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WFP's Corporate Emergency Response in Northeast Nigeria (2016–2018)

Corporate emergency response evaluation

Evaluation report: Volume I

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Evaluation features

1. This evaluation spans WFP operations conducted between March 2016 and November 2018 in northeast Nigeria. It addresses three evaluation questions, on the appropriateness of design and delivery, operational performance and factors and quality of strategic decision making. It offers corporate opportunities for learning relevant to the establishment of an in-country presence, at scale, in a complex operating environment, and provides insights to the Nigeria country office as it starts implementing its first country strategic plan (CSP), covering the period 2019–2022.

2. The evaluation was conducted by WFP's independent Office of Evaluation, together with an external independent evaluation team that collected evidence at the headquarters, regional and country levels, through the following lines of inquiry:

- a desk review of quantitative and qualitative secondary data;
- a field visit to WFP operations in northeast Nigeria, including Maiduguri and Damaturu;
- 112 key informant interviews at the international, national and state levels with representatives of WFP, partners, governments and donors; and
- 21 focus-group discussions with affected populations in deep-field locations, of which 12 were held with internally displaced women and host community members.

3. The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, and findings from various data sources were triangulated during the analysis phase to achieve consensus on findings and conclusions. The design of the evaluation strongly emphasized the integration of gender and protection issues. In addition to the usual confidentiality arrangements, ethical standards were applied to ensure the dignity and confidentiality of those involved in the evaluation. The team did not encounter major constraints that compromised the overall validity of the evaluation.

Context

4. Nigeria has been classified as a lower-middle income economy since 2008¹ and ranked as Africa's largest economy in 2016.² Persistent inequality is evident, however, with more than half the population living in poverty. Poverty is most severe in the northeast and northwest, with rates of 77.7 percent and 76.3 percent, respectively.³ Traditional socio-cultural gender roles, relatively low levels of education and exclusion from social and political decision making rendered women in the northeast vulnerable even before the current crisis.

5. Since 2009, violent attacks on civilians by non-state armed groups have caused massive displacement of people in the Lake Chad Basin. It is estimated that more than 20,000 people have been killed in northeast Nigeria during the current crisis.⁴ The number of internally displaced people rose to a peak of 1.65 million in June 2015 in Borno State alone (figure 1).

¹ World Bank. *Worldbank Country and Lending Groups*.

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>.

² International Monetary Fund. 2016. *World Economic Outlook: Subdued Demand: Symptoms and Remedies*.

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2016/12/31/Subdued-Demand-Symptoms-and-Remedies>.

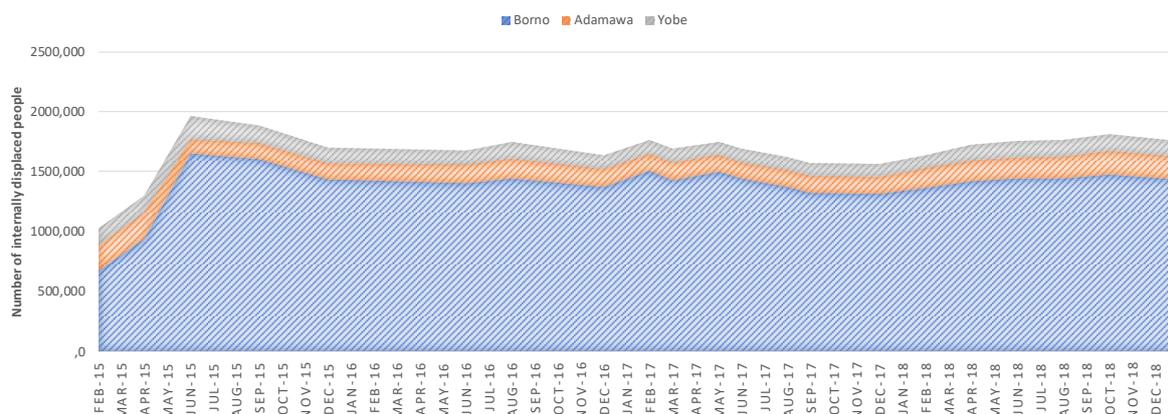
³ Press briefing by the Statistician-General of the Federation/Chief Executive Officer, National Bureau of Statistics. 2012.

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/b410c26c2921c18a6839baebc9b1428fa98fa36a.pdf>.

⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2017. *2018 Humanitarian Response Plan Nigeria*.

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2018_hrp_v5.4.pdf.

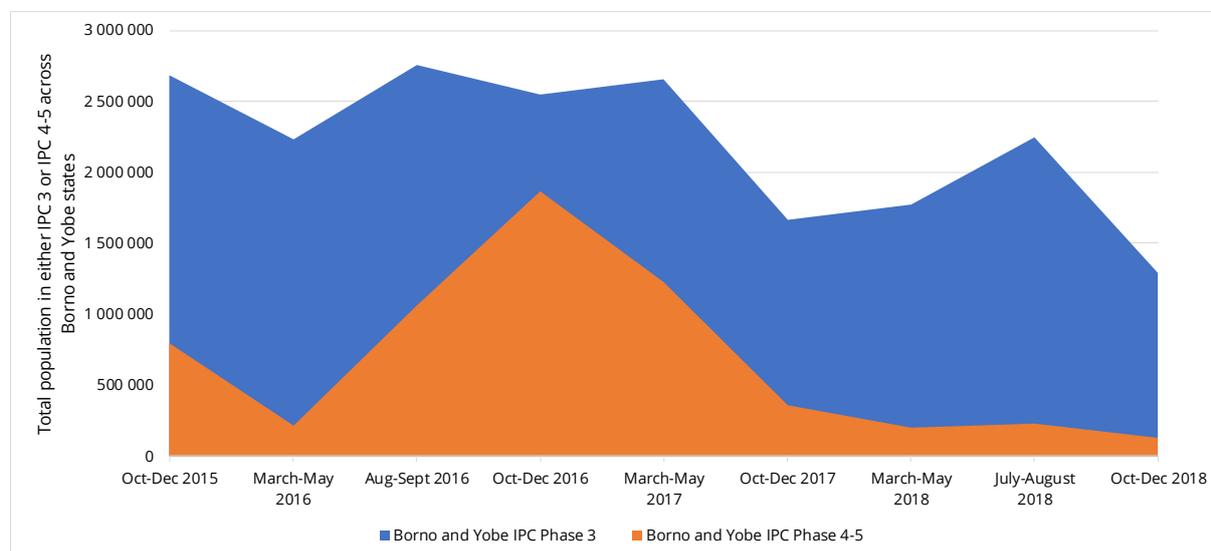
Figure 1: Number of internally displaced people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states (February 2015–December 2018)



Source: International Organization for Migration. Displacement Tracking Matrix 2015-2018.

6. Even before the conflict, the northeast experienced extremely high rates of chronic malnutrition. Since 2012, the conflict has worsened the food security and nutrition situation, causing widespread loss of livelihoods and reducing access to essential social services. A December 2016 Famine Early Warning Systems Network report argued that a famine had already occurred in parts of Borno State.⁵ Figure 2 shows the trend in food insecurity in Borno and Yobe states. The latest projections by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network indicate that much of the northeast is likely to remain in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 (crisis) or Phase 4 (emergency) until at least September 2019,⁶ as the military offensives continue, causing ongoing displacement.

Figure 2: Cadre harmonisé* phase classification: IPC phases 3-5 (October 2015–December 2018)



Source: Cadre harmonisé data, October 2015–May 2018.

* The cadre harmonisé is the current regional framework for consensual analysis of food insecurity situations

7. The Government ministries and entities involved in humanitarian response in northeast Nigeria included the National Emergency Management Agency, the Presidential Committee on the North East

⁵ Famine Early Warning Systems Network. 2016. *Famine risk in northern and central Borno State*. https://fews.net/sites/default/files/documents/reports/FEWS%20NET%20Borno%20%20Analysis_20161213release.pdf.

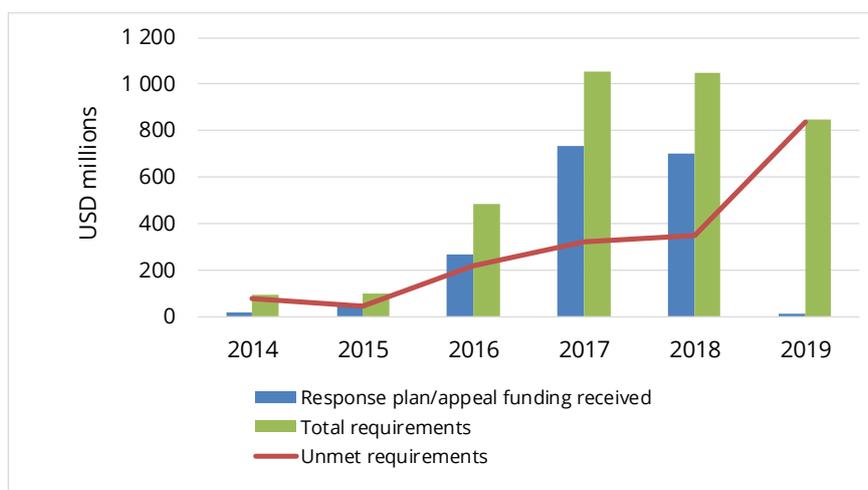
⁶ Famine Early Warning Systems Network. 2019. *Nigeria Food Security Outlook Update*. http://fews.net/sites/default/files/documents/reports/NIGERIA%20FSOU_April%202019_Final_2_rev.pdf.

Initiative and the Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning (inter-ministerial task force lead), with support from the Emergency Coordination Centre. The evaluation was not able to access consolidated information on government assistance to internally displaced people.

8. The National Emergency Management Agency is responsible for coordinating humanitarian assistance at the federal level, along with the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative. WFP is mandated to co-lead the food security sector and lead the logistics and emergency telecommunications sectors.⁷ Nigeria’s federated structure gives significant autonomy to states, and the State Emergency Management Agency leads coordination at the state level.

9. United Nations entities, including WFP, coordinate their response under humanitarian response plans for Nigeria, which have been produced since 2014. Total humanitarian response plan appeal funding is shown in figure 3.

Figure 3: Trends in annual humanitarian response plan appeal funding (USD millions)



Source: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Financial Tracking Service.

WFP portfolio

10. The operations included in the scope of the evaluation are the West Africa regional emergency operation 200777 activities implemented in Nigeria, special operations 200834 and 201032, immediate response emergency operation 200969 and operations under immediate response preparation account 200965.

11. The activities supported by WFP in northeast Nigeria have evolved over time and have included:
- capacity strengthening for the National Emergency Management Agency, extended to the state emergency management agencies in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states starting in 2015;
 - a pilot project for cash-based transfers via mobile money transfers starting in March 2016;
 - food and nutrition security assistance through in-kind, mobile cash and e-voucher transfers and blanket supplementary feeding programmes in response to a request by the Government of Nigeria in April 2016 to support its effort to address the food security situation in northeast Nigeria;

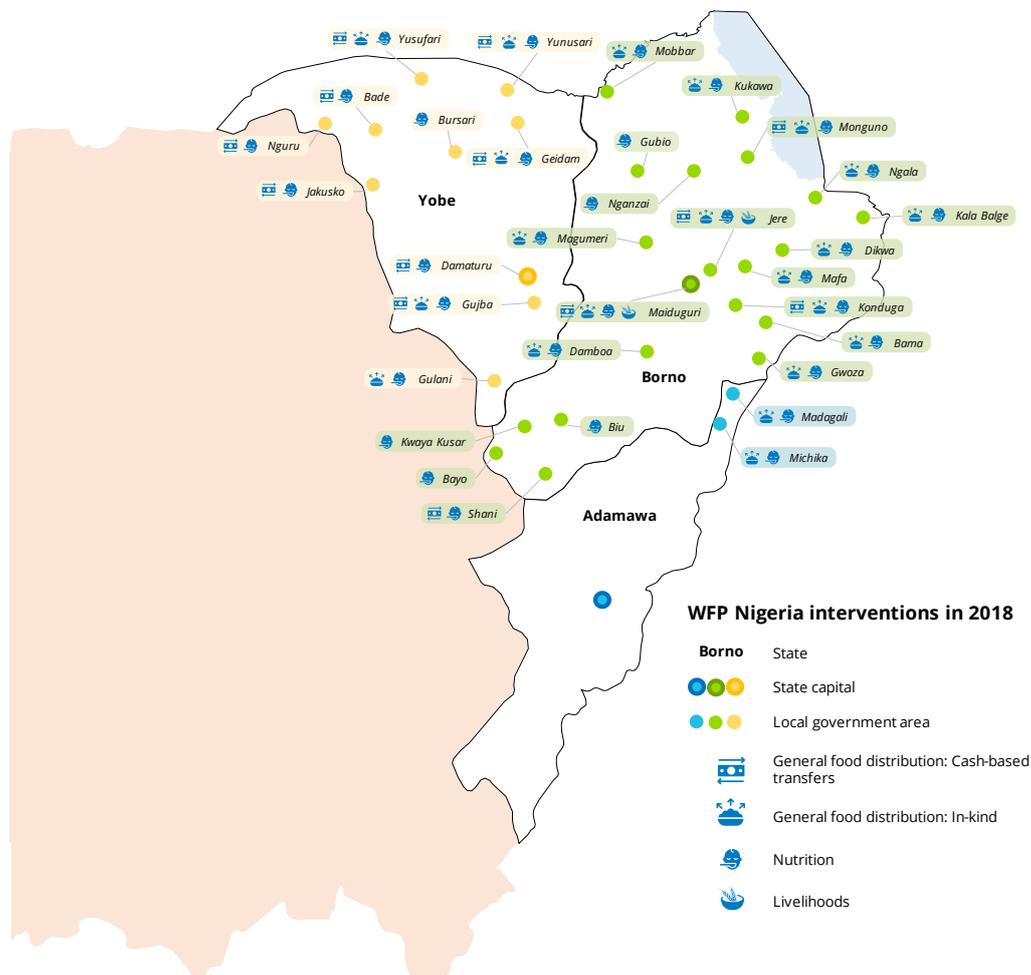
⁷The cluster system has not been activated in Nigeria; sectors are co-chaired by an international lead and the Government of Nigeria.

- d) from June 2016, treatment and support for households with members suffering from moderate acute malnutrition, with nutrition-sensitive interventions added in July 2017; and
- e) livelihood recovery activities commencing in October 2017.

12. As more areas became accessible to the humanitarian community, WFP’s operation expanded geographically from 2 local government areas in 2016 to 27 in 2018, covering the states of Borno and Yobe and parts of Adamawa. As at September 2018, the Nigeria portion of regional emergency operation 200777 was targeting 2.1 million beneficiaries, 54 percent of whom were women. The coverage of WFP activities under this emergency operation in 2018 is shown in figure 4.

13. Importantly, WFP managed three common services on behalf of the humanitarian community, providing United Nations Humanitarian Air Service flight services and leading the logistics and emergency telecommunications sectors, in addition to co-leading the food security sector.

Figure 4: WFP Nigeria interventions in 2018



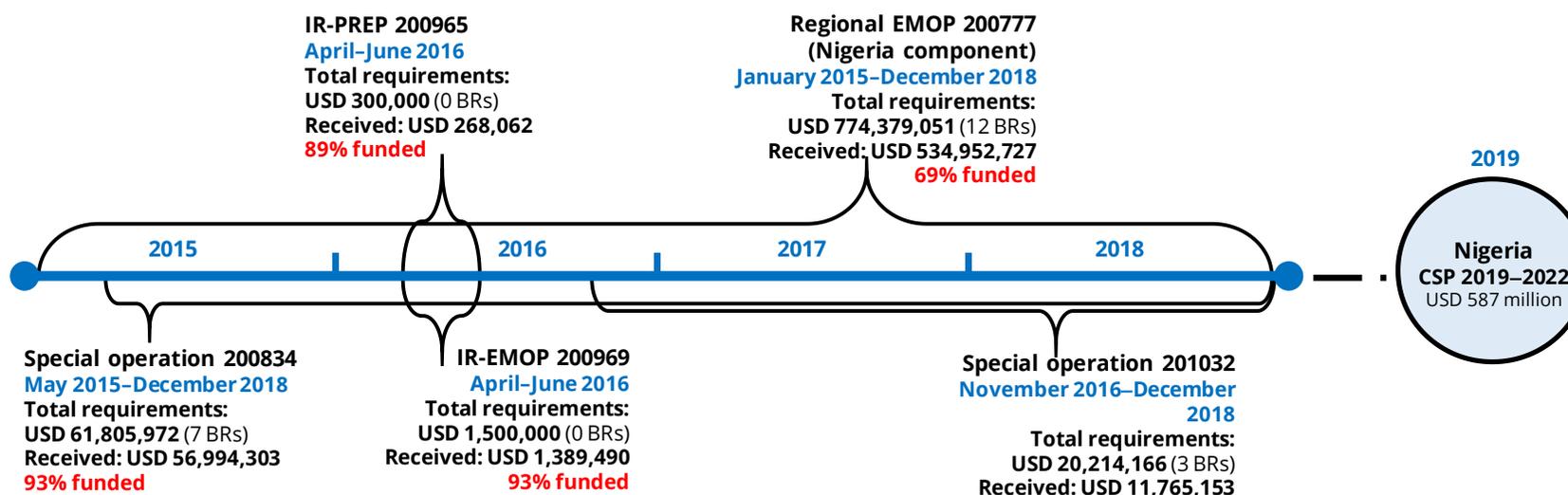
14. In accordance with WFP corporate strategy, the Nigeria country office has prepared a CSP for the period 2019–2022, in line with the national priorities articulated in Nigeria’s Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017–2020⁸ and the Buhari Plan.⁹

15. The timeline and resource situation of the Nigeria operations are summarized in figure 5.

⁸ Government of Nigeria, Ministry of Budget and National Planning. 2017. *Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017–2020*. <https://yourbudget.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Economic-Recovery-Growth-Plan-2017-2020.pdf>.

⁹ Government of Nigeria, Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative. 2016. *Rebuilding the North East. The Buhari Plan*. Vol. I-IV.

Figure 5: WFP Nigeria timeline and resource situation



Top five donors by operation 2016-2018					
EMOP 200777 (Nigeria component)		Special operation 200834		Special operation 201032	
Donor	Funding level (USD)	Donor	Funding level (USD)	Donor	Funding level (USD)
United States	251 111 221	United Kingdom	21 385 294	United States	4 000 527
United Kingdom	145 735 682	United States	13 500 000	Sweden	2 377 416
European Commission	34 790 733	European Commission	6 788 198	Germany	1 672 952
Germany	28 620 121	Germany	4 446 640	European Commission	1 435 334
Canada	16 467 920	Sweden	2 200 024	United Nations country-based pooled funds	827 002
Total requirements	774 379 051	Total requirements	58 231 370	Total requirements	20 214 166
Total received	534 952 727	Total received	54 185 440	Total received	11 765 153
% of requirements	69	% of requirements	93	% of requirements	58

Source: Funds received sourced from WFP's corporate system for contribution statistics WINGS report: Distribution contribution and forecast statistics 2019-02-03. Total requirements sourced from the FACTory/WINGS report: Country: Nigeria - Needs and allocated contributions. All data extracted February 2019. Abbreviations: BR = budget revision; EMOP = emergency operation; IR-PREP = immediate response account for preparedness; IR-EMOP = immediate response emergency operation.

Evaluation findings

Alignment with identified humanitarian needs and relevant national policies

16. WFP has drawn on an increasingly detailed understanding of needs to underpin its operational planning. WFP was a key partner in developing and implementing the multi-agency cadre harmonisé food security analysis, with added input from internal assessments and situation monitoring. Nutrition surveys were available from 2013 onwards; however, there was a lack of information on the needs of an estimated 823,000 people living in inaccessible areas controlled by non-state armed groups.¹⁰ WFP operational plans were broadly aligned with the cadre harmonisé results, most clearly in terms of geographic targeting. There is a lack of transparency, however, in the relationship between the overall needs assessment and WFP operational plans and “prioritized” beneficiary numbers.

17. The values of in-kind and cash-based transfers and nutrition commodities were generally appropriate for the context and were regularly monitored and adjusted. In late 2016, a decision was made to change the cereal in the food basket from rice to sorghum or millet based on cost considerations. This required beneficiaries to invest more time, labour and fuel in food preparation, however, and did not coincide with beneficiary preferences.

18. While the in-kind ration was calculated on a per capita basis, the cash-based transfer was set at a standard amount per household, creating tensions in some locations. The elderly and persons with disabilities were prioritized alongside other vulnerable groups during targeting and distribution, but the type of assistance was not specifically adapted to their needs.

19. A cash-based response was an appropriate modality given the initial urban operational context and the functionality of local markets; however, there was minimal assessment of the operational feasibility of using mobile money as a delivery mechanism. WFP encountered significant challenges with the chosen cash delivery mechanism, including low beneficiary access to and familiarity with mobile phone technology, inability to perform programmatic reconciliation and liquidity problems. WFP subsequently adapted its approach to include the use of e-vouchers and in-kind distributions.

20. The nutrition strategy appears to have been well adapted to the circumstances. As the Government did not have a treatment protocol in place for moderate acute malnutrition, it was decided not to initiate a large-scale moderate acute malnutrition treatment response, which was an appropriate and pragmatic decision.

21. The inclusion of livelihood activities for both internally displaced people and host communities was consistent with the contextual assessment. There was little evidence of clear strategic decision making on the selection of projects, beneficiaries and locations, however, or of a clear strategy for ensuring that the large number of general food assistance beneficiaries made a transition to sustainable livelihood opportunities, although it is noted that agricultural livelihoods were severely constrained by limited access to secure farmland.

22. Overall, the WFP programme was found to be technically consistent with national development and emergency response policies. It was notable, however, that national policies were not seen by stakeholders as influential in shaping the response strategy.

23. From the outset, WFP paid close attention to risk management and analysis. This included early placement of specialist staff and the use of the corporate risk register as a core tool for identifying and managing risk. A memorandum of understanding between the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the WFP Office of Inspections and Investigations was established to conduct detailed investigations on allegations of fraud. The volatile security situation in the northeast required WFP to balance risk exposure for staff and partners with ensuring access to assistance. Department of Safety and Security restrictions on the

¹⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2018. *North-East Nigeria: Humanitarian Situation Update – Progress on key activities from the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan, November 2018 edition*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/north-east-nigeria-humanitarian-situation-update-progress-key-activities-2018-6>.

presence of staff in deep-field locations was felt to have a negative impact on programme quality, and WFP lobbied for relaxation of the most onerous restrictions.

24. To help identify protection risks, WFP appointed a full-time protection officer in July 2016 and established multiple complaint and feedback mechanisms. The Programme was slow to address identified protection risks, however, including the risks for women collecting firewood outside camps, the use of transactional sex to gain access to items not included in the food basket and abuses by mobile money agents.

25. There was widespread concern among stakeholders on the application of humanitarian principles. Stakeholders argued that the United Nations in Nigeria had not been vocal enough on the need to ease some of the restrictions on humanitarian assistance enforced by the Nigerian security forces or to advocate a more principled approach and had paid limited attention to needs in areas outside of government control. The evaluation team noted that WFP's close adherence to political and military strategies in the northeast had had a negative impact on the perceptions and realities of neutrality, impartiality and operational independence.

