

Decentralized evaluation for evidence-based decision making

WFP Office of Evaluation

Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS)



Management Response Template

Version June 2016

This template provides a suggested structure and guidance on content for the management response to decentralized evaluation recommendations

World Food Programme McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (FFE 699-2013/036-00-B) in Liberia from September 2013 to September 2016						
WFP Liberia						
Rec. #	Recommendation Text (as per evaluation report)	Management Response (Is recommendation Accepted, partially accepted or not accepted?. If partially accepted or not accepted, provide a brief response)	Actions to be taken (Briefly state what actions will be taken to address the recommendation)	Action By [WFP Country Office, WFP Regional Bureau, WFP Headquarters, External Stakeholders (UN Agency, Government body, Donor)]	Implementation timeframe [Month, Year]	Status [Not started/In progress/On hold/ Complete]
1	<p>In collaboration with the MoE the CO should, with support from the RB as necessary, develop a clear capacity development strategy to support the handover of the SF programme to the Government of Liberia.</p> <p>The ET recommend that the first step in the development of the strategy is to undertake a comprehensive SABER assessment to identify the key barriers and opportunities</p>	Accepted	a) The CO will work with the government of Liberia/MOE to conduct the SABER assessment for Liberia. The MOE has been broadly supportive of a SABER and has expressed as much in several bilateral	CO with support of RB/HQ CO, MOE	August 2018	Not started Not started

	<p>for handover. The Capacity Development Strategy should then include appropriate activities to address the identified issues. The Strategy should also ensure that actions are given appropriate timeframes, with responsible entities named, and clear accountability frameworks developed.</p> <p>Further, the ET find that the Capacity Development Strategy should include national, county, and school level capacity development activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Level: Due consideration should be given to the inclusion of high-level advocacy, participatory technical studies, information-sharing mechanisms, stakeholder consultations and workshops, joint assessments and inter-agency coordination. The School Feeding Unit at the MoE should be fully engaged with this process and participate in the process of developing clear and concrete accountability mechanisms, including annual milestones. • County Level: Advocate that SF is included in the County Superintendents Development Plans, and ensure that appropriate county level personnel have specific roles in the programme, and are trained as such. • School Level: Engagement of project implementers (teachers, administrators) in capacity building activities at the school level to strengthen record-keeping and filing practices. Provide the necessary tools to do so (e.g. ledger books, booklets). 		<p>meetings with WFP. The main challenge that has prevented the SABER taking place so far has been the several transitions, including at ministerial level, that have taken place at MOE</p> <p>b) Based on the SABER assessment, the CO will work with the MOE to agree and develop a clear capacity development strategy to address capacity deficits at national and sub-national levels to facilitate the gradual handover of school feeding to government.</p>		Four months after the SABER	
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	The final strategy should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The ET recommend using a comprehensive indicator such as the National Capacity Index or similar, to measure changes in government capacity.					
2	<p>In collaboration with the MoE the CO, with support from the RB as necessary, should develop a clear operational framework and timeline for the transition of the SF programme to the Government of Liberia.</p> <p>To implement effective capacity development activities, the CO and MoE must agree as to the timeline of the programme handover to the MoE, and develop milestones to the achievement of the goal within that timeline. Currently, the capacity building focuses on training, rather than on high level advocacy to enhance and maintain political will and any other systemic requirements to implement SF. Advocacy at all levels of government and the inclusion of SF in national and county development plans will be critical to a successful transition to a government owned programme.</p> <p>The ET therefore recommend that a clear operational framework is developed alongside the capacity development strategy. Both documents should clearly state the goal of handover and the steps required to achieve it. The ET also recommends the following to be done during the development of the framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CO should review the policy & legal 	Accepted	a) As part of the CSP formulation and based on the Capacity Development Strategy , the CO will work with the MOE to develop a multi-year (to match the CSP duration) operational plan that will establish the framework for WFP assistance leading to government ownership. The multi-year plan will be reviewed and updated annually.	CO with support of RB/HQ, MOE	Two months following the issuance of a Capacity Development Strategy (per actions related to Recommendation 1)	Not started

	<p>framework and associated strategies regarding education and SF in Liberia to assess the enabling environment; this should also consider the role of civil society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the operational framework, due consideration should be given to the inclusion of partnerships with national and regional stakeholders to help ensure that ownership of these initiatives is in the hands of institutional partners, and the government. • The operational framework should include regular reviews (at least quarterly) against milestones, and updates to the JPA's to ensure that they reflect the situation on the ground. <p>The JPAs should also include activities at the organizational level – these could be development of a transition/handover plan; information sharing mechanisms; joint assessment of MoE implementation capacity; introduction of results based management; joint evaluations – to complement the institutional policy support and field level training activities.</p>					
3	<p>The CO, with support from RB as necessary, should review their capacity to implement the new SF Operational Framework and the new Capacity Development Strategy.</p> <p>In parallel to the development of the framework and strategy mentioned above, the ET recommend the CO review its own human resource and capacity development needs. This should include an appraisal of</p>	<i>Accepted</i>	a) As part of the CSP formulation and in line with the capacity development strategy and multi-year operational plan, the CO will put in place adequate capacity to manage and implement	CO	As part of the CSP formulation	Not started

