4.* The main nutrition activities were supplementary feeding to support community management of acute malnutrition and MCHN. WFP used food transfers to improve the food security of HIV-affected households.
35. The nutrition component, discontinued in 2014, reached 92 percent of planned beneficiaries; the MCHN programme achieved 100 percent of planned coverage in its final six months. The country office did not collect data on outcome indicators for nutrition from 2008 to 2013. Coverage of community management of acute malnutrition increased from 2011 to 2014 but remained low because of lack of capacity in rural health centres.
36. Targets for assistance to anti-retroviral patients were nearly achieved or exceeded, with assistance reaching 83 percent of planned beneficiaries in 2011 and 122 percent in 2012. Stunting targets for nutrition activities and ration distributions were achieved in 2012 and 2013.³⁰
37. *Productive assets and livelihood support – Strategic Objective 3.* WFP used food and cash-based transfers in its FFA activities in times of food shortage. Activities involved the construction or rehabilitation of assets for improved livelihoods, disaster reduction and mitigation, natural resource management and climate-change adaptation and the provision of rice for community rice banks. Fewer beneficiaries than planned were reached because of resource constraints and significant outmigration in project areas.³¹
38. Assets were created and rehabilitated in 56 communes in 18 districts in six provinces. Assets met the standards of the Government and WFP and were generally well maintained. The target community asset score was exceeded, reaching 87 percent in 2016 versus a target of 80 percent.³² The coping strategy index score has improved since 2015. Diet diversity and food consumption scores also improved but attribution to WFP activities is unclear given that WFP distributed mainly rice.

²⁶ SPR for CP 200202 (2016).

²⁷ WFP/EB.1/2011/7/3. Figure corrected by country office; it used to be USD 5 per school month.

²⁸ SPRs CP 200202 (2011–2016).

²⁹ SPRs for CP 200202 (2014–2016).

³⁰ SPRs for CP 200202 (2011–2013).

³¹ SPR for CP 200202 (2012), confirmed in an interview with the country office on 7 July 2017.

³² Measured against indicators in the WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017).

39. *Gender equality.* CP outcome indicators show an increased proportion of households where women have decision-making power over use of the cash and food distributed in the education component, rising from 68 percent of households in 2014 to 83 percent in 2016, versus a target of 85 percent. In the productive assets and livelihood support component, the percentage of women remained constant at 76 percent, versus a target of 90 percent. In the nutrition activity, targets for the proportion of households where women make decisions over the use of cash and food were met in only 2014, after which the activity ceased.
40. The country portfolio attained targets for gender equality in the proportions of men and women participating in activities under each strategic objective. Gender equality is hindered by persistent traditional roles and low public awareness of gender issues.
41. *Protection and accountability.* Outcome indicators for protection of and accountability to affected populations show positive achievements in the education component. The 2016 post-distribution monitoring report confirms that beneficiaries were aware of targeting, eligibility and selection processes. Indicator values were close to targets.
42. *Partnerships.* In all components, outcome indicators showed strong achievements in the numbers of partner organizations engaged and project activities implemented with partners. Targets for complementary funds provided to projects by partners were met only in the productive assets and livelihood support component, reflecting the general trend in decreasing funding opportunities in Cambodia.
43. *Factors affecting results – internal.* Acquiring adequate funding has been a constant challenge for the country office, resulting in a gradual reduction of actual beneficiaries under Strategic Objective 3, on productive assets and livelihood support, and 4, on education. There were no major delays or breaks in food and CBT deliveries, however, reflecting the country office's strong management and logistics capacities, which are based on a thorough understanding of Cambodia's logistics landscape.
44. CBTs helped reduce the costs associated with the logistics of food deliveries and improved programme efficiency under Strategic Objectives 3 and 4.
45. The learning culture and adaptive capacity of the country office and its staff contributed to the portfolio's good performance. Current job descriptions do not, however, fully reflect the evolving roles and responsibilities of country office staff.
46. The monitoring and evaluation function was challenged by limited funding and high turn-over of staff, particularly in 2011–2012 when outcome data were not collected. The situation improved with the addition of monitoring and evaluation expertise from 2013 onwards. A review of current systems and functions shows monitoring data to be reliable and accessible, and the development of PRISM has strengthened analytical capacity, as evidenced by the strategic and operational inputs that the country office provided to the HRF and national preparedness planning.
47. *Factors affecting results – external.* Driven by the decentralization and deconcentration process, the hand-over of responsibilities from national agencies to the provincial, district and commune levels is occurring more quickly than the development of capacities to handle them.
48. No security issues disrupting food and cash-based assistance were reported between 2011 and 2016. Post-distribution monitoring reports indicate that distribution points were safe, with only isolated reports of safety incidents during travel to and from sites by women and men in 2016. Natural disasters caused some delays in food distributions and changes in allocations for the education and productive assets and livelihood support components from 2011 to 2013.