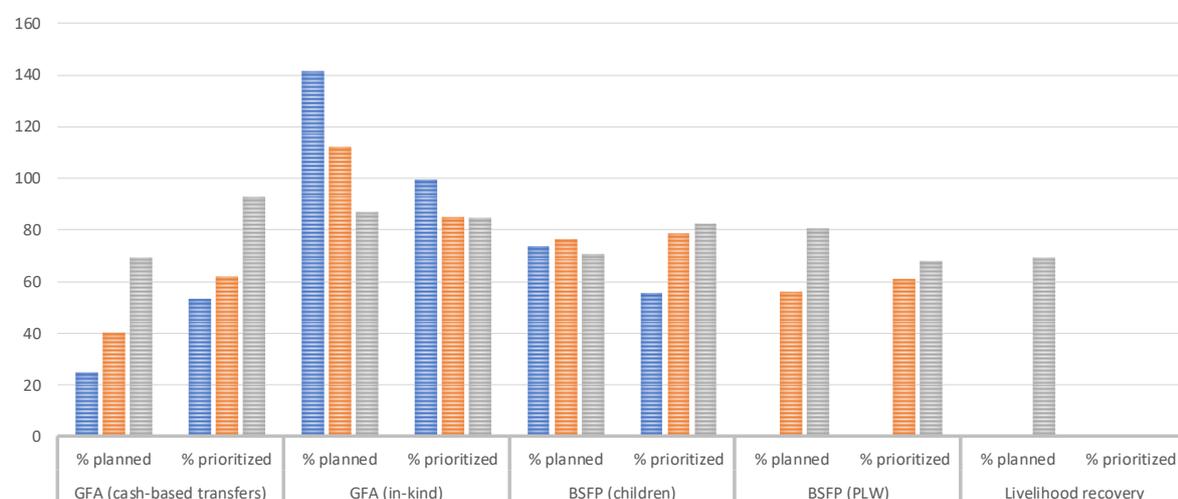
26. While compromises are inevitable in complex emergencies like that taking place in Nigeria, decisions do not appear to have always been made strategically and coherently among humanitarian agencies. The current WFP management team is credited with pushing for more principled engagement.

Operational performance and results

27. The initial targeting and registration process enabled WFP to quickly identify beneficiaries and distribute assistance but resulted in high inclusion and exclusion errors. These have persisted, despite subsequent retargeting efforts, due to insufficient communication by WFP, the varying experience and capacity of cooperating partners and the partiality of local leaders.

28. With the exception of in-kind food assistance, WFP has not met either the planned or the lower prioritized beneficiary targets (see figure 6).

Figure 6: Percentage of planned and prioritized beneficiaries reached, by activity (2016–2018)



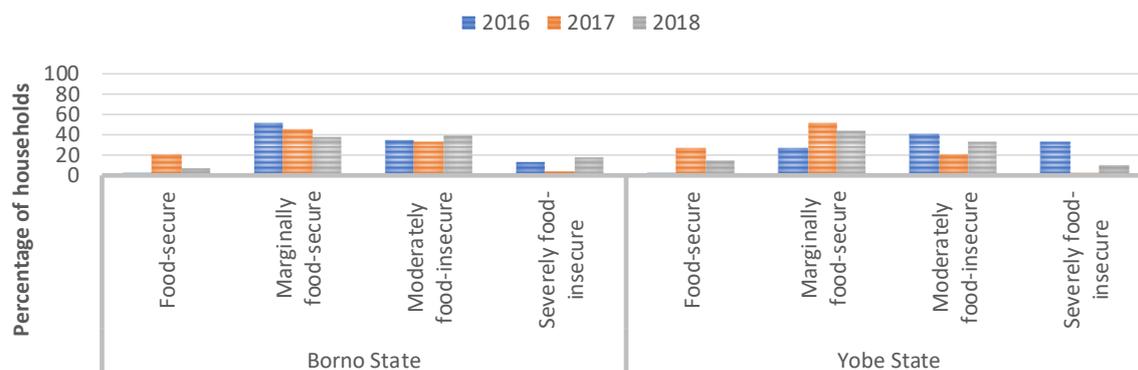
Source: Planned: country office tool for managing effectively (COMET) report CM-C004 for 2016–2018, final figures provided by the country office. Prioritized: Nigeria executive briefs and Nigeria internal situation reports 2016–2018. *Abbreviations:* BSFP = blanket supplementary feeding programme; GFA = general food assistance; PLW = pregnant and lactating women.

29. Challenges in using mobile money have persisted, although the introduction of in-kind assistance in July 2016 and e-vouchers in February 2017 facilitated improved performance against targets. The collective

sector-level coverage of food assistance needs has been consistently low, however, with a 65 percent gap in 2018.¹¹

30. Monitoring of WFP food assistance outcomes (figure 7) shows that large proportions of WFP beneficiaries remain food-insecure despite ongoing food assistance. This is not easily reconciled with cadre harmonisé results showing a significant improvement in food security since 2016, and it requires further analysis.

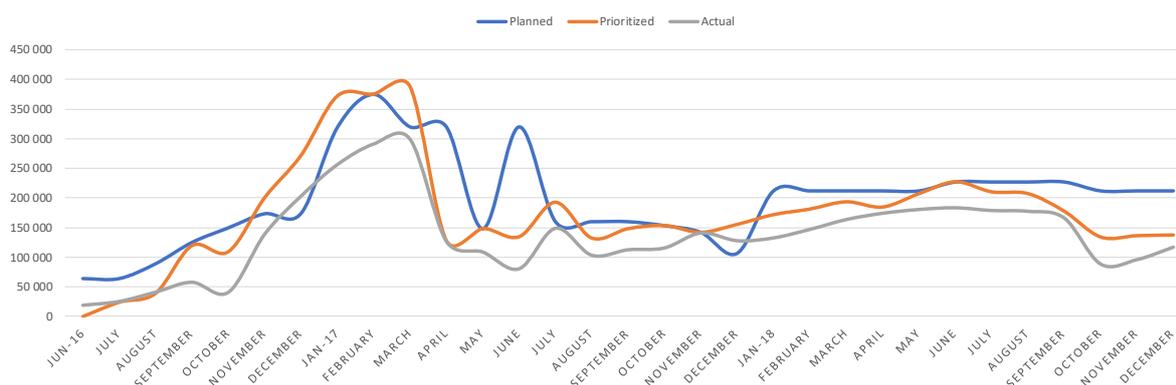
Figure 7: Consolidated reporting on food security outcomes (2016-2018)



Source: Compiled from WFP outcome post-distribution monitoring, December 2016; food security outcome monitoring, September 2017; and food security outcome monitoring, August 2018.

31. While WFP blanket supplementary feeding programme coverage is 75 percent of households targeted for general food assistance, the actual coverage rates would be closer to 20–30 percent if considered as a percentage of the total population of children 6–23 months of age. Figure 8 shows the planned, prioritized and actual regional emergency operation 200777 blanket supplementary feeding programme beneficiary numbers for children age 6–59 months. A significant pipeline break in April 2017 further affected nutrition performance. The nutrition-specific outcome indicators used by WFP have changed over time, and evaluation stakeholders felt that WFP’s nutrition activities had not been implemented on a scale sufficient to make a noticeable difference to overall global and moderate acute malnutrition rates.

Figure 8: Blanket supplementary feeding programme beneficiaries (6–59 months) (June 2016–December 2018)



Source: Planned and actual figures: COMET report CM-C004 for 2016–2018; final figures provided by the country office. Prioritized figures: Nigeria executive briefs and Nigeria internal situation reports 2016–2018.

¹¹ Food Security Cluster. *Food Security Sector Dashboard, November 2018*. <https://fscluster.org/nigeria/document/food-security-sector-dashboard-november>.

32. Livelihood activities have been implemented since October 2017, reaching some 29,000 households (approximately 17 percent of total households to be targeted between 2017 and 2020). Due to widespread insecurity, there have been consistent challenges in finding secure farmland for agriculture-related projects. Sector-wide, 1.9 million people are receiving agriculture and livelihood support,¹² almost entirely through other agencies. The evaluation did not reveal any outcome (as opposed to output) monitoring of livelihood activities.

33. Common service performance has generally exceeded targets. Performance against WFP targets is summarized in table 1 for the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, in table 2 for the logistics sector and in table 3 for the emergency telecommunications sector.

TABLE 1: UNITED NATIONS HUMANITARIAN AIR SERVICE PERFORMANCE AGAINST OUTPUT TARGETS				
	2016		2017	
Indicator	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Metric tons of cargo transported	25	59	84	159
Number of passengers transported	8 400	14 796	18 000	48 849
Number of agencies and organizations using humanitarian air services	50	64	70	92
Number of destinations served	9	17	20	16
Percentage response to medical and security evacuation	100	100	100	100

Source: WFP standard project reports data for 2016 and 2017.

TABLE 2: LOGISTICS SECTOR PERFORMANCE AGAINST OUTPUT TARGETS				
	2016		2017	
Indicator	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Number of agencies and organizations using coordination and logistics services (2016) and number of agencies and organizations using logistics coordination services (2017)	27	15	27	44
Number of organizations contributing to pipeline/planning, logistics assessment and/or capacity information to be shared	N/A	N/A	13	12

¹² *Ibid.*

TABLE 2: LOGISTICS SECTOR PERFORMANCE AGAINST OUTPUT TARGETS				
	2016		2017	
Indicator	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Number of organizations utilizing storage and cargo consolidation services	N/A	N/A	13	30
Organizations participating in Logistics Sector activities (coordination, information management or logistics services) responding to a user survey with a satisfaction rate of 85 percent or higher	N/A	N/A	85	82
Percentage of cargo movement requests served against requested	N/A	N/A	95	92
Percentage of service requests to handle, store and/or transport cargo fulfilled	85	100	85	100

Source: WFP standard project reports data for 2016 and 2017.

Abbreviations: N/A = not applicable

TABLE 3: EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR PERFORMANCE AGAINST OUTPUT TARGETS				
	2016		2017	
Indicator	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Number of radio-rooms (COMCEN) established	3	2	3	6
Number of operational areas covered by common security telecommunication network	4	1	6	6
Number of operational areas covered by data communications services	5	0	6	5
Number of operational areas covered with charging stations	3	0	N/R	0
Number of United Nations agency/NGO staff members trained in radio communications	60	10	120	533
Number of ETS meetings conducted on local and global levels	6	5	48	31
Number of ETS user satisfaction surveys conducted	0	1	N/A	N/A

Source: WFP standard project reports data for 2016 and 2017.

Abbreviations: COMCEN = communications centre; ETS = emergency telecommunications sector; N/A = not applicable; NGO = non-governmental organization; N/R = not reported

34. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service is widely credited with playing a pivotal role in supporting the ability and willingness of partners to work in previously inaccessible locations. Beyond Maiduguri there are very few options, and agencies largely relied exclusively on communication services provided by the emergency telecommunications sector. The evaluation found the logistics sector services to

be generally relevant, although some of the stakeholders interviewed questioned the cost-benefit ratio of the sector's warehousing capacity.

35. WFP achieved an impressive scale up in beneficiaries, reaching more than one million by January 2017.¹³ Several factors underpinned the speed of scale up, including:

- expanded access for humanitarian agencies;
- the location of a Global Commodity Management Facility depot in Kano, which provided additional flexibility in the supply chain;
- direct distributions through a rapid response mechanism launched by WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund until non-governmental organizations could establish a presence; and
- waivers on selected procedures provided by headquarters.

36. The rapid scale up had implications for programme quality, however, and WFP has struggled to rectify quality issues since the start of operations.

37. Analysis of the cost efficiency of WFP's operations is constrained by the fact that budget and expenditure data were only available for high-level cost categories. Cost savings associated with replacing rice with sorghum and millet were offset by increased protection risks. Duplications in staffing in the Maiduguri area office and the country office in Abuja contributed to higher costs that are still being rationalized.

38. The evaluation found that inadequate attention was paid to gender in the Nigeria response, with a failure to implement corporate guidance and standards, including the failure to develop a country-level gender baseline and action plan. Responsibility for gender in the country office remained an "add-on" responsibility. The use of gender analysis to inform programme design and implementation was limited. The only gender-specific action was the prioritization of young children and pregnant and lactating women.

39. Positive achievements with respect to gender were nevertheless found. For the gender indicators reported, WFP exceeded its set targets (table 4) due to the promotion of women's participation in food assistance activities and an improved gender balance in food assistance and nutrition teams. Recently, the Nigeria CSP has resulted in greater investment in gender and the WFP gender focal point and the start of gender capacity strengthening initiatives; however, these need to be well-grounded in a formal gender action plan to be effective.

Cross-cutting gender indicators	Project end target	General food assistance		
		2016	2017	2018
Proportion of households where females and males together make decisions about the use of cash, vouchers or food	50	51	63	54
Proportion of households where females make decisions about the use of cash, vouchers or food	25	20	19	31
Proportion of households where males make decisions about the use of cash, vouchers or food	25	29	18	15
Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees	50	60	N/R	N/R

¹³ WFP standard project report 2016.

<https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/48fac7ec50db4b428a750ea9e929152a/download/>.

Proportion of women project management committee members trained in modalities of food, cash or voucher distribution	60	60	N/R	N/R
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Source: WFP standard project reports data for 2016–2018.

Abbreviations: N/R = not reported.

Factors and quality of strategic decision making

40. The decision to become operational in northeast Nigeria took time, and WFP only became fully operational after August 2016, at a time when famine had already occurred in some parts of the northeast.¹⁴ While access to the area was severely curtailed in the build-up to the crisis, early warning signs had been emerging since 2012. The response lag can be partly explained by the time it took to establish the necessary understanding of the capacities and limitations of Nigerian response institutions and the need for an official government request for assistance.

41. Strong technical and administrative support and guidance for the response was provided by the regional bureau, including by nutrition, protection and cash-based transfer advisors, but technical support on livelihoods and capacity strengthening was less evident. Headquarters engagement was initially very hands-on but responsibility was subsequently largely delegated to the regional bureau despite the continuation of Level 3 status.

42. The evaluation found that WFP had a well-developed suite of technical and administrative policies and guidance to support programming. This was well-utilized in areas such as nutrition, in-kind assistance, supply chain and human resources. Some guidance was inadequately applied, however, due to inexperienced staff and headquarters waivers. Other guidance proved problematic, such as the decision to select Nigeria as a phase I CSP pilot country while concurrently managing a major emergency. Some guidance could be improved, including aspects of humanitarian access and principles, capacity strengthening, complaint and feedback mechanisms and targeting.

43. The early months of the operation were mostly run by staff on mission or secondment (temporary duty) arrangements. When the Level 3 emergency was declared, five concurrent Level 3 emergencies were already stretching WFP's ability to field appropriately skilled staff through its emergency roster.¹⁵ Temporary duty assignments were often highly effective but were nevertheless compromised by a lack of continuity and handover arrangements.

44. Long-term international staff were reluctant to be based in the northeast due to insecurity, poor living conditions and changes in United Nations allowances for hardship postings. Consequently, there was a reliance on consultants, some of whom had no experience with WFP processes or corporate guidance. There were frequent leadership changes in the country office, with no fewer than three emergency coordinators, three country directors and two deputy country directors. This had a significant impact on the development of a strategic vision and programmatic oversight.

45. Recruitment of national staff took several months, complicated by strict – albeit appropriate – due diligence requirements. As Nigeria did not have a history of humanitarian operations, many applicants lacked emergency expertise, with a consequent need for training and induction.

46. The country office worked hard to establish partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including international and national non-governmental organizations, as well as other United Nations entities and international organizations. In the early stages of the operation a lack of staff familiarity with WFP corporate systems resulted in delays in the signing of partner agreements and insufficient assessment of partner capacity.

47. WFP engaged with a wide range of coordination mechanisms at both the federal and state government levels. Coordination responsibilities in the Government were unclear, however, especially

¹⁴ Famine Early Warning Systems Network. 2016. *Famine risk in northern and central Borno State*.

https://fews.net/sites/default/files/documents/reports/FEWS%20NET%20Borno%20%20Analysis_20161213release.pdf.

¹⁵ For Iraq, South Sudan, Southern Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

in 2015, and overlapped with those of multiple institutions tasked with national- and state-level emergency coordination.

48. WFP worked closely on training and policy processes with the Government of Nigeria, under a memorandum of understanding with the National Emergency Management Agency and in close liaison with the State Emergency Management Agency and federal and state ministries responsible for health and agriculture. This covered the principles of cash-based transfers, beneficiary registration, food supply chain management, food basket composition, food security and vulnerability assessment, food security assessment and data analysis.¹⁶ WFP also worked closely with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and the National Bureau of Statistics on food security assessments and technical support for the cadre harmonisé. The WFP nutrition team also worked with the Federal Ministry of Health and the United Nations Children's Fund on activities related to the revision of the protocol for community-based management of acute malnutrition to include moderate acute malnutrition treatment and prevention, with a draft protocol under discussion at the time of the evaluation field mission.

49. While these capacity strengthening activities were well received and relevant, interviewees pointed to missed opportunities in building government capacity for preparedness and emergency response more holistically. Capacity strengthening outputs seem to have been mostly ad-hoc, with no monitoring of outcomes.

50. Humanitarian access has increased considerably but still remains heavily constrained. This led to the roll-out of a humanitarian country team access strategy and civil-military coordination guidance in 2018. At the time of the evaluation, WFP was working on the development of a WFP-specific access strategy for Nigeria.

51. WFP's Nigeria operations, including the emergency operation and common services support, were relatively well resourced. Contributory factors included the provision of information on the severity of the crisis, packaging Nigeria as part of the "four famines" appeal at the global level and declaring a Level 3 emergency. A humanitarian conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad region held in Oslo in February 2017 further focused attention.¹⁷ Appropriate use was made of a variety of internal advance funding mechanisms to both kick-start operations and smooth the flow of multilateral funds.

52. Several stakeholders contended that prior to 2015 there had been limited political will in the Government to support the population in the northeast and that this had contributed to the delayed start-up of the response. A change of government following elections in 2015, complemented by international advocacy, subsequently created the conditions in which humanitarian operations could be conducted.

Conclusions

53. The ability of WFP to scale up from zero to a million beneficiaries in northeast Nigeria by the end of 2016 is impressive and is credibly associated with food security improvements. WFP failed to bring operations to scale before famine-like conditions had already occurred, however, despite early warning of the deteriorating food and nutrition situation.

54. The effective scale up was underpinned by the efficient recruiting of a large complement of national staff and an effective supply chain and logistics operation. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, emergency telecommunications and logistics common services were universally appreciated and widely seen as essential to humanitarian access. WFP analytical services were effective in undertaking needs assessment and protection and risk analysis.

55. The rapid scale up led to challenges in beneficiary targeting, the choice of cash transfer delivery mechanisms, gender analysis and gender-sensitive programming. While some quality trade-offs are

¹⁶ WFP standard project report, 2016.

<https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/48fac7ec50db4b428a750ea9e929152a/download/>.

¹⁷ Reliefweb. 2017. *Oslo humanitarian conference for Nigeria and the Lake Chad region raises \$672 million to help people in need*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/oslo-humanitarian-conference-nigeria-and-lake-chad-region-raises-672-million-help>.

understandable in the context of the rapid scale up of a major operation from scratch, what is less understandable is the length of time taken to implement corrective measures.

56. Frequent changes in senior leadership at the country level coupled with unclear responsibilities and reporting lines for staff in the Maiduguri and Abuja offices resulted in an overall lack of programmatic oversight and at times compromised credibility with donors. There was a lack of continuity and handover by temporary duty staff and some key positions were filled by relatively inexperienced staff. Conversely, many of the functional areas where WFP performed best were led by experienced staff who were appointed early and have remained in post.

57. In common with the United Nations response as a whole, WFP has struggled to adhere to humanitarian principles. A lack of leadership and commitment undermined a neutral, impartial and operationally independent humanitarian response. While absolute adherence to the principles is not always practical and trade-offs may be inevitable, decisions do not appear to have been made strategically and coherently among humanitarian agencies.

58. The complexity and scale of the food security crisis in northeast Nigeria requires a response that effectively draws together the contributions of multiple government, international and non-governmental entities. While there were many specific examples of WFP participating in multi-agency action during the period evaluated, there are important opportunities to further develop and strengthen coordination and partnership approaches.

59. Increasing attention to the role of WFP in strengthening the capacity of national institutions has not yet been matched by investment in staff capacities, resources or guidance. Capacity strengthening support has remained ad-hoc and no proper assessment of the capacity of Nigerian institutions has been conducted; nor has a plan been developed to support the goal of supporting national ownership of the response. There has been limited progress in building national capacity and accountability.

60. Looking ahead, there is a need for a more robust approach to ensuring that beneficiaries are either moved to government support or provided with sustainable livelihood opportunities or other avenues for self-reliance. A primary programmatic approach of achieving transition through household-level livelihood interventions is of doubtful effectiveness under the current circumstances.

61. Despite considerable achievements, large gaps in the overall humanitarian response remain in the areas of food assistance, nutrition support and livelihood recovery. Given the continuing high rates of food insecurity and the highly unpredictable security situation, life-saving assistance is a continuing priority. WFP should advocate vigorously for these needs to be met in full and general food assistance should be maintained, given the highly unpredictable and fluid security situation.

Recommendations

62. The following seven recommendations are derived from the evaluation findings and conclusions and were informed by an evaluation workshop in April 2019. Some call for action at the corporate level, while others are to be addressed by the regional bureau and country office.

No	Issue	Recommendation	Responsibility
1	WFP should enhance coverage of, and preparedness plans for, major emergencies in countries where WFP does not have a presence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review the responsibilities for, and coverage by regional bureaux of, countries where WFP does not have a presence. b) Consider posting WFP “antenna” staff in countries where WFP does not have a presence identified as being at risk of food security crises. c) Develop and regularly update scenario-based contingency plans for expanding WFP’s footprint in countries where WFP does not have a presence. d) Consider developing short papers on key lessons from past operations in similar contexts to aid the start-up of responses. 	Headquarters/(OSE), in conjunction with the regional bureau
2	WFP should strengthen corporate capacity to rapidly deploy sufficiently experienced staff to lead and manage the in-country emergency response on a sustained basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Urgently develop a pool of qualified and trained leadership staff available for medium- to long-term deployments in Level 3 emergencies, including as emergency coordinators, heads of programme, country directors and deputy country directors. a) Review and revise the guidelines for adding candidates to the emergency roster. b) Review arrangements for effective handover from outgoing temporary duty staff and temporary duty replacements and long-term staff. c) Institutionalize arrangements for the rapid onboarding of national staff through predefinition of mandatory training and induction packages, specifically on core corporate tools, including the COMET and the Logistics Execution Support System. 	Headquarters/(OSE)

No	Issue	Recommendation	Responsibility
3	WFP should strengthen support for country offices in planning, delivering and reporting on capacity strengthening for national institutions in emergencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Position capacity strengthening more prominently and develop a corporate resource mobilization strategy. b) Follow up on the recommendations of the strategic evaluation of the WFP Policy on Capacity Development (2009).¹⁸ c) Appoint a focal point within regional bureaux and country offices to support the implementation of the WFP capacity development policy. d) In partnership with other entities, develop a coordinated capacity strengthening strategy for Nigeria. 	Headquarters/(OSZ), country office
4	WFP should maintain a core strategic focus on addressing the immediate needs of affected populations in northeast Nigeria, in line with the CSP commitment to provide life-saving emergency assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clearly advocate the provision of sufficient food and nutrition assistance, in coordination with partners, to meet assessed needs. b) Provide a clear and transparent line of sight between the total number of people assessed as requiring food and nutrition assistance and WFP's own operational planning figures. c) Revise the current plans for transition to livelihood support in line with a careful contextual analysis. d) Coordinate with government, development and community partners in producing a strategy for transition from a Level 3 emergency response to livelihood support. 	Country office

¹⁸ WFP Office of Evaluation. 2017. *WFP Policy on Capacity Development: An Update on Implementation (2009)*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfps-capacity-development-policy-policy-evaluation-terms-reference>.