	<p>whether the CO currently has the skills and profiles to undertake the necessary capacity development of the MoE, and implement the required community development activities.</p> <p>The CO should also ensure that there is sufficient monitoring capacity to enable WFP and MoE to adhere to donor requirements for monitoring of program performance indicators, not only outputs but also programme outcomes.</p> <p>The capacity review process should enable the development of staff profiles – including the ‘soft’ skills for capacity development - needed within WFP CO. These profiles should then be used for the recruitment of new staff and the training up of current staff. These skills include negotiation, communication, facilitation, information synthesis, coaching and engagement skills (for national capacity building), as well as community engagement and mobilization skills.</p>		<p>(including monitoring) a successful programme handover.</p> <p>b) The CO will work with the MOE to establish and maintain an appropriate staffing capacity for programme management, implementation and monitoring.</p>	CO, MOE	Within the first 18 months of CSP implementation	Not started
4	<p>The CO, with support from RB as necessary, should strengthen collaborations and develop new partnerships with other development and community actors.</p> <p>The ET recommend that the CO expand their partnerships for the SF programme and look for opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with other development and community actors to add value to SF activities.</p>	<p>Partially accepted: Community and government schools already benefit from the community members’ contribution in the form of cooking fuel, cooking services, condiments, and participation in school feeding management. Feeding in many of the private and faith-based schools is through the payment of fees. This</p>	<p>a) The CO will continue to advocate for the establishment of a multi-sectoral school meals task force by the government.</p> <p>b) The CO will prioritize and establish strategic partnerships with other development partners (FAO,</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p>	<p>September 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p>	<p>Not started</p> <p>Not started</p>

	<p>Partnerships¹ should focus on maximizing synergies with other UN agencies (e.g. UNICEF for equipment, training and WASH, FAO with school gardens, WHO for health). The CO can use these partnerships to conduct joint sensitization, monitoring, training and other activities with the schools and community on the relevant shared issues of their programs.</p> <p>The CO should also look to the model of private and church schools who are able to garner support from the communities or churches to carry on feeding, bring resources (food, condiments, wood, labour), and bring these lessons learned to future SF programming with the aim to reduce donor dependency and encourage schools (community and public) to increase community participation.</p>	model may not work for many of the schools targeted by WFP	UNICEF, UNDP, etc.) to increase delivery of complementary services in WASH, school gardens, etc.			
5	<p>The CO to consider expansion of the GTHR to all primary school grades in areas where there is a high gender disparity in primary school enrolment.</p> <p>GTHR is a small element of the programme averaging around 10 percent of the beneficiaries. The ET found the GTHR to be effective, more flexible and to offer more cost efficiencies than SF. It is also apparent that girls commonly dropped out of schooling before Grade 4, so before reaching current programme eligibility. This action would necessarily increase the number of female beneficiaries to the benefit of programme gender sensitivity.</p>	<p><i>Not accepted:</i> the purpose of GTHR is to contribute to gender equality in primary education by providing families with an incentive to keep in school pubescent girls who would otherwise be at-risk of being pulled out of school for early marriage or to engage in livelihood activities. Although there are a number of pubescent girls in</p>	a) The CO will apply the provision of take-home-ration by geographical targeting beginning with the district level to avert movement from one school to another in the same district to receive the ration. However, the ration will continue to target girls in grades 4, 5 and 6.	CO	January 2018	Not started

¹ Global Humanitarian Principles of Partnership – equity, transparency, results-orientated approach, responsibility and complementarity/mutuality.

		grades 1, 2 and 3, there is abundant anecdotal indication that most girls in these grades are pre-pubescent and therefore much less susceptible to the risks that GTHR is intended to mitigate; i.e. parents are less likely to pull them out of school for marriage and/or work. Furthermore, gender disparity in primary grades 1, 2 and 3 is generally quite low and even favors girls in many schools.				
6	<p>The RB must provide ongoing support to the CO to develop a more transparent and gender responsive M&E system and ensure that monitoring and evaluation activities are appropriate, systematic and as per donor agreements.</p> <p>The ET recommend that the RB provide the CO support to develop a more transparent M&E system for the next phase of programme. Support from the RB should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the CO's methodology used for beneficiary counting to reflect actual beneficiary numbers and to ensure indicators are clearly defined. Particular attention to context needs to be paid when numbers of beneficiaries/commodities distributed don't tally. The ET recommend that RB 	<p>Partially accepted:</p> <p>The CO is already using "gendered" indicators against which it is collecting gender-disaggregated data. Additionally, the CO beneficiary counting methodology is consistent with long established practice within WFP globally.</p>	a) The CO will update the existing monitoring and evaluation strategy to include elements of the (TI)CSP	CO with support from RB	March 2018	Not started