Overall assessment

Relevance, coherence and appropriateness

49. Strengthening its evidence base and analysis of strategies for responding to changing country needs and resources, enabled the country office to demonstrate adaptive management and define school meals, nutrition, FFA and disaster preparedness activities that were relevant to country needs and within its own financial and technical capacity.

50. The portfolio was well aligned with Cambodia's current policy framework and development priorities. WFP has developed a strong partnership and collaboration with government stakeholders, supporting the Government's vision of public administration reform. WFP engages with government processes relevant to its portfolio, but increased focus on subnational support will be required to support implementation of government policies. Budgetary support to the country office's hand-over activities is limited.
51. WFP's pursuit of synergies through partnerships was appropriate and had positive results. School infrastructure was improved and fortified rice introduced. In the nutrition component, productive synergies supported the establishment of national nutrition priorities and actions to inform government policy and programmes.
52. The country portfolio aptly reflected WFP's adherence to core humanitarian principles. Most pertinent were WFP's involvement in initiating the HRF in 2011 and its chairing of the United Nations disaster management team. The country office's objectives also adhered to WFP's corporate principles for effective humanitarian action.³³ The design and implementation of the portfolio were relevant to the needs of target beneficiary groups. Geographic targeting focused appropriately on the areas most affected by food insecurity, malnutrition and disasters. Appropriate beneficiary targeting is demonstrated by the use of the IDPoor system.

Efficiency

53. WFP's operations were efficient given the complex operating environment. The activities and outputs of the country office were generally of high technical quality and were strategically relevant to the changing country context and WFP's role in Cambodia. Beneficiary targeting was conducted efficiently with the Ministry of Planning and included the country office's technical assistance to the ministry and its contribution to development of the IDPoor atlas.
54. *Education.* The decision not to extend education activities into new areas was backed by strong evidence. With decreasing resources, WFP's gradual hand-over of the school meals programme and cash scholarships is appropriate. Government capacity constraints hinder this process, however, and need to be reflected in an updated road map for hand-over of the school meals programme.
55. *Nutrition.* The decision to phase out the direct implementation of nutrition activities was justified in terms of efficiency and sustainability as conditions were not conducive to investing further in the direct delivery of nutrition services. WFP's shift to a less resource-intensive approach involving national coordination and the development of context-specific technical guidance is appropriate at this stage.
56. *Productive assets and livelihood support.* WFP shifted from the traditional food/cash for work approach to a productive assets and livelihood support programme under the FFA activity that supports more targeted resilience activities, which constitutes a strategic use of limited resources. The country office and the Government considered that the introduction of CBTs would be more efficient than food distributions, although no cost analysis was conducted. CBTs have since been discontinued because of resource constraints. The country office currently depends on an in-kind contribution of rice from the Government and therefore has no choice in determining the most efficient transfer modality for productive assets and livelihood support activities.

Effectiveness

57. *Education.* The school meals programme is recognized as an effective social safety net although the planned number of beneficiaries was not reached because of funding constraints. Assessments show that children in WFP-assisted schools performed better than peers in schools not covered by WFP. Home-grown school meals provide a good opportunity to expand links to local suppliers and to diversify school meals.

³³ WFP. 2004. "Humanitarian principles". (WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C).

58. *Nutrition.* The effectiveness of the nutrition programme was challenged by funding constraints, low government capacity at the local level and the Government's prioritization of severe acute malnutrition treatment. WFP's phase out of the programme in 2014 is likely to have left unmet needs in the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition, HIV and tuberculosis where government services are limited. WFP, partners and government staff are concerned about this gap, but the phase out is justified as conditions are still not conducive to investing further in the direct delivery of nutrition services.
59. *Productive assets and livelihood support.* These activities improved access to infrastructure and services, increased agricultural productivity and reduced indebtedness, but were insufficiently linked to the Government's investments in assets.³⁴ Country office studies on climate change led WFP to find a new niche in livelihood resilience with non-governmental organizations and other partners specialized in livelihood programming. Additional training and accompaniment of country office staff will enable better adoption of corporate guidance on FFA.
60. *Gender equality.* FFA activities implemented in the productive assets and livelihood support component were revised to facilitate women's enhanced participation and leadership. Support to HIV/AIDS patients and the nutrition counsellors of people living with HIV/AIDS served both sexes in this highly vulnerable group. The moderate acute malnutrition intervention targeted vulnerable pregnant and lactating women, children under 2 and children under 5. The school meals programme supported improved access to education for girls and boys from poor families, and women managed cash and food scholarships, although women's participation in school committees was modest.