No	Issue	Recommendation	Responsibility
5	WFP should appropriately promote the application of humanitarian principles and equal access to food and nutrition assistance, in line with the CSP commitment to a principled approach to gaining and maintaining humanitarian access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop and disseminate practical corporate guidance for senior field staff on the application of corporate policies on humanitarian principles and access. b) In coordination with other United Nations entities in Nigeria, contribute to training on the application of humanitarian principles. c) Complete the WFP access strategy, aligned with the Humanitarian country team access strategy. d) Define responsibilities and establish capacities for integrating humanitarian principles and access into programme operations in the Nigeria country office. 	Headquarters (OS/OSZ), regional bureau, country office
6	WFP should reinforce efforts to mainstream gender in programme activities and build partnerships to deliver on the CSP commitment to strengthen gender transformative programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Appoint a full-time gender officer, with a clear separation of functions from protection. b) Develop a country-level gender baseline and action plan. 	Country office
7	WFP should clarify and improve its targeting approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop a communication strategy for improving the exchange of information on targeting approaches. b) Review, revise and develop corporate policies and guidance on the targeting of food assistance, including acceptable verification thresholds and targeting errors for both inclusion and exclusion errors. 	Country office, Headquarters (VAM)

Abbreviations: OS = Operations Services Department; OSE = Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division; OSZ = Policy and Programme Division; VAM = Vulnerability Analysis Unit.

1. Introduction

1.1 Evaluation Features

Rationale and objectives

1. The World Food Programme (WFP) Office of Evaluation (OEV) has commissioned this evaluation based on the WFP Evaluation Policy 2016-2021. This is the first evaluation of Nigeria since the formal establishment of a WFP in-country presence in 2016. The evaluation spans the operations conducted between March 2016 and November 2018.¹⁹ It also includes an analysis of strategic decision making from the start of 2015.
2. The full terms of reference (ToR) for this evaluation are included as Annex A and state that evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning, to:
 - Assess the relevance/appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence (internal and external), coverage, coordination, connectedness, as well as the performance and results of response in northeast (NE) Nigeria (accountability)
 - Determine the reasons for observed results and draw lessons to inform WFP management decisions with respect to strategic positioning, efficiency and sustainability (learning).
3. The evaluation addresses three key evaluation questions:
 - i. How appropriate was the design and delivery of the emergency response to the needs of the food insecure population, including the distinct needs of women, men, boys and girls from different groups?
 - ii. To what extent were beneficiary needs covered over time?
 - iii. Why and how has the emergency response produced the observed results?
4. The immediate users of the evaluation findings and recommendations include WFP country offices, the Regional Bureau for Central and West Africa (the regional bureau in Dakar (RBD)), headquarters (HQ) technical units and senior management, and the Executive Board (EB), the Federal Government of Nigeria and other national authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors and the United Nations (UN) Country Team.
5. Corporately it offers an opportunity for learning, relevant to the establishment of an in-country presence, at scale, in a complex operating environment. It also provides insights to the regional bureau in Dakar and the Nigeria country office as it starts the implementation of the first country strategic plan (CSP) in line with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals.

Methodology

6. The evaluation methodology is set out in full in the inception report and summarized in Annex C.
7. The evaluation was undertaken by the independent Office of Evaluation together with an external evaluation team. The evaluation team consisted of Nick Maunder (Team Leader), Sophie Dunn (emergency preparedness and response, nutrition and food security), Mariangela Bizzarri (gender and protection), Volker Huls (logistics and supply chain, common services), Marte Hurlen (Research Analyst) and Oxford Policy Management (OPN) Nigeria (focus group discussions with affected populations). It was managed by the Office of Evaluation (Gabrielle Duffy and Yaver Sayyed).
8. The three main evaluation questions were broken down into eight sub-evaluation questions in an evaluation matrix (Annex D). The sources of evidence drawn on by the evaluation included a large-scale document review (including policies, guidance and evaluations and documents authored by WFP and other stakeholders, needs and context assessments, monitoring reports, and budgets and financial reports), key informant interviews in Abuja, Borno and Yobe States and international offices, focus group discussions with

¹⁹ Standard project report (SPR) data on results is included until December 2018.

affected populations, and direct observation of WFP operations in Maidaguri and Damaturu, in northeast Nigeria. The bibliography is provided in Annex G and the list of stakeholders consulted in Annex H.

9. The evaluation framework is multifaceted. Firstly, the evaluation was framed by the norms and standards set out in corporate policies, strategies and guidance materials. The L3 activation protocols provided a key point of reference to the evaluation. As an evaluation of the WFP corporate response to the L3 crisis in northeast Nigeria, the evaluation not only assessed the actions of the country offices, but also the respective roles of the regional bureau in Dakar and headquarter units. In addition to the L3 specific guidance, the evaluation is cognizant of the large body of corporate guidance which implicitly shape the design and implementation of WFP operations. Moreover, logical frameworks drawn from project documents and other relevant sources²⁰ were central to evaluating the scope and linkages of expected actions, results, and effects identified, as well as the planning and results of the response. Contribution analysis was used to map out the pathways from interventions to results and timeline construction was deployed to map out and analyse strategic decision-making in the dynamic environment.

10. The evaluation placed a strong emphasis on the integration of gender and protection issues in its design. This is reflected in: embedding gender- and protection-related questions into enquiry tools (analytical frameworks, interview and focus group tools); ensuring that the methodology contains a gender-sensitive approach (for example, separate focus groups for women); and committing to embedding gender and protection concerns into analysis and reporting.

11. Given WFP accountability to affected population commitments, the evaluation methodology included a focus on affected people throughout the evaluation process and included strong qualitative data-collection methods to inform relevant evaluation questions. Information from affected populations, both internally displaced and host, was systematically captured and analysed. This included the perspectives of affected populations, both beneficiaries in different activities and non-beneficiaries, and the views of both women and men. Oxford Policy Management Nigeria was recruited to organize focus group discussions (FGDs) in different locations and provided a team of local consultants with diverse local language skills and knowledge.

12. The evaluation adopted a systematic approach to analysis, ensuring validity and transparency in the relationship between findings, conclusions and recommendations. Triangulation methods included: (i) different team members exploring the same aspect of the evaluation to ensure that findings are fully endorsed by all team members; (ii) the use of more than one method to explore each aspect of the evaluation, and (iii) the use of multiple sources and types of data. Moreover, the use of structured tools ensured that findings are directly traceable to evidence, while any tensions or contradictions within the evidence are transparently recorded. Validation took place through dialogue with key stakeholders throughout the evaluative process.

13. The evaluation drew heavily on secondary qualitative and quantitative data through comprehensive desk reviews. A comprehensive e-library was compiled, which includes WFP corporate policies and strategies related to the response, relevant evaluations and audits, as well as a range of project documents. Data were compiled from relevant databases and disaggregated as far as possible by sex, age group and other relevant groupings (including people with disabilities).

14. Information from international, regional, national and state level stakeholders was collected through semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs). All key informant interviews were treated as confidential. Stakeholders interviewed include WFP staff from headquarters, the regional bureau in Dakar, Nigeria country and area offices, NGOs and INGOs, cooperating partners, donors and representatives of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

15. To ensure uptake and operationalization of the evaluation, WFP stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft terms of reference, inception and evaluation reports. Regular workshops and briefings were held to ensure WFP stakeholders' strong and continued engagement in the process. Inception visits were conducted in Rome, Dakar and Nigeria in October 2018. The main evaluation field mission to the WFP country and area offices took place over three weeks in November and December 2018. This incorporated a

²⁰ Such as the Report of the External Auditor on the scale-up and scale-down of resources in emergency operations. Executive Board, Annual Session, Rome, 18–22 June 2018.

week of visits to Borno and Yobe States (Annex B) and a presentation of preliminary findings to the country office and staff from the Office of Evaluation and the regional bureau in Dakar.

16. Some limitations were experienced by the evaluation. The major constraint related to limited data availability, especially from the period at the start of operations in 2016 when systems were still being established, as well as challenges accessing disaggregated budget data for cost efficiency analysis. In most areas livelihoods activities were still only in the planning phase, limiting the ability to evaluate these activities. However, these limitations did not compromise the overall validity of the evaluation.

1.2 Country and Sub-Regional (Lake Chad Basin) Contexts

Political economy

17. Nigeria has a population of 184 million and an annual population growth rate of 2.7 percent.²¹ It has been classified as a lower-middle income economy since 2008,²² and ranked as Africa's largest economy in 2016.²³ However, the pace of economic growth has slowed down since 2015 due to the falling price of the primary export, oil. Nigeria's federated structure gives significant autonomy to its States.

18. In the 2015 human development index (HDI), Nigeria was ranked low at 152 out of 188 countries, with a gender development index (GDI) of 0.85.²⁴ Persistent inequality is evident (Gini-coefficient of 43.0),²⁵ with more than half the population living in poverty. Core development indicators are given in Annex I. Poverty is most severe in the Northeast and Northwest geo-political zones, with rates of 77.7 percent and 76.3 percent respectively.²⁶ These zones are characterized by marginalization and chronic underdevelopment, illiteracy and youth unemployment and two thirds of the population have no schooling.²⁷ Approximately 13.5 percent of Nigeria's population reside in northeast Nigeria, which comprises the States of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe.²⁸

19. The main livelihoods for people in northeast Nigeria are agriculture-related, with households engaging in farming and livestock rearing as their main source of income.²⁹ Climate change is associated with increasingly unpredictable weather, more frequent droughts and floods and land degradation.³⁰ Traditional socio-cultural gender roles, lower levels of education, and exclusion from social and political decision-making rendered women in the Lake Chad Basin vulnerable even before the current crisis.³¹ Traditional systems of land tenure meant that women had less access to productive resources.

20. Since 2009, violent attacks on civilians by non-state armed groups, typified by the Islamic State in West Africa, (formerly known as Boko Haram until March 2015 and before that as Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad), have caused massive displacement of people in the largely arid Lake Chad Basin, where four countries share borders, namely Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. It is estimated that more than 20,000 people have been killed in northeast Nigeria during the current crisis.³²

21. The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) tracking of the displacement in northeast Nigeria started in late 2014. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) rose to a peak of 1.65 million

²¹ Worldbank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW> (2015 data).

²² Worldbank Country and Lending Groups, <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>.

²³ IMF, World Economic Outlook - October 2016.

²⁴ Human Development Report 2016.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Press briefing by the Statistician-General of the Federation/Chief Executive Officer, National Bureau of Statistics, Monday, 13th February 2012.

²⁷ Nigeria DHS EdData Survey 2010; Education Data for Decision-Making.

²⁸ Nigerian Senate, May 2015. Concept Note: North East Development Commission <http://adamawacentral.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/North-East-Development-Commission-Bill.pdf>.

²⁹ FAO (2016) Nigeria Food Security and Vulnerability Survey Report. November 2016.

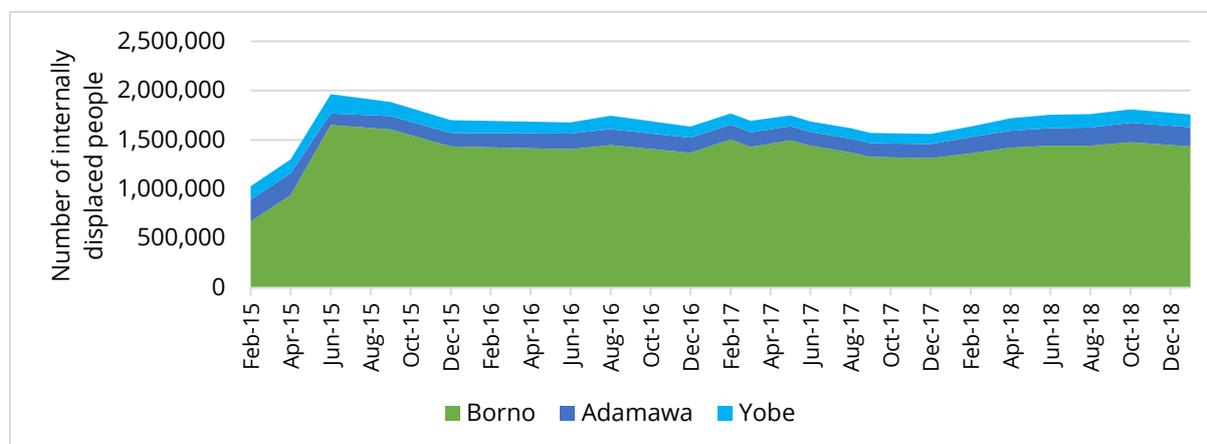
³⁰ OCHA 2017 Sahel 2018: Overview of Humanitarian Needs and Requirements https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HNRO_Sahel-2017-EN_1.pdf.

³¹ World Food Programme, (WFP), Gender and Markets: VAM Case Study – Lake Chad Basin. August 2016.

³² OCHA, 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan Nigeria - December 2017; International Organization for Migration (IOM), DTM Nigeria | Baseline Dashboard - Round XXI - Feb 2018.

by June 2015 in Borno State alone (Figure 1). By May 2016, Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, was home to an estimated 1.4 million internally displaced persons, with most living among host communities.³³ Others have fled northeast Nigeria into Cameroon, Chad and Niger, albeit in relatively low numbers.

Figure 1: Number of displaced people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States (February 2015–August 2018)



Source: IOM DMT 2015-2018.

22. There are an estimated 6,000 unaccompanied minors and 15,000 orphans in northeast Nigeria, while the number of households headed by women is on the rise due to family separation and ranges between 30-54 percent in 2018.³⁴ Unsafe conditions in displacement sites, insecurity and patterns of sexual exploitation and abuse are common. A study conducted in 2016 found that six in ten women in northeast Nigeria have experienced some form of gender-based violence (GBV).³⁵ Women’s dependency on firewood collection exposes them to the risk of attacks and sexual violence³⁶ and they are also vulnerable to transactional sex for food and non-food needs. Men and boys are also subject to abduction and forced recruitment by both non-state armed groups and the security forces.

Food and nutrition security

23. Even before the conflict, the Northeast zone experienced extremely high rates of malnutrition (Figure 2). Global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates were consistently close to, or above, the 15 percent emergency threshold, and above the severe acute malnutrition (SAM) emergency threshold of 2 percent. Multiple contributory causes of malnutrition have been cited, including: poor infant and young child feeding practices; low levels of micronutrient supplementation; lack of access to water and sanitation; endemic disease; poor coverage and quality of health facilities; and limited education.^{37 38}

³³ WFP & FEWNET (2016) Emergency Food Security Assessment – Maiduguri. Data from May 2016.

³⁴ 2017 (OCHA) “Humanitarian Response Plan 2018 Nigeria”.

³⁵ 2018 Nigeria Humanitarian Response Plan, Statement by the Minister for Budget and Planning.

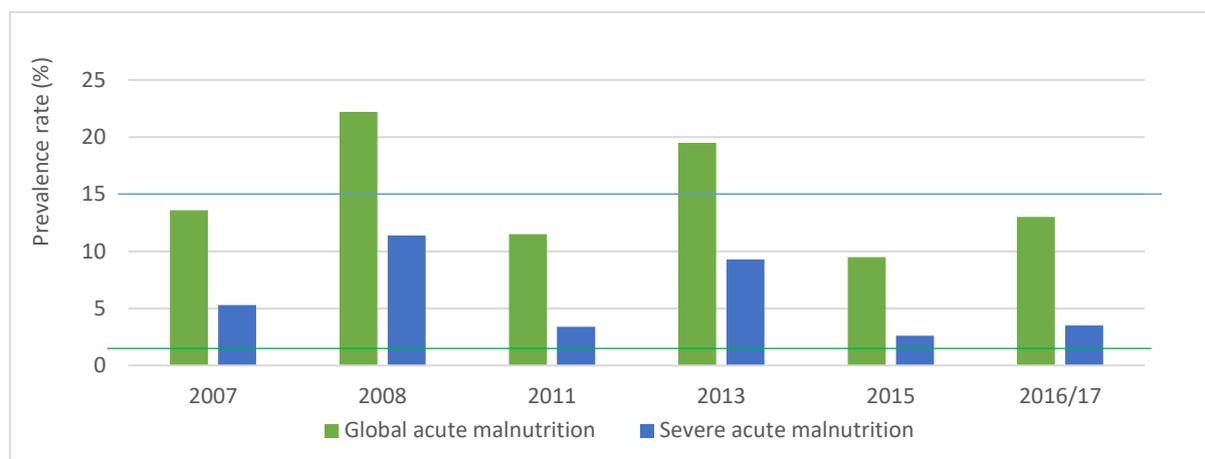
³⁶ WFP, 2017, Nigeria-Konduga, Joint Rapid Assessment.

<https://www.wfp.org/content/nigeria-konduga-joint-rapid-assessment-september-2017>.

³⁷ Amare, M. et al (2017) Study of the determinants of chronic malnutrition in northern Nigeria: Quantitative evidence from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Surveys. IFPRI Nigeria. Strategy Support Programme. Working Paper 45. September 2017.

³⁸ UNICEF (2017) Nutrition in Emergency Sector Response Plan/Strategy Nigeria 2017-2018.

Figure 2: Rates of acute malnutrition in children under 5 years in northeast Nigeria (2007-2017)



Source: Compiled from national surveys: MICS 2007, DHS 2008, MICS 2011, DHS 2013, NNHS 2015 and MICS 2016/2017.

24. In recent years, the conflict has worsened the food security and nutrition situation, with widespread loss of livelihoods and reduced access to essential social services.³⁹ The conflict has reduced the food security of both internally displaced persons and host communities⁴⁰ as farmland has become inaccessible, irrigation material destroyed and animals looted. Food prices have increased, and labour wage rates fallen. Other contributors to severe food insecurity include below-average crop production and a financial crisis linked to local currency depreciation.⁴¹

25. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) Food Security Outlook Updates have identified civil insecurity-related food insecurity in northeast Nigeria since February 2012.⁴² By January 2014, FEWSNET warned that households in Borno and Yobe States were in Crisis (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3)⁴³ and in April 2015, FEWSNET predicted that the areas worst affected by conflict would begin to experience Emergency (IPC Phase 4). A December 2016 report argued that a famine had already occurred in Bama local government area (LGA) and that was probably ongoing in other parts of Borno State.⁴⁴

26. The regional framework for consensual analysis of food insecurity, Cadre Harmonisé (CH), was established in Nigeria with support from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in late 2015. By October 2016, the Cadre Harmonisé analysis confirmed a very severe food insecurity and nutrition situation in Borno State, projecting the population in Famine (IPC Phase 5) would increase from 55,000 to 115,000 people by the following year (June-August 2017).⁴⁵ Figure 3 provides an overall summary of the total population numbers classified in IPC Phases 3 and 4-5 across Borno and Yobe States from late 2015 to December 2018.

³⁹ UNDP (2017) Business case assessment for accelerating development investments in famine response and prevention. Case study: northeast Nigeria.

⁴⁰ Save the Children (2017) Displaced and host community livelihoods and food security, Borno State, Nigeria. HEA Urban Baseline Report. May 2017. USAID.

⁴¹ <http://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/featured-stories/news-details/en/c/1134723>.

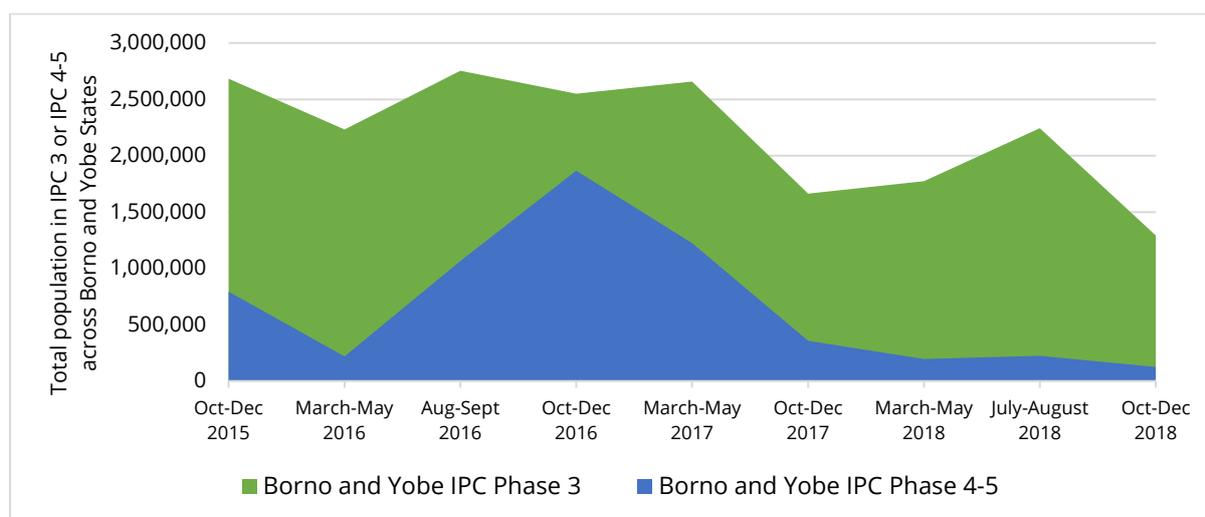
⁴² FEWSNET (2012) Nigeria Market Assessment Summary: Localized food insecurity in the extreme north as civil insecurity persists in the north. February 2012.

⁴³ FEWSNET (2014) Nigeria Food Security Outlook: Crisis food insecurity in the NE. January – June 2014.

⁴⁴ FEWSNET (2016) Famine risk in northern and central Borno State. A Famine likely occurred in Bama LGA and may be ongoing in inaccessible areas of Borno State. 13th December 2016.

⁴⁵ FAO (2016) Cadre Harmonisé for Identifying Risk Areas and Vulnerable Populations in Sixteen (16) States of Nigeria. Results of analysis of current (October–December 2016) and projected (June-August 2017) situations of acute food and nutrition insecurity. 28th October 2016.

Figure 3: Population classified as IPC Phases 3-5 (October 2015–July/August 2018)



Source: Cadre Harmonisé data October 2015–Dec 2018.

27. FEWSNET’s latest projections indicate that much of the Northeast is likely to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3!)⁴⁶ until at least May 2019⁴⁷ and large parts of Borno State are likely to experience Emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) as the military offensives continue, resulting in ongoing displacement. The conflict is also still severely restricting agricultural production, with the 2018 harvest season expected to be below average.⁴⁸

28. The Nigeria nutrition in emergency working group undertook a large-scale nutrition survey in October/November 2016 together with the National Bureau of Statistics and multiple other government agencies. The survey found an overall prevalence of global acute malnutrition of 11.4 percent in Yobe State, 11.3 percent in Borno State, and 5.6 percent in Adamawa State, with several local government areas having much higher rates.⁴⁹ Displaced women were found to lack access to health care, family planning, and reproductive health services. Women and girls were reducing their food intake, with negative repercussions for their nutrition and health — especially when women are pregnant or lactating, leading to increased nutritional needs for themselves and their children.⁵⁰ In June 2016, the Ministry of Health (MoH) declared a state of nutrition emergency in Borno State calling for urgent life-saving humanitarian assistance in newly accessible areas. The most recent nutrition surveys from Borno State (August/September 2018)^{51 52} continued to find high rates of acute malnutrition, above the global and severe acute malnutrition emergency thresholds. High numbers of newly arrived children from previously inaccessible areas are being diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition, highlighting concern for areas that remain inaccessible to the humanitarian community.