	<p>provide support on how this is done in other countries, with similar contexts.</p> <p>Support the CO to develop a more robust M&E system including documenting methods used & their rationale, systematic reporting, standardized formats and filing. Reporting should be systematic and transparent.</p>					
7	<p>The CO should consider increasing the coverage of the programme within counties to improve multiple efficiencies including capacity building.</p> <p>County level coverage of schools receiving SF is low. This increases logistic and monitoring costs and reduces the ability of SF staff in neighbouring districts to build a community of practice. The low coverage also means that the schools implementing the SF programme create a significant “pull factor” leading to larger class sizes, and potentially reducing educational outcomes due to lower quality of teaching.</p> <p>Increasing county level coverage rates would minimise these negative effects and improve efficiencies for logistics, training needs and enable information sharing, knowledge and ownership by the County Education Office. This would involve reducing the number of counties or districts served by WFP.</p>	<p><i>Not accepted:</i></p> <p>in every county that WFP implements school feeding, all public and community schools that meet the criteria in the school feeding policy are targeted for assistance. For access reasons, some schools may not be reached at some points; but no school meeting the above conditions is excluded. The only exception in this regard has been Nimba County, to which school feeding was expanded after an earlier phase out in order to meet the target of 127,000 which would not otherwise have been reached. That said, and generally speaking, funding levels might just not allow further expansion of coverage</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

8	<p>The CO, with support from the RB as necessary, and in consultation with the MoE, should strengthen monitoring in the field.</p> <p>The ET have identified several areas for improvement of the SF programme monitoring. The ET recommend that the CO and the MoE review their JPAs to include the following monitoring activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CO to continue to advocate for GoL, including MoE, funding for MoE to support programming and monitoring. • The CO and MoE to increase joint WFP-DFP monitoring visits to strengthen capacity of DFPs. These monitoring visits should be used for capacity strengthening of the PTAs/FMCs. This recommendation may also require the number of WFP monitors to be increased, to at least one per county, to support the MoE to carry out their monitoring duties. • The CO and MoE should consider using the PTAs as additional programme monitoring entities and enable them to report or contact WFP directly if needed. PTAs are in a good position, and motivated, to regularly monitor school activities, such as the number of days' hot meals are provided, check the delivery of food stocks to the schools, view ration calculation and daily food preparation. • The CO should consider making commodity delivery conditional upon reconciled records (both SF and School records). • The CO to ensure the new phone-based 	<p>Partially accepted:</p> <p>As per prevailing SOP, the food delivery to schools is not conditional upon reconciled SF and school records. Any cut or discontinuation of meals, due to shortcoming of school administrators, would result in denial of much needed food assistance. The CO will increase efforts to get better quality data from schools by providing better support, training and greater oversight of schools.</p>	<p>Actions on recommendations 3 and 6 will apply.</p>			
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	<p>beneficiary feedback system is anonymous and that all information is recorded, actioned appropriately with gender sensitivity.</p> <p>The CO need to agree monitoring roles with DFPs/PTAs to ensure that food is delivered directly to the schools to enhance effectiveness. WFP to regularly monitor and continue to enforce agreements with transporters.</p>					
9	<p>The CO, with support from the RB as necessary, and in consultation with the MoE, should take steps to improve the provision of the in-school meal.</p> <p>This evaluation has highlighted several inefficiencies in the implementation of the in-school meal, and the ET recommend that the processes be reviewed and revised during the next phase of programming to ensure that schools provide school meals, every school day.</p> <p>The ET recommend the CO and the MoE work together to ensure the following are done on a regular basis throughout the next phase of programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CO should ensure that multiple people receive SF training in each school to mitigate future staff turnover and to include long standing school staff and the PTA. • Provide technical assistance to storekeepers to improve the accuracy of the ration calculations. This should include visual aids to ensure correct rations are prepared. 	<p>Partially accepted:</p> <p>The CO accepts the point that it should ensure that multiple people receive SF training in each school. However, the CO does not see that this will necessarily mitigate future staff turnover although it certainly should mitigate the impact of such turnover. Moreover, the CO considers the school feeding programme as a partnership not just with government but also with communities. In this partnership, communities make their own contributions. One of the many ways they do this is through the provision of cooks. Each community has to</p>	<p>a) The CO will support the dissemination of the school feeding code of conduct;</p> <p>b) The CO will organize and deliver appropriate county, district and school level trainings to improve programme implementation at sub-national levels</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p>	<p>Periodically</p> <p>Periodically</p>	

	Ensure cooks are provided with adequate financial or other incentives for their work. Work with the school community and aim to provide the meal earlier in the day.	work out how it provides this important input, which contributes to the sustainability of the programme.				
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