Impact and sustainability

61. Interviews with government counterparts confirm the importance of WFP's technical support to the Government in developing plans and strategies that support poverty reduction, nutrition and resilience and enhancing capacities to support national ownership and management of activities.
62. *Relief.* By initiating the HRF linked to the PRISM tool, WFP improved disaster response capacity at the national level. Although the HRF is financially dependent on WFP, findings indicate improved planning capacity among sector stakeholders and strengthened coherency with the Government, which has started preparedness and response activities.
63. *Education.* WFP ensured the sustainability of the school meals programme through formulation of the road map, hand-over of the food and cash scholarships to the Government, and capacity building at all levels. The home-grown school meals model has strong potential for sustaining the school meals programme through local management and connections to local producers. There are, however, concerns about decentralized capacities to take over school meals activities and about financial sustainability given competing priorities for strengthening the education system.
64. *Nutrition.* In response to resource limitations, the country office reformulated its engagement in nutrition from direct service delivery to capacity strengthening and coordination.
65. WFP's rice fortification activity is in its early stages. Ensuring sustainability will require enlisting financial and operational support from government and private sector partners.
66. *Productive assets and livelihood support.* WFP is adapting to a changing role for its FFA activities in Cambodia. The country office is making strategic use of limited resources, strengthening the evidence base for FFA activities and demonstrating the added value of a multi-layered resilience design. WFP support at the local level is effective, but additional resources will be required to support improved resilience programming at scale.
67. Table 4 provides operational recommendations for 2018 and strategic recommendations for the CSP.

³⁴ SPR CP 200202 (2014).

TABLE 4: RECOMMENDATIONS			
No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Timing and responsible units
<i>Operational recommendations for 2018</i>			
1	Organize an internal sense-making workshop to consolidate the results of the numerous assessments and studies conducted to date. This should be part of the strategic review/CSP process and will require strategic engagement with stakeholders and partners.	Stronger corporate consensus is needed to guide the country office towards a more specific role. Without a clear identity based on specific roles and responsibilities, it will be difficult for WFP to maintain productive partnerships in the longer term.	2018 Led by the country office leads, supported by the regional bureau and headquarters
2	Develop information products and knowledge management strategies that consolidate WFP's technical and financial contributions in Cambodia.	WFP has invested time and resources in highly strategic information collection and analysis processes. The information provides a valuable contribution to knowledge and learning. Many of these results have not yet been properly documented or packaged for external, non-technical audiences, including government representatives, donors and bilateral partners.	2018 Led by the country office leads, supported by the regional bureau and headquarters
<i>Strategic recommendations for the CSP</i>			
3	Strengthen WFP's support to decentralization and deconcentration by examining a variety of models for strengthening subnational administrative and operational capacities.	The main transition process that WFP is currently engaged in is for the school meals programme, but the recommendation also applies to productive assets and livelihood support. Local government offices responsible for continuing both activities are already heavily burdened by decentralization activities and lack the staff and institutional capacity to ensure uninterrupted functioning of all aspects of productive assets and livelihood support and school meals programmes.	2018–2019 Led by the country office leads, supported by the regional bureau
4	Rationalize the country office's staff capacity and ensure that it is the right size for WFP's new institutional role in technical rather than operational support, including through workforce planning.	New roles for staff as technical advisers and capacity enablers are challenging the country office operational model. Staff responsibilities have grown beyond existing job descriptions while capacity strengthening for new roles has been insufficient. WFP does not have clear corporate guidance or training support for the new roles that staff must play. The learning culture in the country office must be strengthened to promote the continuation of adaptive management in a changing strategic and operational environment.	2018–2019 Led by the country office leads, supported by the regional bureau