⁴⁶ Phase 3! means Classified as IPC Phase 3 but likely to be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance.

⁴⁷ FEWSNET (2018) Nigeria Food Security Outlook Update. Assistance needs remain high as the main harvest concludes. December 2018.

⁴⁸ FEWSNET (2018) Nigeria Food Security Outlook: Elevated food security outcomes persist again in 2018 in the Northeast during the harvest season. October 2018–May 2019. October 2018.

⁴⁹ Nutrition in Emergency working group (2016) Nigeria Nutrition in Emergency Sector Strategic Response Plan 2017–2018.

⁵⁰ WFP, Empowering Women in West African Markets: Case Study of Street Food Vendors in Maiduguri, Nigeria, VAM Gender and Markets Study #9 2017.

⁵¹ Save the Children (2018) Nutrition and mortality survey report. Borno State, Nigeria. Final Report. August 2018.

⁵² UNICEF et al (2018) Nutrition and food security surveillance: Bama Emergency SMART Survey. Final Report. September 2018.

Government policies and programmes

29. Key national policies include:
- i. The National Disaster Response Plan (2002) and the accompanying National Disaster Management Framework outlines the mandate of the National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA) and the State Emergency Management Authority (SEMA) for leadership of humanitarian response at federal and state levels respectively.
 - ii. The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020) prioritizes agriculture and food security and provides government commitment to funding social safety nets.
 - iii. The countrywide National Social Investment Programme focuses on job creation, home-grown school feeding, and cash transfers to the vulnerable.
 - iv. The new National Social Protection Policy indicates plans for scaling-up the existing social investment programmes in Nigeria including those using cash-based transfers (CBT).
 - v. The Agricultural Sector Food Security and Nutrition Strategy (2016-2025)⁵³ includes nutrition-sensitive interventions in agriculture, social protection, and education, and the provision of locally processed nutritious foods to children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and girls.
 - vi. The 2013 National Policy on Food and Nutrition in Nigeria and the National Strategic Plan of Action for Nutrition (2014-2019) provides the framework for interventions on food and nutrition security.
 - vii. The National Policy on Infant and Young Child Feeding in Nigeria (2010)⁵⁴ promotes a prevention approach to nutrition.
 - viii. The Buhari Plan⁵⁵ managed by the Presidential Committee on the Northeast Initiative is the guiding document for all interventions in the region and the Government's blueprint for humanitarian relief.
30. NEMA has been leading humanitarian assistance efforts through the provision of humanitarian aid, food and non-food items, in both camps and within host communities, registration and monitoring of internally displaced persons and emergency medical services. The Government has sole responsibility for wet feeding at registration centres for newly arrived internally displaced persons. However, it was not possible to find information on the amount and location of assistance provided. Other government ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoA) and the Ministry of Health participate in the emergency response and food and nutrition security analysis.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women

31. Nigeria adopted a National Gender Policy in 2006 to address the systematic inequalities between men and women, prioritize the empowerment of women for gender equality, and seek balanced gender relations. This was followed by an implementation plan for the period 2008-2013. The Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development developed a new national gender policy that awaits validation and seeks to address five specific policy priority areas.⁵⁶ The 2016 Buhari Plan lists women and youth empowerment among the 10 pillars for economic development.⁵⁷

Coordination fora

32. Nigeria coordination structures include national mechanisms managing the relationships with the humanitarian community, and state structures acting primarily at the operational level. NEMA has the responsibility to coordinate humanitarian assistance at federal level, along with the Ministry of Budget and Planning, and the Presidential Committee on the Northeast Initiative (PCNI). SEMA coordinates at state level. Coordination groups include protection, gender-based violence prevention and child protection sectors at

⁵³ Federal Government of Nigeria (2016) Agricultural Sector Food Security and Nutrition Strategy (2016-2025). Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

⁵⁴ Federal Government of Nigeria (2010) National Policy on Infant and Young Child Feeding in Nigeria. Department of Family Health, Abuja. November 2010.

⁵⁵ Federal Government of Nigeria (2016). Rebuilding the Northeast. The Buhari Plan Volumes I-IV. Presidential Committee on the Northeast Initiative. June 2016.

⁵⁶ WFP, 2018, Nigeria Country Strategic Plan, gender comments.

⁵⁷ PCNI, 2016, The Buhari Plan Volume III.

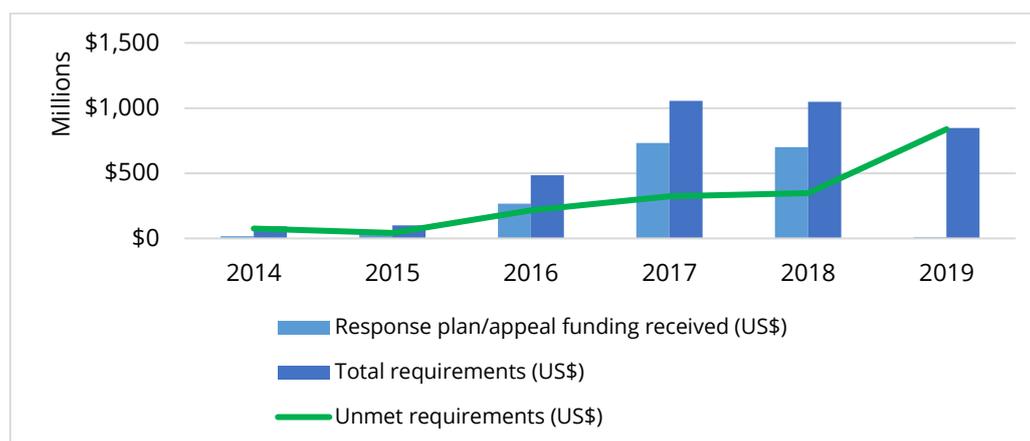
federal level, with technical level working groups at state level; and community engagement (formerly called accountability to affected population) and access working groups at state levels. WFP is mandated to lead the food security (in conjunction with FAO), logistics, and emergency telecommunication sectors. There are currently two coordination structures specifically on gender, both of which have been recently reactivated: The Development Partners Group on Gender and a United Nations-specific gender theme group headed by UN Women.

33. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)-led Civil-Military coordination (CMCoord) mechanism regulates the relationships between the Nigerian military and humanitarian organizations. It serves as a channel for regular information sharing between the military and humanitarian organizations, including on protection challenges faced by the affected population, including issues of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) emanating from extended military operations.

Humanitarian assistance

34. United Nations agencies, including WFP, coordinate their response under the Nigeria humanitarian response plans (HRP) which have been produced since 2014. The humanitarian response plans consolidated the appeal for humanitarian assistance under a number of strategic objectives, with the three objectives for 2018 being: i) lifesaving assistance, ii) protection and iii) resilience/early recovery. The total appeal and funding provided is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Trends in annual humanitarian response plan appeals and funding (million USD)

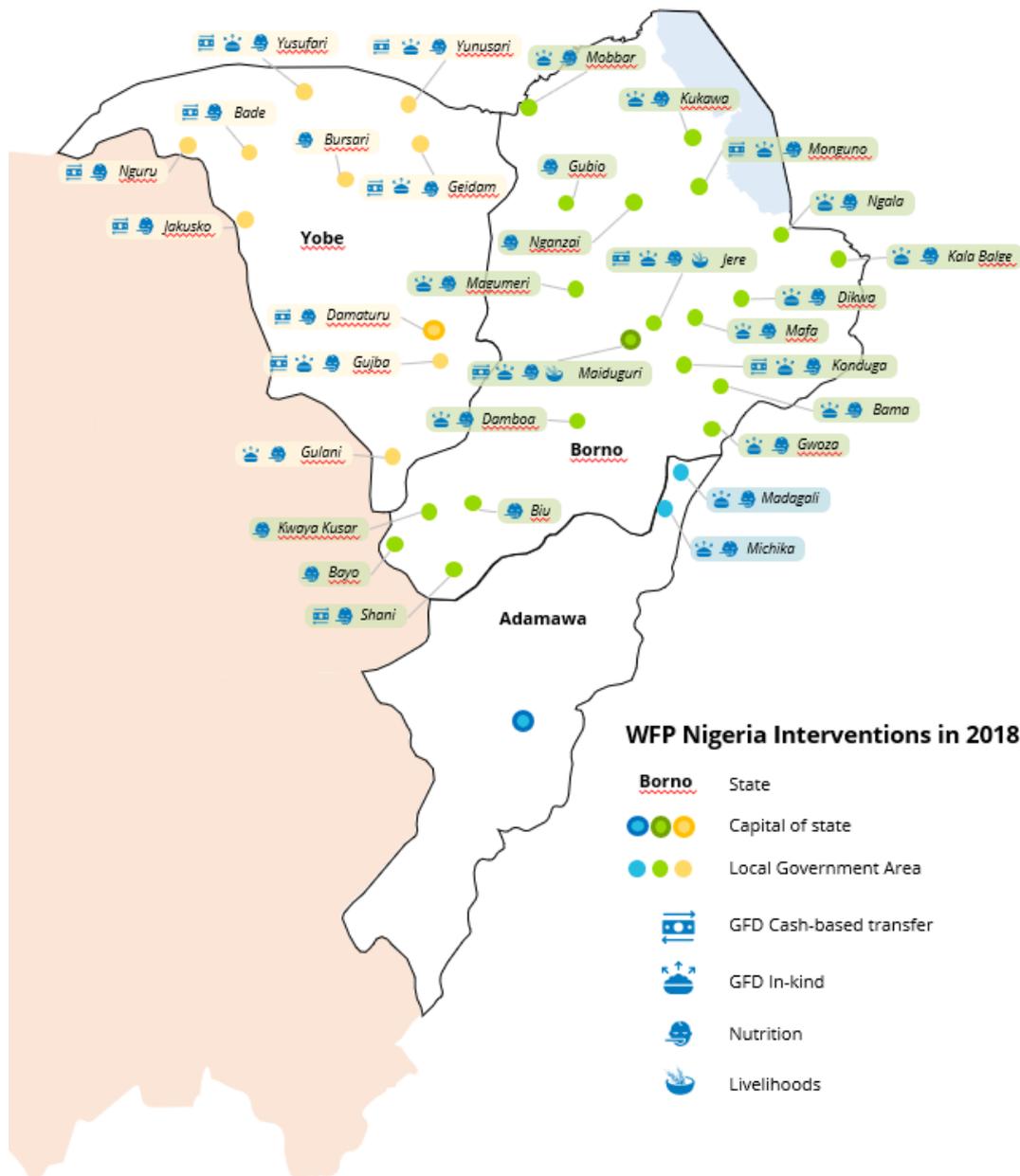


Source: OCHA Financial Tracking Service (downloaded 7 February 2019).

1.3 The WFP emergency response in northeast Nigeria

35. The operations included in the scope of the evaluation are the activities of the regional emergency operation (EMOP 200777) implemented in Nigeria, two special operations (SO 200834 and SO 201032), an immediate response EMOP (IR-EMOP 200969) and an immediate response preparation (IR-PREP 200965). The coverage of WFP activities in 2018 by local government area is shown in Figure 5 and for all years in Annex J. A summary of the key events in the evolution of the WFP portfolio in northeast Nigeria and further details for each WFP operation is provided in Annex K.

Figure 5: WFP Nigeria interventions in 2018



36. The initial strategy of WFP was to provide capacity to support a government-led response to the crisis. In September/October 2015 WFP deployed staff to Nigeria to work with NEMA. Capacity strengthening of NEMA was later extended to SEMA in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States, and focused on beneficiary registration, supply chain management, distributions and food basket composition. At national level, support also included conditional transfer mechanisms, food security, vulnerability and market analysis. Through this engagement it became clear that there were political, institutional and logistical constraints to a government-led large-scale food assistance operation.

37. This led WFP to implement a pilot cash-based transfer response to demonstrate that food assistance can be provided quickly even when there is limited logistic capacity. Planning for a pilot project started in November 2015, with the project to be implemented jointly between NEMA, WFP and IOM. The plan was to develop a common platform that would enable NEMA to manage a multi-sectoral humanitarian response⁵⁸

⁵⁸ WFP (2015) National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) – Integrated Beneficiary Assistance Management. Draft, 11 December 2015.

and provide a cash-based transfer response via mobile money transfers for 70,000 people in Borno and Yobe States starting in March 2016.

38. Following the request by the Government of Nigeria in April 2016 for scaling-up, WFP established its presence in-country and provided food and security assistance to 431,000 people in Borno and Yobe States through in-kind and cash-based transfer, and blanket supplementary feeding programmes (BSFP). Subsequent expansions to new areas were largely done through in-kind assistance due to unreliable markets and frustrations with the cash-based transfer system due to poor network coverage, inability to use phones, and illiteracy.⁵⁹ Budget Revision No. 9 introduced the use of electronic vouchers (e-vouchers) and the related roll-out of the complete SCOPE “end-to-end” system⁶⁰. SCOPE is the WFP beneficiary identify and benefit management system, incorporating registration, enrolling, crediting, redemption, reporting, payment and reconciliation.⁶¹

39. In June 2016, WFP joined the implementation of the Integrated Nutrition Programme (INP). The Integrated Nutrition Programme was designed to treat and support households with children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. WFP provided cash-based transfers to households receiving nutrition support from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and Action contre la Faim. The Integrated Nutrition Programme provided WFP with an opportunity to better understand the nutrition situation on the ground and promote linkages between severe and moderate acute malnutrition treatment. WFP has recently developed a concept note to pilot nutrition education messaging using social behaviour change communications and mobile vulnerability assessment and mapping (mVAM). The approach aims to help individuals and households to adopt nutrition-related practices such as improved diet and hygiene, and optimal infant and young child feeding and care practices.⁶²

40. WFP livelihood recovery activities commenced in October 2017, with a joint project between FAO and WFP providing seeds and cash-based transfers in areas of Borno State. Since then, two additional livelihood projects have been established. Cooperating partners (CPs) are responsible for the procurement and distribution of inputs, while WFP provides the cash-based transfer or in-kind food assistance.

41. Food security outcome monitoring (FSOM) started in November 2016⁶³ and regular programme outcome monitoring has been done in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics. The latest outcome monitoring in August 2018 was expanded to include a more in-depth livelihood and agricultural opportunities component (EFSOM).⁶⁴ Third-party monitors have been contracted to undertake process monitoring at WFP implementation sites, household level surveys for FSOM and qualitative data collection (focus group discussions with beneficiaries and beneficiary outreach monitoring). From January 2018, WFP has produced monthly monitoring bulletins that provide an overview of outputs, and report on all processes related to input support including complaints and feedback mechanisms and on-site monitoring.⁶⁵ The evaluation team understands that the cooperating partners also conduct regular process monitoring of the activities implemented as part of the WFP field level agreements (FLAs).

42. WFP has managed three common services on behalf of the humanitarian community. It has provided the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flight services, led the logistics and emergency telecommunications sectors (ETS) and co-led the food security sector,. These are detailed as follows:⁶⁶

- UNHAS flight operations commenced in May 2015 with a fixed wing service connecting Abuja and Maiduguri, due to the absence of reliable commercial options for this route.⁶⁷ In July 2016 a rotary

⁵⁹ WFP, 2017, Nigeria-Konduga, Joint Rapid Assessment.

⁶⁰ <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/7e86e5a6a70447aba713e3cd4e759d8d/download/>.

⁶¹ WFP, EMOP 200777 Budget Revision 06.17 No 9.

⁶² WFP (2108) mVAM for Nutrition: Social and Behaviour Change Communication for Strengthening Nutrition Programmes in Nigeria. Concept Note, July 2018.

⁶³ WFP (2016) WFP Nigeria Outcome Post-Distribution Monitoring Report. Borno and Yobe States. November 2016.

⁶⁴ WFP (2018) Nigeria: Expanded Food Security Outcome Monitoring. August 2018.

⁶⁵ Including food basket monitoring, delivery monitoring, warehouse monitoring, retailer monitoring and beneficiary outreach.

⁶⁶ The cluster system has not been activated in Nigeria and sectors are co-chaired between an international lead and the Government of Nigeria as co-lead.

⁶⁷ SO200834, subsequent budget revisions, WFP SitReps 2016-2018.

wing service was added to increase access to areas cleared by the Government.⁶⁸ This has now increased to four rotary wing craft which currently provide passenger and light cargo services to 11 locations in Borno State and one location in Yobe State.⁶⁹

- The emergency telecommunications sector under WFP co-leadership gradually expanded shared internet services in the humanitarian hubs, radio programming, radio training, and management of shared United Nation frequencies.⁷⁰
- The logistics sector was initially established to provide shared storage and UNHAS cargo handling services.⁷¹ At the end of 2018, the sector was managing eight common storage locations. United Nations agencies utilize approximately 25 percent of the logistic sector’s services with the remainder used by NGOs.⁷² An added responsibility has been handling military clearance requests for cargo movements by road on behalf of all humanitarian actors.

43. In line with corporate strategy, WFP Nigeria has prepared a national country strategic plan, drawing on a multi-stakeholder Zero Hunger Strategic Review. Building on the activities of the ongoing regional EMOP, and in line with the national priorities articulated in the Nigeria Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, and the various key government food security and nutrition-related plans, the country strategic plan defines the WFP role and engagement in Nigeria from 2019 to 2022.

Beneficiaries

44. Table 2 shows the planned beneficiaries broken down by age, sex, year and age. As more areas became accessible to the humanitarian community over time, the WFP operation expanded geographically from two local government areas in 2016 (Maiduguri and Jere in Borno State) to 27 local government areas in 2018 covering Borno, Yobe and parts of Adamawa States. As at September 2018, EMOP 200777.NG is targeting 2,087,119 beneficiaries, of whom 54 percent are women.

45. Planned food tonnage over time is shown in Table 1. The composition of the food basket changed over time - the two most significant changes were from rice to sorghum and millet in general food assistance (GFA) and from PlumpySup to Super Cereal plus for children’s BSFP, with the changes driven by cost considerations.

Table 1: Planned food tonnage EMOP 200777 (2016–2018)

EMOP 200777 Budget Revision No.	Date of budget revision	Planned food requirements (MT ⁷³)	Planning period ⁷⁴
1-5	Up to January 2016	0	n/a
6	June 2016	15,235	until 31 December 2016
7	August 2016	21,100	until 31 December 2016
8	January 2017	193,622	until 31 December 2017
9	June 2017	238,253	until 31 December 2017
12	December 2017	334,160	until 31 December 2018
14	July 2018	416,251	until 31 December 2018

Source: EMOP 200777 Budget revision documents 1-14.

⁶⁸ SO200834 Budget Revision No 3.

⁶⁹ UNHAS Nigeria at a Glance, January 2018.

⁷⁰ ETS SitReps 2016-2018, ETS working group minutes 2016-2018.

⁷¹ SO201032.

⁷² Interview 193.

⁷³ Metric ton..

⁷⁴ As per end date of the budget revision document.

Table 2: EMOP 200777: Planned beneficiaries by activity, sex, year and age (2016-2018)

EMOP 200777 Nigeria component - planned beneficiaries by year by sex by activity						
Activity	2016		2017		2018	
	Men/Boys	Women/Girls	Men/Boys	Women/Girls	Men/Boys	Women/Girls
GFA (In-kind food and CBT)	614,080	768,982	768,360	916,640	N/A	N/A
Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	638,400	761,600
Nutrition: Prevention of acute malnutrition - children (6-59 months)	234,766	237,600	157,141	157,770	117,436	117,908
Nutrition: Prevention of acute malnutrition - pregnant and lactating women	N/A	N/A	0	157,455	0	166,000
Livelihoods (food for assets)	N/A	N/A	58,560	91,440	N/A	N/A
Asset creation and livelihood support activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68,400	81,600
Total planned*	321,456	402,544	789,062	1,045,938	633,526	866,474

*Total planned beneficiary figures have been taken from SPRs. They were not calculated by summing the beneficiaries of the various activities, this to avoid double-counting.

N/A = not applicable. 1) Livelihoods activities and nutrition activities for PLW were not carried out in 2016. 2) The CRF introduced a change in some indicator names e.g. GFA to unconditional resource transfers; and livelihoods FFA to asset creation and livelihood support activities.

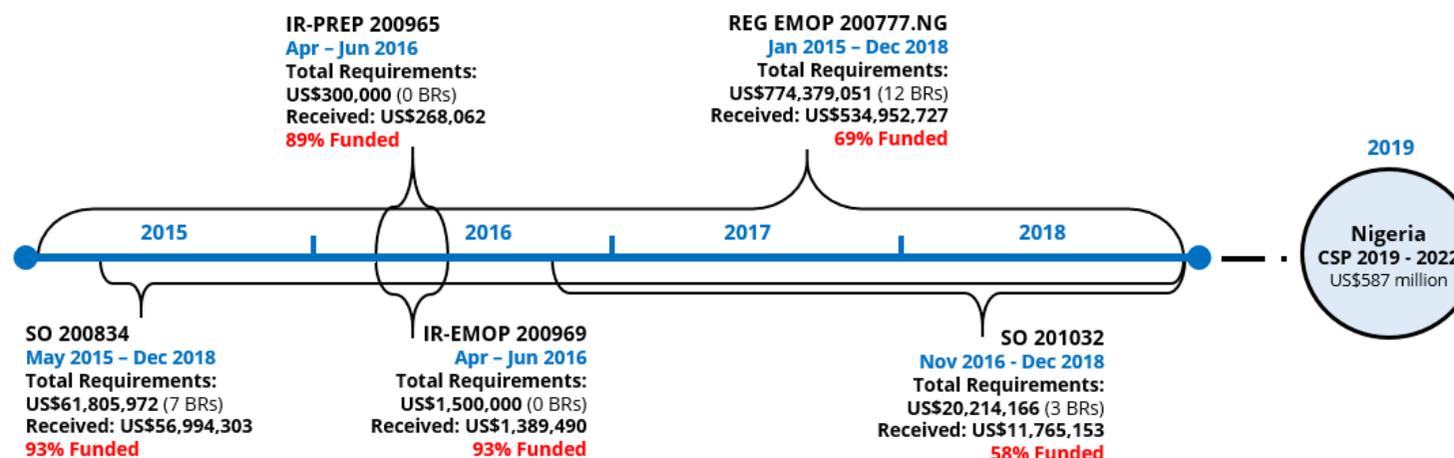
EMOP 200777 Nigeria component - planned beneficiaries by year by sex by age						
Beneficiary age group	2016		2017		2018	
	Men/Boys	Women/Girls	Men/Boys	Women/Girls	Men/Boys	Women/Girls
Children (under 5 years)	85,432	86,156	253,768	254,205	223,697	224,059
Children (5-18 years)	136,836	141,904	241,548	241,548	222,785	222,785
Adults (18 years plus)	99,188	174,484	293,746	550,185	187,044	419,630
Total planned	321,456	402,544	789,062	1,045,938	633,526	866,474

Source: WFP Nigeria SPRs 2016-2018. Please note that in 2018, WFP Nigeria transitioned from the strategic results framework to the corporate results framework. As such, reporting categories are slightly different in the 2018 SPR, which is reflected in the dataset.

Resource situation

46. The timeline and resource situation of the Nigeria operations is summarized in Figure 6.

Figure 6: WFP Nigeria timeline and resource situation



TOP 5 DONORS BY OPERATION 2016-2018					
EMOP 200777 - Nigeria Component		SO 200834		SO 201032	
Donor	Funding level	Donor	Funding level	Donor	Funding level
USA	\$251,111,221	United Kingdom	\$21,385,294	USA	\$4,000,527
United Kingdom	\$145,735,682	USA	\$13,500,000	Sweden	\$2,377,416
European Commission	\$34,790,733	European Commission	\$6,788,198	Germany	\$1,672,952
Germany	\$28,620,121	Germany	\$4,446,640	European Commission	\$1,435,334
Canada	\$16,467,920	Sweden	\$2,200,024	UN country-based pooled funds	\$827,002
Total requirements	\$774,379,051	Total requirements	\$58,231,370	Total requirements	\$20,214,166
Total received*	\$534,952,727	Total received	\$54,185,440	Total received*	\$11,765,153
% of Requirements:	69%	% of Requirements:	93%	% of Requirements:	58%

Source: Funds received sourced from WFP corporate system for contribution statistics WINGS, report: Distribution contribution and forecast stats 03/02/2019. Total requirements sourced from the FACTORY/WINGS, report: Country: Nigeria - Needs and allocated contributions. All data extracted between 3-5 February 2019.

2. Evaluation Findings

2.1. Appropriateness of the design and delivery

2.1.1 Alignment with Identified Humanitarian Needs and Relevant National Policies, and Use of Context and Risk Analysis

Relevance of design to immediate needs of the most food insecure and malnourished

47. While initially sparse, an increasingly detailed understanding of needs has been built up by WFP to underpin its operational planning. The Cadre Harmonisé (CH) analytical framework was introduced to the eight most food insecure states of Nigeria in October 2015. Populations are classified following a compatible IPC food security classification using five phases. Importantly the Cadre Harmonisé represents a consensus view of food insecurity and consequently provides a common reference point for identifying populations in need of assistance. From the start WFP has been a key partner in the multi-agency Cadre Harmonisé assessments and has provided ongoing technical support and inputs into the Cadre Harmonisé.

48. WFP has complemented the Cadre Harmonisé by establishing its own assessments and situation monitoring. One of the first WFP personnel deployed to Nigeria to support the Government's response was a monitoring and evaluation officer conversant with vulnerability assessment and mapping. In 2016 WFP started mVAM assessments, with the first mVAM bulletin (May 2016)⁷⁵ providing WFP with the evidence to start targeting internally displaced persons as a priority. WFP also introduced emergency food security assessments (EFSAs) in Borno and Yobe States in May/June 2016. Since then, an EFSA has been conducted twice a year in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States in collaboration with NEMA/SEMA, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), INGO, FEWSNET and with the support of the regional bureau in Dakar. Several rounds of rapid food security assessments have also been conducted in various local government areas in collaboration with cooperating partners since December 2016.

49. Cadre Harmonisé information indicated a widespread need for humanitarian intervention, with millions of people in need of urgent food assistance and nutrition support (see Figure 3). WFP operational plans were broadly aligned to the Cadre Harmonisé results, most clearly in terms of geographical targeting. WFP operational plans from January 2017 indicate that WFP planned to provide assistance for up to 1.74 million beneficiaries (April 2017). However, these planned numbers represent only 37 percent of the total population of 4.67 million people assessed by the Cadre Harmonisé as in need of food security assistance.⁷⁶ The planning documentation - for this and other operational plans - lacks a transparent explanation of the discrepancy between the WFP targets and overall need. It is unclear to what extent this difference relates to people who were inaccessible due to insecurity,⁷⁷ those whose needs were being met by other actors, or if this is simply the proportion that WFP chooses to target. Interviews with donors and cooperating partners indicate frustration that WFP is not clearly voicing the actual needs, nor adequately advocating for appropriate levels of funding.

50. Since June 2016, WFP has included "prioritized" beneficiary numbers in their operational planning. These numbers are more achievable than the original "planned" numbers. However, it is unclear to the evaluation team what criteria are being used to prioritize beneficiaries. Evaluation stakeholders, including WFP staff, donors and cooperating partners, were unable to specify the criteria used for prioritization, citing only that beneficiary numbers were reduced due to funding constraints.

⁷⁵ WFP (2016) Nigeria mVAM Bulletin 1: May 2016. Food security in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States deteriorated between January and March.

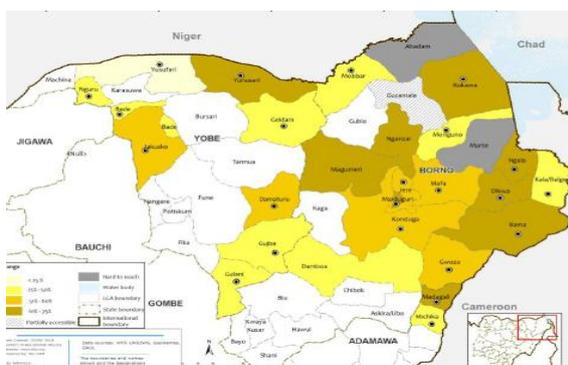
⁷⁶ Reference: Government of Nigeria, FAO & CILSS (2017) Cadre Harmonisé for Identification of Risk Areas and Vulnerable Populations in Sixteen (16) States of Nigeria. Prepared on 10/03/2017.

⁷⁷ It is estimated that around 820,000 people are in areas inaccessible to the humanitarian community. That still leaves 45 percent of the people in need unaccounted for.

51. Furthermore, while the evaluation recognizes the strength of the WFP vulnerability, assessment and mapping unit, there are a number of concerns on limitations of programmatic analysis – including the potential to misinterpret assessment results. These concerns are:

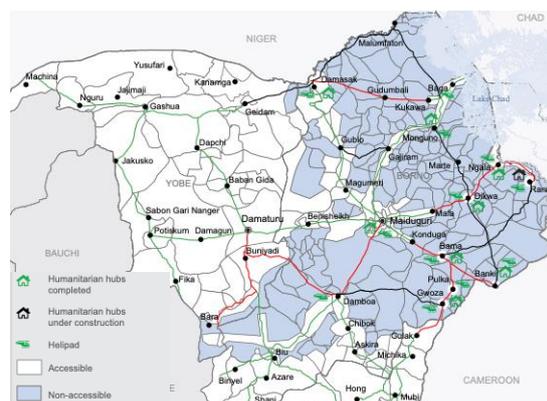
- The security situation in Borno remains unpredictable and therefore assessment findings are highly variable from one point in time to another. Some WFP programming decisions were criticized by evaluation stakeholders for being over-reliant on one-off assessment findings, without sufficient consideration of the security and protection context or the fluidity of the situation. This has been acknowledged in part through the improved allowance of contingencies within planning figures since 2018.
- Understanding the actual needs in inaccessible areas has been, and continues to be, extremely difficult. Using satellite technology, it is estimated that 823,000 people are still living in NSAG controlled areas – approximately 13 percent of the population.⁷⁸ The evaluation could not find any humanitarian agency that had been able to physically conduct assessments in the inaccessible areas. However, given that the nutritional situation of newly arrived internally displaced persons from these areas into government-controlled camps is very poor, there is reason to believe that this is a highly vulnerable group. A concern expressed by stakeholders, including donors, is that WFP (and other humanitarian actors) extrapolate the assessment data from accessible areas across the entirety of a local government area (Figure 7). The impression created of overall food security conditions can be misleading⁷⁹ given the reality that the majority of Borno State remains inaccessible and information on food security in these areas is absent (Figure 8).
- A further potential bias is that the Cadre Harmonisé data in Borno is largely based on assessments of populations where a significant proportion are receiving assistance. Unless carefully interpreted, users may miss that improvements in food security may be more associated with the provision of humanitarian assistance rather than a sustainable change in conditions. The latest FEWSNET data indicates that people in several areas of Borno State would be classified at least one phase worse without the current humanitarian assistance.⁸⁰

Figure 7: WFP food security monitoring results, September 2017



Source: WFP expanded food security outcome monitoring, August 2018.

Figure 8: OCHA map of humanitarian access by humanitarian actors, November 2018



Source: OCHA Map of humanitarian access by humanitarian actors, August 2018.

52. From 2013, the regional bureau in Dakar monitored the nutrition situation through their regional nutrition sector meetings. Several nutrition surveys were available from various locations by UNICEF and

⁷⁸ OCHA (2018) northeast Nigeria: Humanitarian Situation Update – Progress on key activities from the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan, November 2018 Edition.

⁷⁹ Early on, WFP mapping of assessments clearly showed the actual locations that had been assessed.

⁸⁰ FEWSNET (2019) Projected food security outcome map. June-September 2019. As cited at: <https://www.acaps.org/country/nigeria/crisis/complex-crisis>

other agencies who were already operational.⁸¹ Although no additional assessments were carried out by WFP, the need for nutrition support was clear, and WFP appropriately leveraged the expertise of UNICEF and partners to determine the most appropriate nutrition response. The coverage of nutritional assessments has been increased through WFP support to cooperating partners.

53. The corporate drive to implement a disability and age inclusive approach in all its interventions, has so far only translated into the prioritization of the elderly and persons with disabilities alongside other vulnerable groups during targeting and distribution.^{82, 83} The evaluation found no considerations on how disability and age could affect people's capacity to participate in and benefit from the assistance provided, and the impact different transfer modalities could have on this.⁸⁴ There was only limited analysis on how sex, age or other diversity factors, including disability, affect the vulnerability of the populations to food insecurity, although the EFSA data included an analysis of protection issues and disabilities. The evaluation did not identify any efforts by WFP to determine and address the specific food and nutrition needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities.⁸⁵

54. The value of WFP transfers has been set to meet a full food basket. The in-kind ration was calculated to provide 2,100 kcal per person per day (100 percent ration) and included cereals, (rice, millet or sorghum) pulses, oil and salt, as well as Super Cereal to support the nutritional status of children. For cash-based transfers (mobile money and e-vouchers) the value was calculated as the cost of buying the same food basket on the local market. Market prices were regularly monitored, and values adjusted periodically (see Annex M).

55. The same transfers are provided to general food assistance and livelihood beneficiaries. However, while the in-kind ration was calculated on a per capita basis, the cash-based transfer was set at a standard amount per household, based on an assumption of five family members. This means that households with more than five members that receive cash-based transfer effectively receive a transfer of lesser value. This inconsistency created tensions in some locations; households receiving cash-based transfers requested to change to in-kind support. At the time of the evaluation, the Maiduguri cash working group had not standardized the household size.

56. At the end of 2017, the value of the transfer was reduced to a 70 percent ration (cash-based transfer and in-kind) in urban areas after the Household Economy Approach Assessment in Maiduguri found there were several available livelihood opportunities.⁸⁶ Internally displaced persons in closed camps, and households in rural areas with limited access to labour and livelihood opportunities still received 100 percent ration.

57. For the BSFP programme, WFP initially provided 3kg of ready-to-use supplementary food (PlumpySup) per child per month; the equivalent of 100g per child per day as recommended.⁸⁷ From July 2017, this was replaced with 200g per day of Super Cereal plus. Both these rations were appropriate for the context, as they include provision for household sharing.⁸⁸

⁸¹ For example - Njoroge, M. (2016) Report of Small-Scale SMART Survey in MMC, Jere LGAs, Borno State, Nigeria. Nutrition SMART Survey Report. April 2016. Action Against Hunger.

⁸² Interview 567.

⁸³ Limited reference to the elderly can be found in PRRO 200443, in PRRO 200844, and in the 2016 CGAP. Adolescent girls are mentioned among the target groups for Super Cereal together with children and women of reproductive age in PRRO 200443. Disabled are mentioned only in PRRO 200443.

⁸⁴ Examples of issues that require further consideration include the use of inclusive and accessible methods and technologies for information sharing, registration, implementation of food assistance and complaint and feedback; disability and age-specific safety and protection concerns such as discrimination, marginalization, stigmatization, and GBV; and adaptation of the food basket to the specific needs of persons with disability(ies) and the elderly through, for example, the inclusion of easy-to-chew and processed food, among other things.

⁸⁵ It is important to note that no corporate guidance has yet been finalized on adapting assistance to people with disabilities.

⁸⁶ Save the Children (2017) Displaced and host community livelihoods and food security, Borno State, Nigeria. HEA Urban Baseline Report. May 2017. USAID.

⁸⁷ <https://www.nutriset.fr/products/en/plumpy-sup>.

⁸⁸ WFP (2018) Specialized nutritious foods sheet. February 2018.

58. The design of WFP-led common services was based on clear assessment of needs. For example, the emergency telecommunications sector undertook a needs assessment in 2017⁸⁹ and decisions relating to changes in services were largely made based on user demand, for example through user surveys. UNHAS employed mechanisms to adapt the provision of services to evolving needs, while logistics services (common storage and common transport/consolidation for road movements)⁹⁰ were found to be demand-driven (see Annex N).

Use of context analysis in the programme design and delivery

59. The evaluation examined the extent to which programme design was underpinned by an adequate understanding of the context. This included the use of analysis to support decisions on activities, modalities and delivery mechanisms.

60. Evaluation interviews suggest that a cash-based response was an appropriate modality at the time given the urban operating context and the functionality of those markets.

61. In March 2016, after the cash-based transfer pilot was designed, WFP headquarters conducted a macro-financial assessment to serve as a baseline overview of the Nigerian financial sector.⁹¹ The assessment raised several concerns about the choice of mobile money, including lack of interest from banking service providers to work together with telecommunication companies, problems with float management and poor training of agents. Despite this, there was no further assessment of the operational feasibility of using mobile money as a delivery mechanism. Beneficiaries were not consulted on their preferences, and their familiarity and ability to access and benefit from various transfer modalities have not been adequately assessed. Although there were other humanitarian actors providing food assistance through cash-based transfer at the time, their input was never sought.⁹² There was clearly insufficient assessment conducted to determine the choice of delivery mechanism.

62. WFP Nigeria was granted a waiver from headquarters, so they did not have to follow the usual processes for contracting a service provider, citing pressure to scale up due to urgent needs. WFP chose to provide a cash transfer through mobile phones (mobile money) using a tripartite agreement between WFP, a financial service provider and a telecommunications company. The selected network provider was chosen on the basis of a pre-existing global contract without any assessment of the capacity of the Nigerian branch. Similarly, the capacity of the financial service provider to implement the project was also not assessed.

63. From the outset, WFP encountered significant challenges with the chosen cash delivery mechanism, including low beneficiary access to mobile phones, beneficiaries' low literacy levels and lack of familiarity with mobile phone technology, the contractors' lack of familiarity with humanitarian programmes, and inability of WFP staff to access the network's platform to perform programmatic reconciliation.⁹³ In addition, the financial service provider had liquidity problems, as they were reluctant to keep cash in branches in northeast Nigeria because of conflict. Further, WFP personnel did not have sufficient experience with cash-based transfer or any experience with providing cash through mobile phones.

64. WFP has subsequently used both cash-based transfers (mobile money and e-vouchers) and in-kind distributions. The choice of general food assistance modalities was supported by two multi-sectoral market assessments in late 2016, one in Borno State and one in Yobe State.^{94, 95} From 2017, several joint missions were undertaken with the National Programme of Food Security (NPFS), the MoA, FAO and FEWSNET⁹⁶ to assess the markets in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Yobe States, including specific surveys for different local government areas within those states. The regional bureau in Dakar also produced several regional food security market reports that contributed to the Nigerian market analysis. However, beyond the market

⁸⁹ Interview 130, document was not obtained.

⁹⁰ Logistics Cluster Concept of Operations 25th June 2018.

⁹¹ WFP (2016) Macro-financial assessment: Cash transfer interventions. Nigeria, March 2016.

⁹² The majority of other actors were providing cash vouchers and not mobile cash.

⁹³ The 2018 update of the WFP Nigeria risk register provides an extensive list of the problems with the CBT implementation.

⁹⁴ WFP (2016) VAM-Supply Chain Market Assessment in Borno State, Preliminary Results. November 2016.

⁹⁵ WFP (2016) VAM-Supply Chain Market Assessment in Yobe State, Preliminary Results. November 2016.

⁹⁶ Supported by the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the West African market Information System Network (RESIMAO).

assessment, the evaluation found no further assessments of the appropriateness of modalities around the time of programme design. The WFP Maiduguri area office conducted multi-sectoral capacity assessments in Monguno in June 2018 and in Ngala in September 2018.

65. The nutrition strategy appears to have been well adapted to the context. As the Government did not have a moderate acute malnutrition treatment protocol in place it was decided not to initiate a large-scale United Nations-led moderate acute malnutrition treatment response. It was agreed with the Nigeria Nutrition Sector⁹⁷ that as an initial step, WFP would implement a BSFP for children aged 6-59 months, by default including all children with moderate acute malnutrition. Given the WFP situation in Nigeria at the time, with no partnerships in place and no relationship with the Ministry of Health, the evaluation finds these decisions to be appropriate and pragmatic.

66. Based on assessment findings, nutrition-sensitive interventions have been added to the WFP portfolio. An analysis conducted by Action contre la Faim had identified twelve key risk factors of chronic and acute under-nutrition. Under the second phase of the Integrated Nutrition Programme (INP+), which started in July 2017, nutrition-sensitive interventions have been added such as food security and livelihoods, social protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education (early childcare and development), child protection and women's empowerment.

67. The relevance of supporting livelihoods activities for both internally displaced persons and host communities was consistent with the contextual assessment of loss of livelihood opportunities.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the presence of internally displaced persons within the host communities has increased demand and resulted in rising staple food prices and rental costs, while an oversupply of labour reduced wages. However, findings also clearly showed that most farmlands, particularly in Borno State, were inaccessible as they are located on the outskirts of town where security is poor. Despite this, WFP has attempted to implement agriculturally based livelihood activities. Stakeholders felt that in Yobe State, both host communities and internally displaced persons had greater access to land and therefore a transition to agricultural livelihoods would be more appropriate. Supporting non-agricultural livelihoods for camp communities was appropriate, although these projects are small-scale and often not grounded in market assessment or the existing skills of targeted beneficiaries.

68. The design of some livelihood activities reportedly used the WFP three-pronged assessment approach; integrated context analysis (ICA), seasonal livelihood programming (SLP) and community-based participatory planning (CBPP), while others were more opportunistic. Overall, it was difficult to see clear strategic decision-making on the selection of projects, beneficiaries or targeted locations, or a clear exit strategy on how to successfully ensure that the large number of general food assistance beneficiaries were adequately transitioned to government support, sustainable livelihood opportunities, or other avenues for self-reliance (see Annex M).

Strategic alignment with national policies, programmes and capacities

69. Overall, the WFP programme was found to be technically consistent with the body of national development and emergency response policies. However, it was notable that the policies were never referenced in any discussions as shaping the response - even the Buhari Plan⁹⁹ which is intended as the guiding document for all interventions in the region and the Government's blueprint for humanitarian relief. As an overarching coordination framework, the WFP Humanitarian Response Plan (2016)¹⁰⁰ served to guide the humanitarian assistance under government leadership.

70. Given Nigeria's status as a middle-income country, WFP made an appropriate initial decision to not directly implement programmes but instead, build Nigeria's emergency response capacity. WFP initially provided technical support to NEMA on integrated beneficiary assistance management, ration design, food management, distributions, and supply chain management, and later planned to support the cash-based transfer pilot as a demonstration for the Government. Throughout their response, WFP has continued to

⁹⁷ Nigeria Nutrition Sector (2016) Minutes of Nigeria Nutrition Sector Coordination Meeting – 16th May 2016. Maiduguri.

⁹⁸ Save the Children (2017) Displaced and host community livelihoods and food security, Borno State, Nigeria. HEA Urban Baseline Report. May 2017. USAID.

⁹⁹ Federal Government of Nigeria (2016). Rebuilding the North East. The Buhari Plan Volumes I-IV. Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative. June 2016.

¹⁰⁰ Humanitarian Response Plan (2016).

collaborate closely with both NEMA and SEMA. This includes collaboration on coordination and camp management and aspects of supply chain management (see Annex N) and monthly coordination meetings among WFP, NEMA, PCNI and SEMA. The evaluation found multiple examples of WFP consulting, collaborating, coordinating or partnering with government institutions:

- WFP aligned to the overarching federal response through additional links to the Ministry of Budget and Planning, the Presidential Committee on the North-East Initiative, the Emergency Coordination Centre, and the National Social Investment Programme under the Office of the Vice-President. However, strategic coordination has been challenging given the multiplicity of agencies, overlapping lines of responsibility and frequent changes.
- The BSFP strategy was aligned to the National Policy on Infant and Young Child Feeding in Nigeria (2010),¹⁰¹ which promotes a prevention approach to nutrition and is coordinated under the Ministry of Health-led nutrition sector.
- Throughout 2016-2018 WFP worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO to chair/co-chair the food security sector. In Yobe State, WFP worked closely with the Agricultural Development Programme partners in implementing agricultural livelihood programmes.

Risk analysis and mitigation

71. The implementation of the response in Nigeria demonstrated a keen awareness of the need to identify and mitigate risks. A temporary compliance officer reporting to the regional bureau in Dakar was first put in place in Nigeria in June 2016 to provide defence against fraud and other high risks. In December 2016 this developed into a full-fledged compliance and fraud risk-management unit with two compliance officer positions, one at Abuja and one in Maiduguri. This function was further supported by regular oversight missions from the regional bureau in Dakar.¹⁰²

72. The risk register was employed as a core tool to identify and manage risks, with a corporate goal of developing annual plans, reviewed mid-yearly, together with the annual performance plan.¹⁰³ The first risk analysis occurred in April 2016, followed by updates in 2017 and 2018.

73. Overall, the risk registers were found to have been generally effective in identifying the key risks.¹⁰⁴ Risks highlighted in 2017 included: risks associated with large-scale cash-based transfer programming, inadequate security at distribution sites, programme quality standards not being maintained, cash-based transfer scale-up being hampered by operational and technical challenges, and food introduced within WFP supply chain being unsafe for human consumption.

74. Particular attention was given to mitigating fraud risks, including deploying a multi-layered complaints and feedback mechanism to provide early warning of potential abuses. WFP also agreed a memorandum of understanding with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and WFP Office of Investigation to conduct detailed investigations if needed. Stakeholder feedback suggested that these risks had been contained to acceptable levels. However, donors requested greater transparency and reporting of fraud and safeguarding cases.

75. The volatile security situation in northeast Nigeria constituted the most significant external risk for WFP. The challenge lay in establishing an appropriate balance between risk exposure for WFP and implementing personnel and ensuring the safe access of beneficiaries to assistance. Stakeholders repeatedly commented on a high level of risk aversion within the United Nations, including severe restrictions by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).¹⁰⁵ Heavy restrictions exist on the presence of United Nations staff in deep field locations, which was seen as impacting on programme quality. WFP was credited with advocating for a relaxation on the most onerous restrictions – for example arguing at senior

¹⁰¹ Federal Government of Nigeria (2010) National Policy on Infant and Young Child Feeding in Nigeria. Department of Family Health, Abuja. November 2010.

¹⁰² For example, see interview 186.

¹⁰³ The last update of the Annual Performance Plan for Nigeria dates back to March 2018.

¹⁰⁴ A detailed analysis is provided in the relevant technical annexes.

¹⁰⁵ Informants reported that UNDSS has been extremely risk averse to the point of not doing security assessments, claiming it was not their role to conduct such an analysis. Interviews 378, 727, 511.

United Nations level on the need for an urgent assessment in Rann after the kidnapping and killing of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) staff.