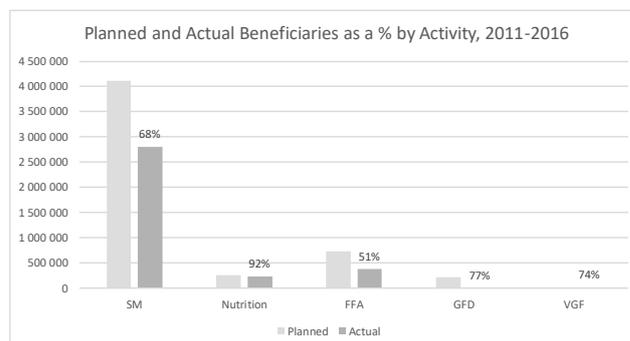
TABLE 4: RECOMMENDATIONS			
No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Timing and responsible units
5	Right-size the focus of the portfolio focus to fit country office capacity and the resource outlook. Include a focus on core country office functions to inform the development of a menu of services.	WFP currently supports very diverse types of activity. The purpose of rationalization is to identify a strategic niche in terms of not only WFP's priorities but also its relevance in the current humanitarian and development environment in Cambodia.	2018–2019 Led by the country office leads, supported by the regional bureau
6	Define the support required from headquarters and the regional bureau for the country office's transition process, and the support that can be mobilized directly by the country office; this may include both programmatic and institutional support.	There is great need for the country office to consult headquarters and the regional bureau on the specific support it needs to gradually adapt its role in Cambodia. During T-ICSP implementation the country office should initiate consultations with headquarters and the regional bureau on tools and pathways that it could use to support the transition to the upcoming CSP.	2018–2019 Led by the country office leads, supported by headquarters and the regional bureau

ANNEX

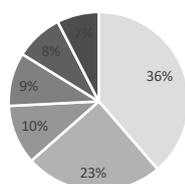
Timeline and funding levels of WFP portfolio in Cambodia July 2011–2016							
Operation	Timeframe	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
CP 200202	1 July 2011–31 December 2018	Required: USD 191 531 887 Received: USD 113 191 751 Funded: 59%					
EMOP 200373	15 November 2011–14 November 2012	Required: USD 11 725 152 Received: USD 6 266 567 Funded: 53%		Legend >75% funded 50–75% funded			
IR-EMOP 200368	12 October 2011–December 2011	Required: USD 500 000 Received: USD 467 290 Funded: 93%					
Extra-budgetary funds							
Trust fund	July 2013–March 2014	Required: USD 192 308 Received: USD 192 308 Funded: 100%					
Bilateral operation	1 November 2012–31 July 2014	Required: USD 210 496 Received: USD 210					
Direct expenses (USD million)		13 258 178	25 925 719	13 837 881	14 695 187	10 784 336	10 052 070
Food distributed (mt)		5 698	27 326	16 549	11 285	7 600	7 241
Total beneficiaries (actual)		510 260	804 581	685 162	575 791	375 728	607 133
% women beneficiaries (actual)		51.5%	50.6%	50.4%	50.2%	49.8%	51.6%

	SF	Nut	GFD	VGF	FFA
CP 200202	X	X	X	X	X
IR-EMOP 200368			X		
EMOP 200373			X	X	X

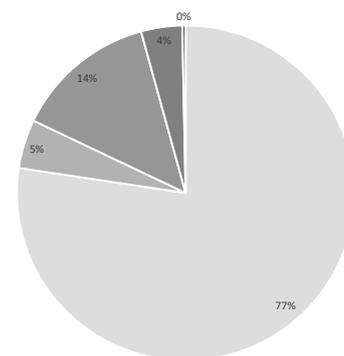
Source: SPRs. Nutrition (Nut.) includes CMAM and MCHN programmes, phased out in 2014. SF, VGF and FFA components include C&V interventions.



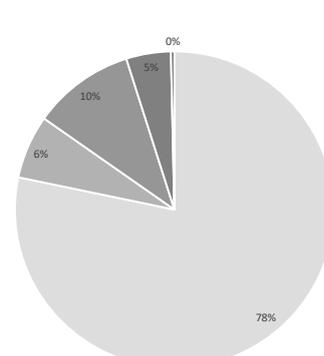
Top five donors (+ Cambodia)



- 1 United States of America
- 2 Multilateral donors
- 3 Australia
- 4 Private donors
- 5 Japan
- 6 Cambodia



- School meals
- Nutrition
- FFA
- GFD
- VGF



- School meals
- Nutrition
- FFA
- GFD
- VGF

Acronyms used in the document

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
CBT	cash-based transfer
CP	country programme
CSP	country strategic plan
DEV	development project
EMOP	emergency operation
FFA	food assistance for assets
GFD	general food distribution
HRF	Humanitarian Response Forum
IDPoor	Identification of Poor Households Programme
IR-EMOP	immediate-response emergency operation
MCHN	mother-and-child health and nutrition
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRISM	Precision Real-time Information System Manager platform
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
SPR	standard project report
SF	school feeding
SM	school meal
T-ICSP	transitional interim country strategic plan
UNDAF	United Nations development assistance framework
VGF	vulnerable group feeding