76. To mitigate against the risks of attacks on cargo, WFP strengthened convoy security arrangements (working with the Nigerian Armed Forces and the National Union of Road Transport Workers).¹⁰⁶ This permitted fast recovery of trucks that had broken down, as these are potential targets for attacks and looting. The office also tightened controls over road transport by using GPS trackers and stronger monitoring of convoys from 2018.¹⁰⁷

77. As a cross-cutting theme, WFP has made a strong commitment to assessing protection risks from the outset of its engagement in Nigeria. This included the appointment of a full-time protection officer from July 2016. This has resulted in the early identification of several key protection concerns through a variety of protection assessments (see Annex O). A core achievement was the establishment of multiple complaints and feedback mechanisms, including suggestion boxes, help desks, a telephone hotline and protection committees.¹⁰⁸ While each mechanism has its own strengths and weaknesses, collectively they provide an effective feedback system (see Annex O).

78. However, key informant interviews found that the programme as a whole has been slow to address all identified risks. For example:

- Some stakeholders argued that cash-based transfer risks were insufficiently understood and identified too late.¹⁰⁹ For example, while the challenge of conducting a proper reconciliation was identified in March 2016, the November 2017 internal WFP audit was still raising serious concerns about the cash-based transfer reconciliations,¹¹⁰ with USD 32 million yet to be adequately reconciled. Since then a special unit has been established and by the time of the evaluation field mission, only USD 8,000 remained unreconciled, due to lack of documentation.
- The internal audit in November 2017 identified that the group distribution approach¹¹¹ for general food assistance posed several risks to beneficiaries, including increased risk of disagreements over sharing, incomplete rations reaching beneficiaries, and transport costs to beneficiaries. Although grouping might be appropriate to avoid overcrowding at the distribution sites, it has not been adequately supervised or controlled. The evaluation field mission found that these issues were still present one year later.
- The ability to address protection concerns in a timely way has also proved mixed, also due to the limited expertise in this area within WFP, and the high reliance on partners. The distribution of fuel-efficient stoves and milling machines in some locations was on-going to mitigate the risks associated with firewood collection and alleviating the burden of milling. Other well-known protection concerns have yet to be resolved, including the use of transactional sex to access condiments and abuses associated with the use of mobile money. Focus group discussions repeatedly claimed that mobile agents commonly requested payment for helping beneficiaries to cash out.

2.1.2 Application of Humanitarian Principles and a “Do No Harm” Approach

Application of humanitarian principles

79. There was widespread concern amongst various stakeholders (including donors, the United Nations staff of WFP and NGOs) on the extent to which the response has been able to maintain humanitarian

¹⁰⁶ EMOP200777 SPR 2017.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ These were seen during the team visit to Pulka and were established by WFP partner Social Welfare Network Initiative (SWNI); WFP, 2017, Standard Project Report 2017 EMOP 200777. WFP, 2018, Nigeria Protection Mission Final Report.

¹⁰⁹ For example, interviews 160, 686, 892, 818 amongst others.

¹¹⁰ WFP (2018) Internal Audit of WFP Operations in Nigeria. Office of the Inspector General. Internal Audit Report AR/1/03 – February 2018 (FA-NGR-17-07).

¹¹¹ WFP groups GFA beneficiaries to provide food at the primary distribution point for 30 people at a time. Beneficiaries then go to a secondary distribution point, where they have to open the bags of food, and re-distribute the food between households. Although this process is supposed to be done under supervision from the CPs, the process is open to mismanagement, with households at risk of not receiving all their entitlement.

principles. Humanitarian assistance is largely implemented through the support of, or under the direct protection of, the Nigerian security forces. In a context where dialogue with non-state armed groups is basically nonexistent¹¹² and hostilities ongoing, there is no access to areas under the control of non-state armed groups. Attacks on humanitarian aid workers in 2018 have further reduced the humanitarian space.

80. The humanitarian response in northeast Nigeria is largely implemented in highly militarized areas, where often defined security perimeters and restrictions are enforced and monitored by Nigerian security forces. There are significant restrictions on humanitarian movements. Stakeholders argued¹¹³ that the United Nations in Nigeria has not been vocal enough on the need to ease some of the restrictions to humanitarian assistance enforced by the Nigerian security forces or to advocate for a more principled approach.¹¹⁴

81. A contributory factor was found to be a generally poor understanding of humanitarian principles¹¹⁵ across the whole humanitarian community in general, including WFP staff.¹¹⁶ Many WFP and cooperating partner national staff were relatively inexperienced and came from a development background with little to no knowledge of humanitarian principles. The role of the military in enabling access was appreciated and close collaboration was actively welcomed by senior managers. Military assets and escorts have often been used as the “first” rather than the last resort¹¹⁷ even where responsibility for local security has been returned to the police in parts of Yobe State. In several garrison towns, cooperating partners are co-located with the military barracks, as staff perceive that it is generally safer to be close to the military. There was little acknowledgement that an overly close relationship with Government might negatively impact on the perceptions and realities of the principles of neutrality, impartiality and operational independence.¹¹⁸

82. The current WFP management team is credited with pushing for a more principled engagement. Examples include: agreeing minimum conditions with Government prior to supporting returns;¹¹⁹ holding regular meetings with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) on increasing access to inaccessible areas;¹²⁰ awareness-raising conducted by the protection and accountability to affected populations team on the humanitarian principles; and support to the NGOs community's advocacy efforts for a more principled approach.¹²¹ The Nigeria country strategic plan commits to a principled approach to gaining and maintaining humanitarian access.

83. While references to impartiality and some aspects of neutrality were reflected in cooperating partners' agreements, adherence to the humanitarian principles did not appear among the criteria guiding partners' selection and management in Nigeria.¹²² This point reinforces the findings of the 'Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access in Humanitarian Contexts', which recommended increased policy awareness, guidance and training opportunities for commercial partners. The management response confirmed that “humanitarian principles will be fully integrated into the selection and due diligence processes for contractors, with guidance and training on how to handle sensitive situations provided as required”. Given WFP reliance on commercial transporters and vendors in Nigeria, it would be desirable for WFP to define standards and monitor the conduct of commercial partners in relation to sensitive issues such as the use of armed escorts and access challenges.

¹¹² Similar statements can be found in: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-02-27/statement-attributable-spokesman-secretary-general-nigeria>; <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-10-30/secretary-generals-remarks-15th-meeting-united-nations-counter>; as well as in the United Nations Security Council resolution 2349 in 2017, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/863830/files/S_RES_2349%282017%29-EN.pdf.

¹¹³ Interviews 727, 836, 740, 511.

¹¹⁴ Interview 511.

¹¹⁵ See WFP policies including “Humanitarian Principles” (WFP/EB.A/2004/5-C) and “Note on Humanitarian Access and its Implications for WFP” (WFP/EB.1/2006/5-B/Rev.1).”

¹¹⁶ Interviews 836, 247, 740, 567, and 737.

¹¹⁷ Evidence of this can be found in interviews 378, 247, 692, 676, as well as in the 2018 HCT CMCoord Guidance and Access Strategy.

¹¹⁸ Interviews 836, 567, 247, 378, 740, 421, 511, and 737.

¹¹⁹ WFP, 2018, Position on Return, emails; interviews 567, 511. IASC, 2018, EDG Chair Response to Joint Donor Letter on Nigeria.

¹²⁰ In partnership with the ICRC, UNHCR, and MSF and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, WFP contributed to the creation of a Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation in 2015.

¹²¹ Interviews in Abuja and Maiduguri, November 2018.

¹²² WFP, 2018, NGO Capacity Assessment Template. Interview 567.

84. Arguably, operational independence has also been compromised in Nigeria. Until recently, the United Nations has followed the government terminology of “hard to reach areas” and only recently acknowledged (in the last OCHA access map) that large areas and over 800,000 people are in reality inaccessible. This narrative has contributed to the fact that unmet needs in areas outside of government control receive less attention (see paragraph 115).

Trade-offs between humanitarian principles

85. The evaluation found a clear tension between the reality of having to work closely with the Government and the Nigerian security forces to gain access to affected populations in government-controlled areas and possibly compromising the ability to access areas controlled by non-state armed groups. This created a trade-off between the principle of humanity and that of impartiality. Similarly, the heavy reliance on military escorts and premises to ensure delivery of assistance to the populations in need has compromised the principle of neutrality over humanity and impartiality. Finally, by abiding to the government political and military strategy in northeast Nigeria, humanitarians have compromised their independence. This has created serious challenges for humanitarian staff and partners, who are perceived as associated with one party to the conflict and therefore at risk of being targeted, and for parts of the affected population, which is either excluded from any form of assistance, such as in areas outside of government control, or forced to relocate to government-controlled areas to access humanitarian assistance.

86. While understanding that compromises are inevitable in the reality of complex emergencies like Nigeria,¹²³ decisions do not appear to have been made strategically and coherently among humanitarian agencies. No independent context and risk analysis has really been made by humanitarian agencies mostly due to lack of access, and therefore the tendency has been to simply abide to the analysis provided by the Government and the military, which is heavily influenced by political and security considerations.

Application of a "do no harm" approach

87. “Do no harm” is a framework for analysing the impact of aid on conflicts.¹²⁴ In line with this, WFP protection and gender policies require that interventions do not create, exacerbate or contribute to the harm of the beneficiary populations, including harms such as gender inequality, discrimination, and gender-based violence. As such, “do no harm” is a wide-ranging approach and examples of WFP efforts on this can be found below, where WFP had both successfully anticipated and avoided doing harm, as well as cases where WFP actions may have had unintended negative consequences for affected populations.

88. **Non-food needs not being met:** Given that there is no provision for cooking fuel within the food assistance, internally displaced persons generally rely on the collection of firewood for cooking. The serious risks associated with this were first formally captured by FAO in mid-2017 (Figure 9). The risks of abduction and violence when fetching firewood, as well as rape and abuses by the militaries while escorting people to firewood collection have also been raised in the latest WFP protection mission report.¹²⁵ The findings were further confirmed by the evaluation, with 10 of the 21 focus group discussions reporting risks of attacks, kidnappings and killings for those venturing into insecure areas outside the camps to collect fuel.

89. WFP has promoted various measures to mitigate these risks including advocating for the provision of fuel to internally displaced persons in camps¹²⁶ and the provision of fuel-efficient stoves. Despite these improvements, actions to date have been slow and not at all sufficient to address the extent of the risks associated with firewood collection.¹²⁷ Given the well-known risks associated with firewood collection in similar contexts¹²⁸ it is surprising that the risks were not anticipated and mitigated from the outset. As part of the SAFE Stove working group WFP participated in a SAFE Stove needs assessment in collaboration with FAO and UNFPA in 2018.

¹²³ See discussion on this in the 2018 Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access in Humanitarian Contexts.

¹²⁴ Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Contribute to Peace – or War*. 1999.

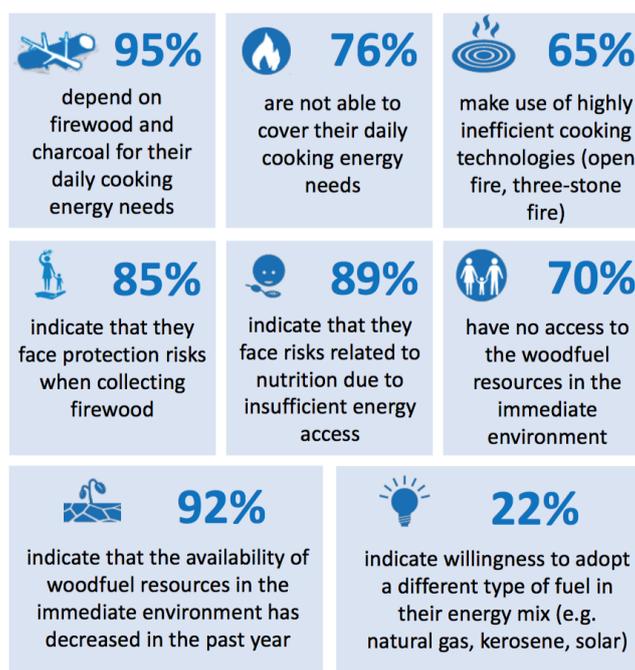
¹²⁵ WFP, 2018, Nigeria Protection Mission Final Report. Similar challenges were reported by women street vendors in the 2017 Empowering Women in West African Markets – Street Vendor in Maiduguri.

¹²⁶ WFP, 2017, Standard Project Report 2017 EMOP 200777.

¹²⁷ Interviews 087 and 567.

¹²⁸ See for example: South Sudan: An Evaluation of WFP's portfolio (2011-2015).

Figure 9: Safe access to fuel and energy – Northeast Nigeria: Assessment highlights



Source: Joint SAFE assessment was conducted by WFP-UNHCR and FAO in January 2018.

90. More generally, assessments¹²⁹ indicated that as non-food needs were not being met, beneficiaries were using harmful coping strategies to meet these needs. The coping strategies employed by beneficiaries in the focus group discussions include several food-based strategies¹³⁰ as well as more severe livelihood coping strategies.¹³¹ Annex P has more details on the specific coping strategies used. Although non-food items are not a WFP mandate, some stakeholders suggested that being the largest food security player, WFP had a role to lobby the Government to provide non-food item support, and/or include the provision of non-food items for general food assistance beneficiaries in their cooperating partner's field level agreements.

91. **Livelihoods programming increasing exposure to insecurity:** Significant risks have been identified in implementing livelihood programming in areas of high insecurity. In particular, there are significant risks of promoting agricultural activities in Borno State and insecure areas of Yobe State. Given that relatively small areas of agricultural land are protected by the military in the vicinity of garrison towns and there is no intention to expand the area of control, encouraging agricultural production may expand cultivation into insecure areas and put beneficiaries at risk. The evaluation encountered repeated stories of farmers who were injured or killed while working beyond the military perimeter – although not specifically related to WFP livelihoods projects.

92. At a more general level, the evaluation identified the risks of food assistance becoming a pull factor for returnees back into insecure areas. WFP has taken a principled position in not officially supporting the return of internally displaced persons until minimum conditions are met in-country. However, at the same time it is enrolling spontaneously returning internally displaced persons onto food assistance in towns where the military has regained control. Significant movements of people were found by the evaluation from Maiduguri to both Bama and Pulka. As the security situation remains highly fluid this carries risks that have so far been inadequately identified or mitigated.

¹²⁹ WFP (2017) Emergency Food Security Assessment in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States, Nigeria. December 2017; WFP (2017) Food Security Outcome Monitoring, North-Eastern Nigeria.

¹³⁰ Food-based coping strategies include reducing the number of meals eaten, eating less preferred foods, adults reducing their meals in favour of children eating, and borrowing food from others.

¹³¹ Examples include begging, reducing non-food related expenditure, sale of assets, and transactional sex.

93. **Avoiding market disincentives:** The WFP supply chain in Nigeria effectively minimizes any unintended negative effects. With commodities being procured inside Nigeria to the farthest extent possible, and with the application of the tariff system to build up capacity in the local transport market, it has addressed the two main areas of impact from the significant tonnage it procures and transports. Despite the volume it procures, WFP is small compared to the scale of food exports in Nigeria, and its procurement is therefore unlikely to affect market prices adversely. On the contrary, WFP appears to have to compete with other buyers to get access to the best value for money for the commodities it procures locally.¹³²

94. **Data privacy:** WFP has been cognizant of the need to respect data privacy standards. Informants reported that registration of biometric data occurs with the consent of beneficiaries and is intended for humanitarian purposes only. Data protection is reportedly given utmost priority by both IOM and WFP.¹³³ NEMA did not sign the data protection and confidentiality agreement as it was not in a position to ensure sufficient protection of data within the government offices, and hence IOM has not been sharing data with them.¹³⁴

2.2. Operational Performance and Results

2.2.1 Achievement of Stated Objectives

Targeting

95. Beneficiary targeting for general food assistance has proved highly challenging. Staff reported inadequate corporate guidance with which to develop a contextualized targeting strategy. Geographic targeting was done through appropriate consideration of several factors, including access to the affected population, access to livelihood opportunities, agricultural and labour markets, presence of partner organizations and security. Identifying the specific household to target however, was more difficult, as the process required substantial personnel and time; both of which were limited by the lack of WFP presence and the urgency of the situation. Initially, WFP targeted all internally displaced persons within their chosen geographic for food assistance. Faced with limited human resources and no existing partnerships, WFP initially recruited volunteers (students from local universities) to conduct the targeting and registration exercise in August 2016. Using lists of internally displaced persons provided by IOM, students received some training, and then were asked to “go house to house, check if the people living there were internally displaced persons, and if they were, immediately register them for assistance.”¹³⁵ The targeting and registration processes were therefore one and the same, enabling WFP to quickly identify beneficiaries and to distribute tokens/SIM cards for the cash-based transfer pilot. While effective in rapidly identifying beneficiaries, this approach resulted in high inclusion and exclusion errors.¹³⁶

96. In March 2017, after discussion with donors, the regional bureau in Dakar and headquarters, WFP agreed to conduct a re-targeting exercise to selectively target the most vulnerable. The need for re-targeting became more urgent as WFP experienced major pipeline breaks due to resource shortfalls and problems getting food from Lagos Port. WFP developed targeting guidance¹³⁷ to help cooperating partners conduct the re-targeting exercise based on vulnerability criteria in the prioritized local government areas. Although the WFP targeting guidance was clear and relevant, several WFP personnel reported that targeting was not appropriately prioritized, in terms of receiving adequate resourcing to carry out the exercise and that WFP verification of the targeting was inadequate. An internal audit in November 2017 noted that the re-targeting process continued to support inclusion and exclusion errors, as a result of poor beneficiary verification.¹³⁸

¹³² WFP Nigeria Country Office Procurement Plan Dec 17-Sept 18 v6.pdf.

¹³³ WFP developed a Guide to Personal Data Protection and Privacy in 2016.

¹³⁴ UNHCR on the other side has an agreement with the Government for the sharing of data on refugees and returnees. Interview 384.

¹³⁵ Interview 917.

¹³⁶ This was confirmed by subsequent re-targeting exercises.

¹³⁷ WFP (2017) Guidelines for targeting and registration in northeast Nigeria. February 2017.

¹³⁸ Internal Audit Report on WFP operations in Nigeria.

97. The re-targeting exercise depended largely on cooperating partners with varying targeting experience and capacity. In practice, many cooperating partners relied on the *Bulamas*¹³⁹ (Nigerian community leaders) to produce revised beneficiary lists. The effectiveness of community-based targeting in reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized groups was questionable. In 5 out of 21 focus group discussions, beneficiaries reported issues with their *Bulamas*. In one camp, the women interviewed denounced unfair distribution of items by the *Bulamas*, who are believed to favour their friends and family members. There is also a conflict in the *Bulamas'* role as complaint mechanism and women also stated that they generally tend not to complain because they are afraid of losing the assistance. Most of these challenges were recognized by WFP and included in the food security sector's targeting guidance.¹⁴⁰

98. In mid-2018, food security assessments indicated an improvement in many parts of northeast Nigeria. Anticipating reduced funding, WFP took the opportunity to embark on another re-targeting exercise as part of an overall strategy of transitioning to livelihoods or phasing out its involvement altogether. A new beneficiary targeting standard operating procedure was developed for this exercise.¹⁴¹ The standard operating procedure was more detailed, and protection and gender considerations were included as annexes. In November 2018, this second re-targeting exercise was ongoing.

99. The evaluation found high levels of confusion and frustration over WFP targeting processes and the time taken to do the re-targeting exercises. Re-targeting exercises have been slow to complete and often overlap. Geographical targeting remained at the local government level, rather than at a more granular level, although the evaluation understands that this is not possible in all locations. Rules have often been adapted in ad hoc ways. For example, families in Dalori 1 camp have been "paired" to allow for the sharing of limited resources. The additional needs of large and/or polygamous households have been recognized by allowing each woman to register as a separate household, but this is done inconsistently, despite the clear guidance provided by WFP. It was also noted that at the start of the programme there was a time lag before support was extended to newly arrived internally displaced persons - with extended wet feeding in reception centres. However, over time an improved system of contingencies has been put in place to serve newly arrived internally displaced persons.

100. Questions were raised on the locations being phased out or removed from general food assistance support, given that livelihood interventions were still small-scale and/or provided marginal contributions to household income. The evaluation found several stakeholders that criticized the intention of WFP to down-scale in Borno State, despite a highly unpredictable and fluid security context.¹⁴²

101. Findings from focus group discussions confirmed that special attention is generally accorded to particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, unaccompanied minors, children under two, and pregnant and lactating women. This entails: prioritization during registration and distribution; targeted nutritional support for pregnant and lactating women and children under two; support provided in checking the price of commodities and/or using the SIM card during cash distribution; help during secondary distribution ("scooping"); and carrying food items to their dwellings.¹⁴³

102. WFP livelihood activities generally target households headed by women or youth. However, the projects are small-scale relative to the needs within the community, and this made beneficiary targeting very difficult. Focus group discussions with beneficiaries indicate that many cooperating partners relied on the *Bulamas* to provide beneficiary lists, with some beneficiaries being selected for projects without their knowledge or consent.

103. For the FAO/WFP seed protection activity in 2017 as part of FADAMA (see Table 3), FAO targeted households with access to land for cultivation. This was appropriate from a seed protection approach, but not strategically aligned with the WFP focus on ensuring support to the most vulnerable households. In non-conflict areas, this project has supported vulnerable households with access to land, but in conflict-affected areas, most of the vulnerable have lost their land access. The focus on Borno State, where the security context

¹³⁹ Nigerian community leaders.

¹⁴⁰ WFP (2017) Guidelines for targeting and registration in northeast Nigeria. February 2017.

¹⁴¹ WFP (2018) Standard Operating Procedure: Beneficiary targeting in Northeastern Nigeria. WFP Nigeria Country Office. July 2018.

¹⁴² Interviews 471, 73, 864, 658, and 114.

¹⁴³ Focus group discussions with affected populations (IDPs, host communities, both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries).

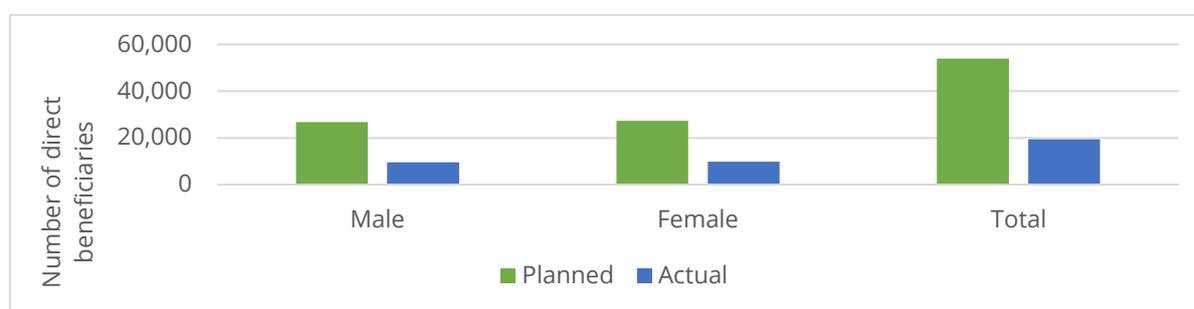
is particularly unfavourable to livelihood interventions, was also questioned. In contrast Yobe State has critical livelihood programming gaps alongside greater access to land and water.

Coverage of needs

104. The main findings on the performance of WFP in meeting planned outputs for the activities implemented within the portfolio are given below, while full details are provided in Annex P and analysed by thematic area in Annexes M, N and O.

105. IR-EMOP 200969 was implemented in Maiduguri and Jere local government areas with a plan to reach 54,000 children aged 6-23 months. Figure 10 shows that by June 2016 when the IR-EMOP was closed, WFP had reached only 35.8 percent of this planned target (19,324 beneficiaries). Over the two-month implementation period, WFP distributed 48 MT of Super Cereal plus¹⁴⁴ through the IR-EMOP. This was due to a combination of late start in distribution, insufficient cooperating partners providing nutrition and lack of WFP human resources to directly implement the project. All the IR-EMOP beneficiaries were rolled into EMOP 200777 in July 2016.

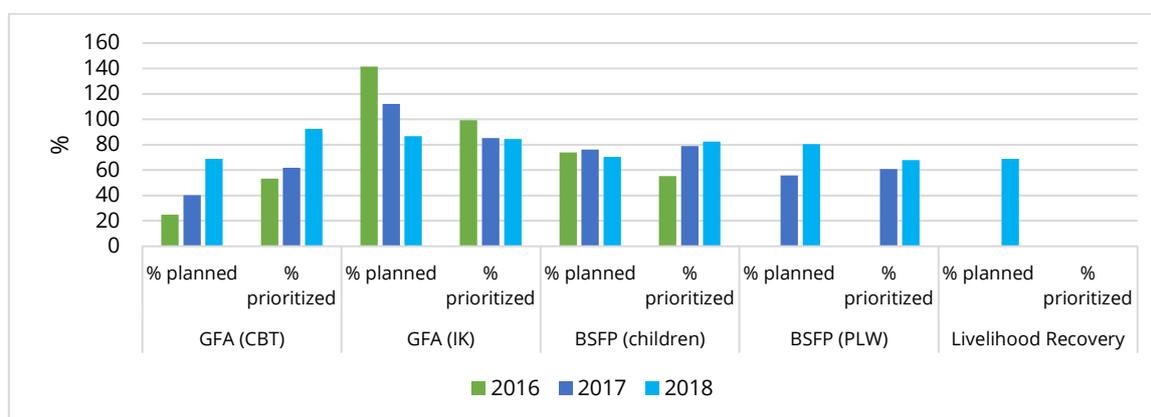
Figure 10: IR-EMOP 200969 planned versus actual beneficiaries (April–June 2016)



Source: WFP Nigeria SPR 2016.

106. Figure 11 shows the percentage achievement of targeted numbers of beneficiaries in each of the activities, by year, under EMOP 200777. From June/July 2016, WFP reports show both “planned” and “prioritized” beneficiary numbers (see paragraph 50). Figure 11 shows that aside from general food assistance (in-kind), where WFP was able to meet their planned targets in 2016 and 2017, WFP has not met either the planned or the lower prioritized targets.

Figure 11: Percentage of planned and prioritized beneficiaries reached by activity (2016-2018)



Source: Planned: COMET report CM-C004 for 2016-2018, final figures provided by CO. Prioritized: Nigeria executive briefs and Nigeria internal situation reports 2016-2018.

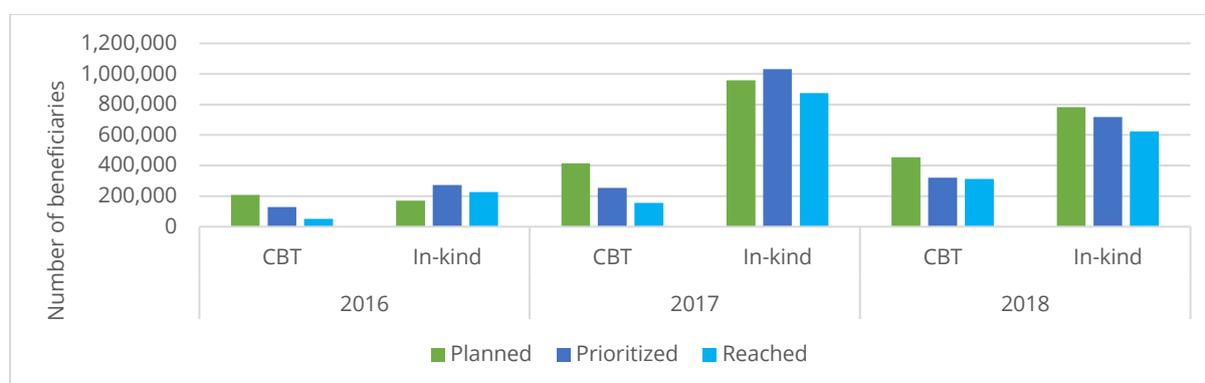
¹⁴⁴ Previously known as Corn-Soya Blend Plus or CSB+.

General food assistance

107. The relative success in achieving general food assistance output targets is closely associated with the modality. The implementation of the cash-based transfer pilot began in Maiduguri and Jere local government areas in Borno State in March 2016 for 70,000 beneficiaries. However, from the outset, WFP encountered significant challenges with the cash delivery mechanism. Consequently, during 2016, cash-based transfer through mobile money reached only 25 percent of 70,000 planned beneficiaries. This led management to declare a moratorium on scaling up mobile money from January 2017.

108. The introduction of in-kind assistance in July 2016 enabled WFP to rapidly scale up their response. WFP was able to reach or exceed their planned in-kind beneficiary numbers in 2016 and reach more than 80 percent in 2018 (Figure 12). In 2018, WFP was not able to access some of their planned locations¹⁴⁵ due to security issues. E-vouchers were introduced in February 2017, which then helped to scale up the cash-based transfer response, increasing performance to 40 percent of planned cash-based transfer beneficiaries in 2017, and 69 percent in 2018.

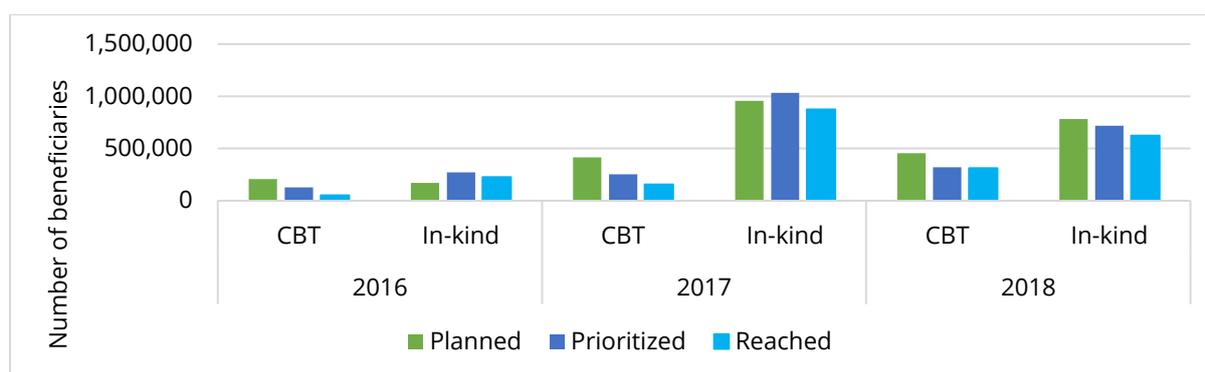
Figure 12: Planned and prioritized beneficiary numbers for the two general food assistance modalities (2016-2018)



Source: Planned: COMET report CM-C004 for 2016-2018, final figures provided by CO. Prioritized: Nigeria executive briefs and Nigeria internal situation reports 2016-2018

109. Figure 13 shows the value of cash and vouchers provided over the evaluated period. In total, WFP provided almost USD 62 million through the cash-based transfer modality, 40.5 percent of planned.

Figure 13: Value of cash and vouchers provided (March 2016-December 2018)



Source: COMET report CM-C004 for 2016-2018 as at 8 January 2019.

110. Reports from affected populations collected during the evaluation suggest that challenges in relation to mobile money persist. Many beneficiaries did not have access to mobile phones, or a safe place to keep their SIM cards. SIM cards were also being blacklisted¹⁴⁶ and cases reported of payments not being received.

¹⁴⁵ For example - Kukawa, Mobar/Damasak and Rann.

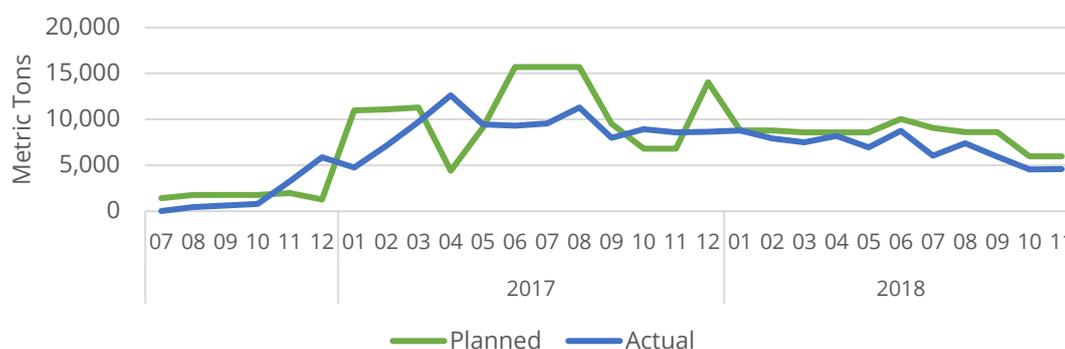
¹⁴⁶ Blacklisting occurs when the wrong PIN number is repeatedly entered and the phone blocked.

Low beneficiary literacy also meant it was difficult for them to follow instructions on redemption or know the timing for payment. When coupled with inadequate sensitization on the payment process, it was common for beneficiaries to come late in the payment/redemption period, which meant that if problems arose, they could not be addressed until the following month, leaving people without food assistance.

111. Focus group discussions with beneficiaries receiving mobile money generally stated a preference to receive e-vouchers instead of mobile money. E-voucher beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the variety of commodities being offered, and the comfort and safety of not having to travel to town to get their commodities. In the words of one beneficiary: "It is preferred because the burden of managing cash is eliminated as you only have to worry about the choice of food items."¹⁴⁷

112. Over the evaluation period, WFP appears to have delivered slightly lower than planned tonnages to partners. Figure 14 shows planned versus actual figures for commodity deliveries to partners between 2016 and 2018.¹⁴⁸ The evaluation analysis (see Annex N) indicates a functional supply chain throughout the evaluation period, although at times finances limited supplies. In general, the evaluation found that WFP had provided high quality food commodities, although beneficiaries in some locations reported occasional worm and weevil infestations. WFP specifically included Super Cereal as an additional commodity to help ensure that children and other vulnerable household members would receive sufficient caloric intake to prevent the nutrition situation from deteriorating.

Figure 14: Grains delivered to partners – planned versus actual



Source: COMET report CM-C004 for 2016-2018 as at 8 January 2019.

113. In late 2016, WFP changed the cereal in the food basket from rice to sorghum/millet based on cost considerations. The change to sorghum and millet was not a popular decision due to a requirement for significantly more grinding, pounding and water for preparation, more cooking time and fuel, and condiments to make the meal palatable. Evaluation interviews indicate that after the change, beneficiaries claimed to have sold quantities of sorghum so they could purchase alternative food commodities. This could not be verified by WFP monitoring data. To address this issue, WFP established a milling pilot in Dikwa and Pulka local government areas, implemented from March to September 2018. The success of the pilot in reducing beneficiaries' milling costs led to the development of a livelihood project supporting groups of women to access grinding machines, which all households could access (with payment) to grind their food commodities. The evaluation field visit to Pulka in November 2018 found the milling machines for the livelihood project had not yet been distributed and beneficiaries were complaining about the inclusion of sorghum in the food basket.

114. Over the years, safety en-route to and from cash-based or in-kind distribution sites remained high for both men and women beneficiaries. WFP has been collecting data on the "proportion of assisted people who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programmes sites".¹⁴⁹ The percentage who reported safety concerns ranged from 3 to 14 percent, with similar results reported for both

¹⁴⁷ Focus group discussions with affected populations.

¹⁴⁸ COMET report CM-C004 for 2016-2018 as at 8 January 2019.

¹⁴⁹ WFP, 2018, Corporate Results Framework – Outcome and Output Indicator Compendium 2017-2021.

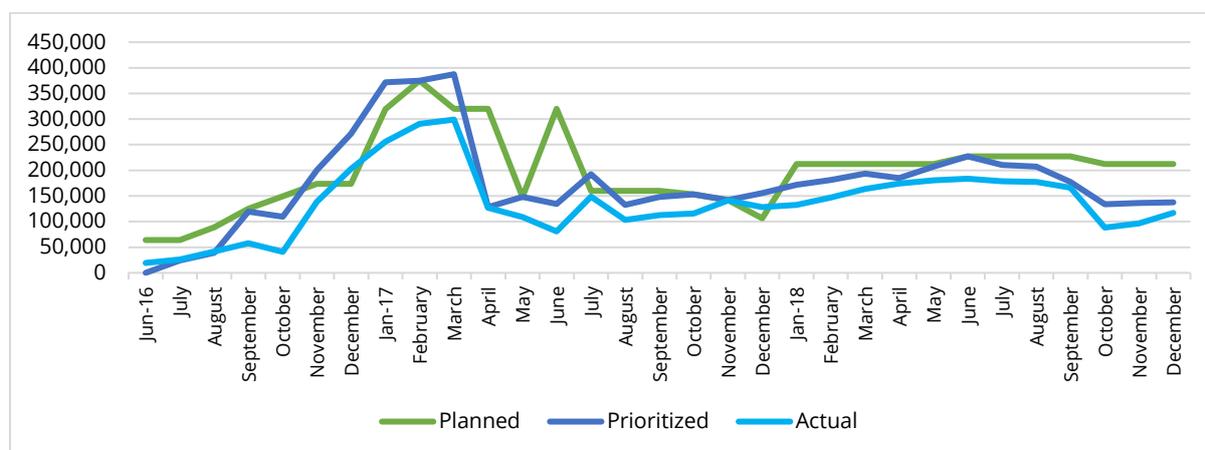
men and women.¹⁵⁰ Similar findings emerged from the focus group discussions conducted during the evaluation where participants confirmed that they did not experience any particular safety risk in relation to collecting food assistance.¹⁵¹

115. Overall coverage of the food assistance needs in northeast Nigeria has been consistently low. In 2017, the Government said it would provide assistance to a large number of households in need. While some support was provided, this information was not always reported to the food security sector or included in their statistics. Also, the food provided did not constitute a 100 percent ration. The Food Security Sector Dashboard from November 2018 shows that out of 3.7 million people requiring food assistance under Food Security Objective 1 (provide emergency food assistance) only 1.3 million are being reached, leaving a 65 percent gap. The Dashboard notes that this gap has widened as agencies transition from food assistance to livelihoods support.

Nutrition

116. Figure 15 shows the planned, prioritized and actual EMOP 200777 BSFP (children) beneficiary numbers. Since late 2016 only general food assistance-targeted households with children aged 6-59 months were targeted for BSFP. This approach is not aligned with international guidance on BSFP, as it does not prevent acute malnutrition as intended. A significant pipeline break in April 2017 then further affected the performance of the nutrition programme, when funding shortages¹⁵² and Lagos Port congestion¹⁵³ caused delays in the procurement and delivery of imported specialized nutritious foods. During this period, WFP reduced the targeted beneficiaries to only the general food assistance targeted households with children 6-23 months and did not include children with moderate acute malnutrition. This approach continued even after the pipeline improved in October 2017.

Figure 15: Planned versus actual blanket supplementary feeding programme beneficiaries (6–59 months) (2016-2018)



Source: Planned and actual: COMET report CM-C004 for 2016-2018, final figures provided by CO. Prioritized: Nigeria executive briefs and Nigeria internal situation reports 2016-2018.

117. In January 2018, the original “hybrid model” that was initially agreed through the regional nutrition coordination meetings back in 2013 was implemented in support to all children aged 6-23 months plus moderate acute malnutrition children (24-59 months). The late inclusion of moderate acute malnutrition children after the pipeline break meant that there was a 9-month period (April 2017-January 2018) when moderate acute malnutrition children were not covered. To prevent a deterioration of the nutrition situation during this time, UNICEF used expanded criteria for their severe acute malnutrition treatment programme,

¹⁵⁰ WFP, 2016, 2017, Standard project reports 2016 and 2017, and 2018 EMOP 200777.

¹⁵¹ Focus group discussions with affected populations (IDPs, host communities, both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries).

¹⁵² WFP SitReps in 2017.

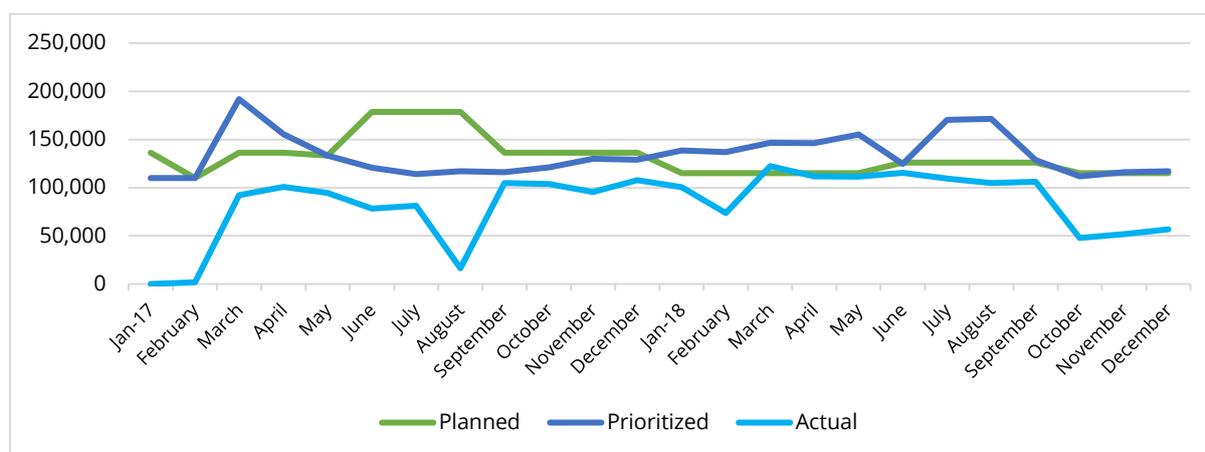
¹⁵³ Interview 688, WFP SitReps between June and October 2017.

providing moderate acute malnutrition and non-complicated severe acute malnutrition cases with the same treatment protocol.

118. Reported BSFP coverage figures from WFP are calculated as actual beneficiaries as a percentage of the general food assistance-targeted households, rather than the actual beneficiaries as a percentage of the total population of children aged 6-23 months within the catchment area. The coverage rate – as per international standards – is therefore estimated as closer to 20-30 percent than the reported 75 percent,¹⁵⁴ ¹⁵⁵ Recent reports by Nigeria’s nutrition in emergency working group¹⁵⁶ corroborate these large gaps in the BSFP activity.

119. WFP added pregnant and lactating women to the BSFP in January 2017, with the first distribution done in February (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Planned versus actual blanket supplementary feeding programme beneficiaries (pregnant and lactating women) (2017-2018)



Source: Planned and actual: COMET report CM-C004 for 2017- 2018, final figures provided by CO. Prioritized: Nigeria executive briefs and Nigeria internal situation reports 2017-2018.

Livelihoods

120. Livelihood activities have been included as EMOP activities since October 2017. Funding for livelihoods has been channelled through three projects, with two that are already completed (Table 3). For all projects, WFP provides 17,000 NGN (approximately USD 46)¹⁵⁷ per household per month (or pro-rata for cash-for-work projects) or the WFP food ration as per general food assistance, together with agricultural inputs and training. All the existing WFP livelihood projects are implemented in Borno State and there are plans to expand livelihood programming in both Borno and Yobe States in 2019.

121. Unlike the other WFP activities, there is no available data showing month-to-month planned and actual beneficiaries for the livelihood recovery activities. Table 3 therefore shows the achieved number of livelihoods recovery beneficiaries by project, reaching a total of 29,586 households to date.

¹⁵⁴ Interviews 715, 100 and 268.

¹⁵⁵ Ongoing discussion between the WFP nutrition team and the monitoring and evaluation team resulted in no coverage data being included in reports after December 2017 as no agreement could be reached on the appropriate way to calculate BSFP coverage.

¹⁵⁶ 2018 first quarter update.

¹⁵⁷ Nigerian Naira (currency). US \$value as of September 2019

Table 3: Livelihood projects' non-food related project outputs (2017-2018)

Project	Period	Planned HHs ¹⁵⁸	Actual HHs	Non-food related outputs
Fadama III (World Bank)	October 2017 – September 2018	7,526	7,049 (93.7%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Resource Management: Soil conservation, compost pits, waste disposal pits, tree nursery for reforestation • Crop production: Boreholes, maize seed • Livestock production: Poultry • Income generating activities (IGA) inputs: Tailoring, food processing, and carpentry • Community infrastructure (through cash-for-work): Rehabilitation of community feeder roads, rehabilitation/construction of vocational centres, construction of new market stalls
“Sustainable agricultural-based livelihoods for food security, employment and nutrition in Borno State” (European Union)	2018-2020	99,500	21,000 (21.1%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seed protection (from FAO) • Livestock (bulls, goats, poultry and aquaculture)
BOWDI (WFP)	January – August 2018	1,550	1,537 (99.2%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poultry • Business skills training and IGA activities (petty trading, sewing, grinding) • Sanitation activities

Source: Fadama end of project report (November 2018)¹⁵⁹; FAO, WFP, UN Women Proposal to European Union (2018),¹⁶⁰ the Borneo Women's Development Initiative's (BOWDI) final narrative report (2018)¹⁶¹ and communication with WFP livelihoods team.

122. Although each of the livelihood recovery projects are relevant, WFP has faced several implementation challenges, many of which are due to the security situation. In addition, there are consistent challenges in agriculture-related projects finding suitable land, as most land is individually owned and already cultivated. The Food Security Sector Dashboard from November 2018 shows that 2.9 million people require agriculture and livelihood support under Food Security Objective 2 (fostering resilience), with a total of 1.9 million currently being reached, almost entirely through other agencies.

¹⁵⁸ HH = Household.

¹⁵⁹ Fadama III AF/WFP end of project report. Borno State (27th October 2017 to 31st October 2018).

¹⁶⁰ FAO, WFP, UNWomen (2018) Restoring and promoting sustainable agriculture-based livelihoods for food security, employment, and nutrition improvement in Borno State. Contract number: T05-EUTF-SAH-NG-07-0. Annex 1: Description of the action.

¹⁶¹ BOWDI (2018) World Food Programme Livelihood Project for 1,550 Households. Final Narrative Report (January - August 2018). Borno Women's Development Initiative.

Common services

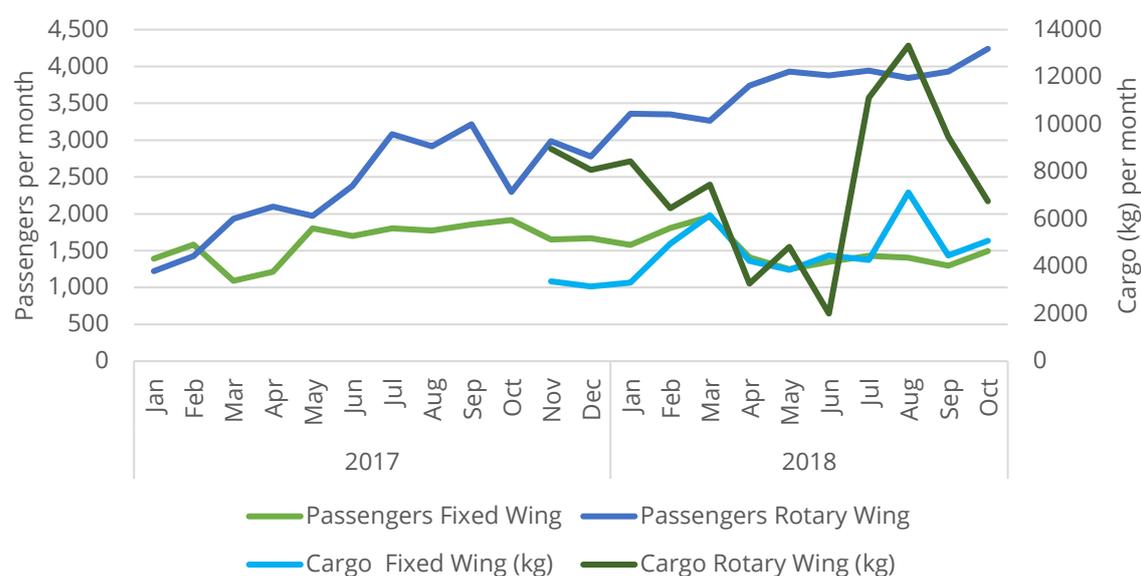
123. UNHAS performance significantly exceeded targets. Table 4 summarizes performance against the programme's targets.¹⁶² Figure 17 shows more detailed passenger numbers and cargo volumes transported on UNHAS flights for 2017 and 2018. The main growth in demand for passengers has been on the rotary wing service, where there is no alternative for safe access. There is an additional value of the helicopter routes for transporting light cargo when roads become less passable due to the rains between June and September. The Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) monitoring mission confirmed that UNHAS Nigeria is effectively implemented in line with international standard practices of aviation.¹⁶³

Table 4: UNHAS performance against output targets

Indicator	2016		2017	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Metric tons of cargo transported	25	59	84	159
Number of passengers transported	8,400	14,796	18,000	48,849
Number of agencies and organizations using humanitarian air services	50	64	70	92
Number of destinations served	9	17	20	16
Percentage response to medical and security evacuation	100	100	100	100

Source: WFP SPR data for 2016 and 2017.

Figure 17: UNHAS passengers and cargo per month



Source: UNHAS reports.

124. An additional benefit from UNHAS has been the provision of medical evacuations. According to statistics compiled by MSF, between July 2017 and April 2018, 21 medical evacuations were conducted by

¹⁶² From SPR data obtained from the country office for 2016 and 2017, at the time of writing 2018 data were not yet available.

¹⁶³ ECHO 2017 Monitoring report Nigeria November DG ECHO UNHAS.

helicopter, with 19 of these patients surviving and recovering. A further 61 medical evacuations were made by road as conditions permitted.

125. The logistics sector was initiated in late 2016, and lower sector performance against initial plans in the same year likely reflects the start-up phase. In 2017 the sector broadly over-performed against targets. Table 5 summarizes the logistics sector’s performance against the programme targets.¹⁶⁴

Table 5: Logistics sector performance against output targets

Indicator	2016		2017	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Number of agencies and organizations using coordination and logistics services (2016). Number of agencies and organizations using logistics coordination services (2017)	27	15	27	44
Number of organizations contributing to pipeline/planning, logistics assessment and/or capacity information to be shared	No data	No data	13	12
Number of organizations utilizing storage and cargo consolidation services	No data	No data	13	30
organizations participating in logistics sector activities (coordination, information management, or logistics services) responding to a user survey with a satisfaction rate of 85% or above	No data	No data	85	82
Percentage of cargo movement requests served against requested	No data	No data	95	92
Percentage of service requests to handle, store and/or transport cargo fulfilled	85	100	85	100

Source: WFP SPR data for 2016 and 2017.

126. The emergency telecommunications sector showed a more mixed performance against targets, but performed better in 2017 over the previous year. Considering that the emergency telecommunications sector was only activated in November 2016 this is not surprising. Table 6 summarizes the sector’s performance against the programme’s indicators.¹⁶⁵ When interpreting these data it needs to be considered that, for the establishment of radio rooms and coverage of operational areas, the emergency telecommunications sector was dependant on the completion of the respective humanitarian hubs, which was outside its control.

¹⁶⁴ From SPR data obtained from the country office for 2016 and 2017, at the time of writing 2018 data were not yet available.

¹⁶⁵ From SPR data obtained from the country office for 2016 and 2017, at the time of writing 2018 data were not yet available.

Table 6: Emergency telecommunications sector performance against output targets

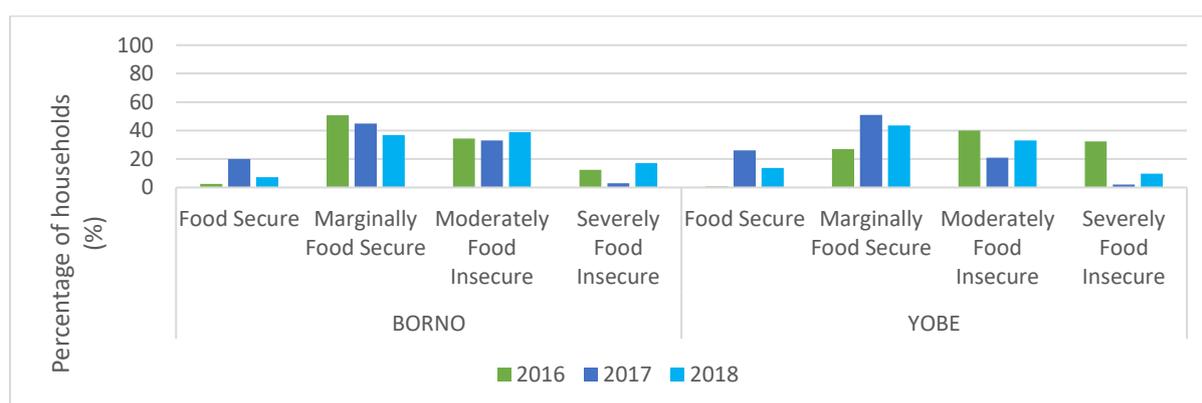
Indicator	2016		2017	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Number of radio-rooms (COMCEN) established	3	2	3	6
Number of operational areas covered by common security telecommunication network	4	1	6	6
Number of operational areas covered by data communications services	5	0	6	5
Number of operational areas covered with charging stations	3	0	No data	0
Number of UN agency/NGO staff members trained in radio communications	60	10	120	533
Number of ETS meetings conducted on local and global levels	6	5	48	31
Number of ETS user satisfaction surveys conducted	0	1	No data	No data
Number of needs assessments carried out	4	2	No data	No data

Source: WFP SPR data for 2016 and 2017.

Effectiveness of WFP operations

127. The planned outcomes for EMOP 200777 food assistance are monitored against changes in food consumption score, dietary diversity score and coping strategies index. The consolidated approach to reporting indicators for food security combines these three indicators to provide an overall assessment of household food security. Based on this, Figure 18 shows that large proportions of WFP beneficiaries remain food insecure despite ongoing food assistance. This does not reconcile easily with the Cadre Harmonisé results showing a significant improvement in food security since 2016 (Figure 3) and may reflect the fact that WFP monitors only beneficiaries rather than the population at large. The improvement in Yobe State compared with Borno State may also reflect the improved security situation and the increased opportunities for livelihood activities in Yobe State, and the ongoing displacement, poor security situation and reliance on humanitarian assistance in Borno State.

Figure 18: Consolidated reporting on food security outcomes (2016-2018)



Source: Compiled from WFP Outcome PDM Dec 2016, FSOM Sept 2017 & FSOM August 2018.

128. Non-food needs such as soap, clothes, complementary foods (condiments), health care and education remain largely unmet. The provision of condiments is the responsibility of NEMA/SEMA, but there is limited evidence of these distributions taking place regularly or at scale. The result is that beneficiaries reported using a range of coping strategies to meet their unmet needs, including selling a portion of the food entitlement.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ Focus group discussions.

129. The most recent food security outcome monitoring from WFP found no significant difference in the level of food insecurity between cash-based transfer and in-kind general food assistance beneficiaries, however there was a difference by gender, with households headed by women more likely to be food insecure than households headed by men (see Annex M).¹⁶⁷ Food insecurity was also worse (64 percent) for beneficiaries living in camp-like situations with limited livelihood opportunities compared to counterparts in non-camp-like settings (52 percent).¹⁶⁸

130. There is less systematic monitoring and documentation of outcomes specific to the nutrition activities.¹⁶⁹ Further, the nutrition-specific outcome indicators that WFP has used have changed over time. Only the minimum acceptable diet (MAD) for children aged 6-23 months has multiple data points.

131. Table 7 shows that at baseline, less than half the children aged 6-23 months (41 percent) in the BSFP, were found to be consuming a minimum acceptable diet.¹⁷⁰ The minimum acceptable diet figure decreased over time to 21 percent by the end for 2018. This is not surprising as the general food assistance ration includes only two of the food groups recommended by WHO for infant and young child feeding (cereals and legumes), and the WFP ration makes up the bulk of food consumed by beneficiaries. Evaluation stakeholders also felt that WFP nutrition activities had not been implemented at sufficient scale to make a noticeable difference to the overall general and moderate acute malnutrition rates, although they have made a contribution to improved nutritional status of the target population.

Table 7: Nutrition-related outcomes (2016–2018)

	Target	Baseline	2016	2017	2018
Proportion of children consuming minimum acceptable diet (%)	>70	40.7	No data	19.9	21
Proportion of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who reached minimum dietary diversity (%)	>60	No data	No data	No data	54.2

Source: WFP SPRs 2016-2018.

132. The evaluation could not locate any outcome monitoring related to livelihood outcomes. The end of project reports for BOWDI and Fadama are both output focused, outlining whether outputs were provided and used, but no indications of how much income resulted, or the effect of that income or asset on household food security or livelihood security. Nor were baselines conducted.

133. Evaluation interviews with stakeholders highlighted the small-scale nature of the livelihood projects compared to the scale of need. Implementation of group projects that required input sharing (for example, sewing machines) were not well received by beneficiaries who felt it would be difficult for each household to have enough use of the inputs to earn adequate income.

Common services

134. UNHAS is widely credited with playing a pivotal role in enabling humanitarian operations in northeast Nigeria. The rotary wing assets deployed (presently four helicopters) are the only means of transport for humanitarian workers to areas where road access is prohibited by insecurity. The rotary wing service in particular supported the ability and willingness of partners to work in previously inaccessible

¹⁶⁷ WFP (2018) PowerPoint presentation on Nigeria Expanded Food Security Outcome Monitoring (EFSOM): August 2018.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ The above food security outcome data is taken from samples of GFA beneficiaries. In many cases, this includes nutrition beneficiaries.

¹⁷⁰ MAD is a compilation of meal frequency and dietary diversity. Minimum meal frequency for breastfed children is defined as two or more feedings of solid/semi-solid or soft food for children 6-8 months, and three or more feedings of solid/semi-solid or soft food for children 9-23 months. Minimum dietary diversity for breastfed children is defined as four or more food groups out of the seven food groups recommended for IYCF by WHO.

locations.^{171, 172} Furthermore, they were vital for lifting cargo to remote locations in the first six months of the operation when WFP and UNICEF provided limited direct food distributions as part of the rapid response mechanism.¹⁷³

135. While there is no alternative for the helicopter service, it is noted that there are now three commercial airlines operating fixed wing services between Abuja and Maiduguri, all approved by UNDSS. At the time of the evaluation, UNHAS continued flying this route while monitoring overlaps and usage patterns.¹⁷⁴

136. Logistics sector services are seen as generally relevant,¹⁷⁵ but interviews also raised questions on the amount of warehousing capacity the sector is holding.¹⁷⁶ As of end 2018, the sector managed eight facilities, one of which was in Maiduguri.¹⁷⁷ Only two of the seven spaces outside of Maiduguri see significant usage.¹⁷⁸ Interviewees pointed to comparatively high costs of storage,¹⁷⁹ but also recognized the importance of maintaining storage facilities as a strategic last resort. After a cost/benefit analysis¹⁸⁰ the common storage in Maiduguri has been marked for being phased out by WFP on the basis that commercial alternatives are now available.¹⁸¹

137. The services of the emergency telecommunications sector have consistently been rated as highly appropriate and relevant to needs by its users.¹⁸² Although there appear to be fledgling telecommunication services in the Maiduguri area, organizations throughout valued the reliability of the uplinks provided by the emergency telecommunications sector. Beyond Maiduguri there are very few options and agencies in the evaluated period largely relied exclusively on the common services provided by the emergency telecommunications sector in the humanitarian hubs.

Unanticipated effects

138. Although not strictly an unexpected effect, WFP operations did bring additional benefits to Nigerian farmers. WFP procured virtually all staples locally (Figure 19), largely through the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) hub in Kano, while only importing supplementary foods and some rice. In terms of value, the net proportion of local procurement steadily increased over the period under review. On average, over the period April 2016 to October 2018, close to 70 percent of procurement value was expended in Nigeria.

¹⁷¹ Interviews 193, 685 and logistics sector minutes 2016-2018.

¹⁷² Mentions in several interviews, including 130, 247, 515, 685.

¹⁷³ Interview 688.

¹⁷⁴ Interview 685.

¹⁷⁵ Interview 515, logistics sector minutes 2016-2018.

¹⁷⁶ Interview 193.

¹⁷⁷ Logistics sector concept of operations - Update 25 June 2018.

¹⁷⁸ Interview 130.

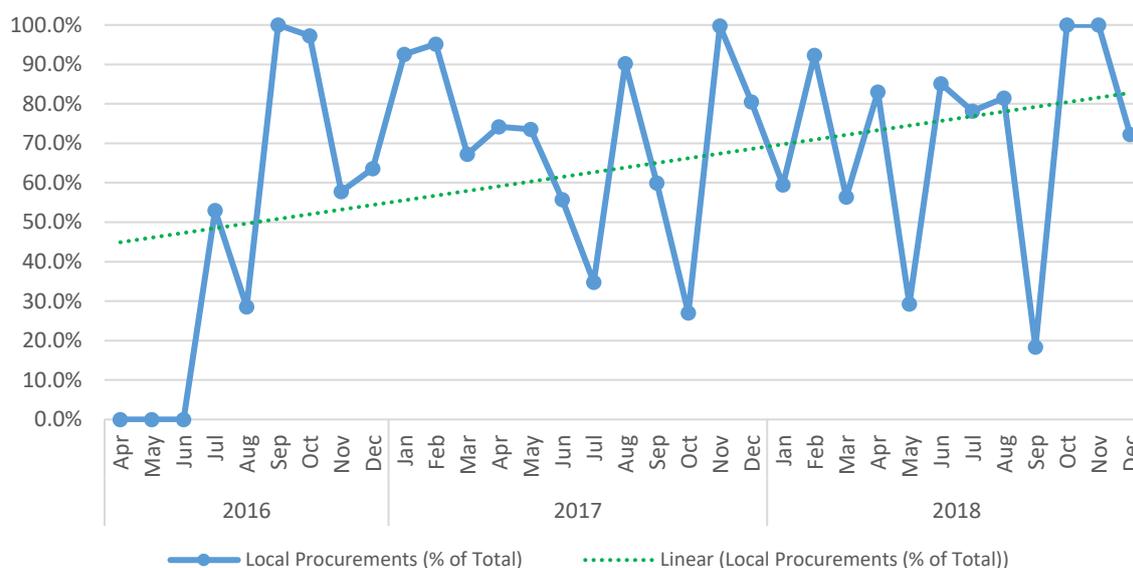
¹⁷⁹ Interview 193.

¹⁸⁰ Logistics sector minutes September to November 2016, interview 515.

¹⁸¹ Interview 193.

¹⁸² ETS user satisfaction surveys 2017 and 2018.

Figure 19: Proportion of local procurement over time



Source: Procurement data provided by WFP Nigeria country office.

139. WFP operations in Nigeria have created a strong relationship with the Government. This in turn has opened up opportunities for longer term work. WFP is currently exploring collaboration on food fortification and other more developmental activities with the Federal Government of Nigeria through the country strategic plan process.

2.2.2 Timeliness and Efficiency

Efficiency of scale-up

140. Once a decision had been taken to become operational in 2016, WFP achieved an impressive scale-up in beneficiaries. By December 2016, WFP provided assistance to 627,514 people, and by January 2017 WFP was supporting more than one million beneficiaries on a month-to-month basis.¹⁸³ Several factors underpinned this achievement.¹⁸⁴

141. Increased access to the affected population was obviously a pre-requisite. In 2015, even access to Maiduguri city was uncertain. As more areas became accessible to the humanitarian community over time, the WFP operation expanded geographically from 2 local government areas in 2016 (Maiduguri and Jere in Borno State) to 27 local government areas in 2018 covering Borno, Yobe and parts of Adamawa States (Annex J shows coverage by year). WFP was given credit for being at the forefront of expanding humanitarian assistance into areas that were previously inaccessible. This expansion went hand-in-hand with the expansion of UNHAS services.

142. As noted, (in paragraph 62), major limitations in the use of mobile money and the extension of programming into areas that had damaged or poorly functioning markets required a shift to in-kind transfers as a precondition to scale-up. In turn, the success of in-kind transfers as a transfer modality was underpinned by an effective supply chain and logistics operation. Examples of sound and creative decision making in relation to the supply chain are given below.

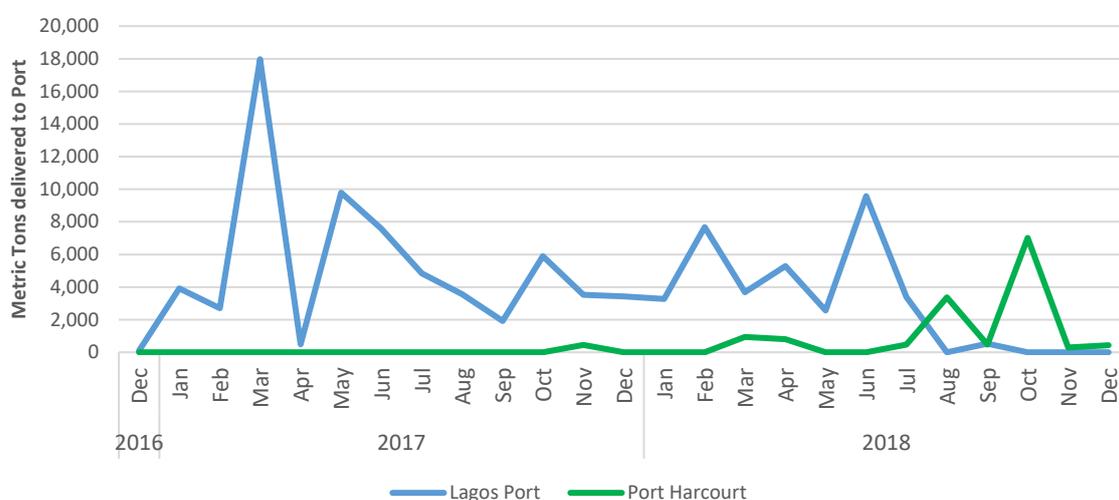
143. Firstly, the pipeline and lead times for internationally sourced commodities was highly vulnerable to port delays. WFP responded to congestion-related delays in Lagos Port in 2017 by shifting imports to the

¹⁸³ SPR 2016.

¹⁸⁴ This analysis does not repeat other factors which are discussed elsewhere such as HR and resourcing.

Port Harcourt area (Figure 20). This decision by WFP was exemplary in its timeliness and the best solution for the problem, other agencies only much later followed suit.¹⁸⁵

Figure 20: Relative port usage over time



Source: WFP LESS commodity management system.

144. WFP also executed measures to improve the efficiency of handling in Lagos Port. This included the introduction of a new clearing and forwarding agent and close liaison with Nigerian Port Authorities to allow easier access to the port. Reportedly over the short-term, this increased WFP container movement compared to the previous months.¹⁸⁶

145. Secondly, the establishment of the Kano hub in March 2017 and the location of a global commodity management facility (GCMF) there¹⁸⁷ gave WFP additional flexibility in the supply chain. The hub enabled WFP to establish sizeable storage space for strategic local procurement and pre-positioning. The use of Kano as a buffer and pre-positioning facility appears to consequently have reduced lead times as it is located closer to the area of operation than the port facilities or Abuja warehouses.¹⁸⁸

146. A further challenge for WFP was that transport between Maiduguri and Damaturu and partner warehouses was constrained by limited availability of trucks that were often old and in poor condition.¹⁸⁹ Transporters in northeast Nigeria had limited financial capacity to take on the larger contracts required by WFP, and it was not possible to attract larger transport firms from other parts of the country.¹⁹⁰ To overcome these constraints, a tariff system for contracting local transport was introduced between January 2017 and March 2018.¹⁹¹ It appears that both the capacity and diversity of the local transporters in the area of operation increased while the tariff system was used (see Annex N).¹⁹²

147. A further major factor influencing the rate of scale-up was the limited availability of cooperating partners initially. Few partner agencies were initially operational in northeast Nigeria, with Médecins sans Frontières and ICRC amongst the first to start activities there. WFP initially overcame this deficit by launching the rapid response mechanism together with UNICEF in November 2016. Rapid response mechanism teams flew into remote areas with UNHAS helicopters, or travelled by road when security allowed, and stayed up to six days providing food, nutrition, water and sanitation and other essential services. This provided the necessary breathing room for WFP to develop partnerships with newly established NGOs to support the

¹⁸⁵ Interview 237.

¹⁸⁶ WFP SitRep September 2017.

¹⁸⁷ WFP Nigeria SitRep March 2017.

¹⁸⁸ Interviews 523, 688; There are references to reduced lead times from Kano throughout SPRs and SitReps, but no concrete statistics were available.

¹⁸⁹ Interviews 193, 237, 688, Logistics sector minutes 2016-2018.

¹⁹⁰ Interview 148.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Interviews 237, 381, 688.

expansion of the operation. Ultimately, WFP has been able to establish more than twenty operational partnerships, which have been critical in enabling WFP to expand their project coverage.

148. The speed of scale-up was also advanced by the willingness of WFP to provide waivers on selected procedures. Interviews with country-based managers highlighted the emphasis placed by corporate leadership on achieving target numbers, over and above following protocol. Waivers on process often appeared to be ad hoc rather than spelled out in corporate L3 guidance. In some cases, such as recruitment of national staff (paragraph 194), waivers were not granted and full due diligence followed, even though this slowed operations, to mitigate key risks.

149. However, the push to achieve target numbers carried a cost. Stakeholders argued that WFP rightly has had scale-up as its focus, in many regards this focus has come at the expense of programme quality. Consequently, WFP has been struggling with rectifying quality issues right from the start. Examples of this are seen in the selection of the transfer mechanisms for cash-based transfers and the continuing confusion on targeting criteria and processes.

Cost efficiency

150. A detailed analysis of the cost efficiency of WFP operations is constrained by the fact that the budget and expenditure data were only available at high-level cost categories. The new country strategic plan budget categories and reporting are expected to create much greater transparency in the relationship between expenditure and results. Consequently, within the context of this evaluation the analysis largely focused on a qualitative assessment of decision making on issues related to cost efficiency.

151. This analysis found mixed results in the appropriateness and effectiveness of efforts to improve cost efficiency. Several key issues were identified which potentially influenced overall cost efficiency.

152. **Choice of transfer modality:** The choice of transfer modality can have significant impacts on cost efficiency. Although an Omega value analysis was started in June 2017, it was never finalized, or shared, and the results did not contribute to decision-making regarding the original modality choice. The internal audit confirmed that a thorough cost-review of the two cash-based transfer delivery mechanisms to help choose the most adequate and cost-effective modality in the various operational areas had not been performed.¹⁹³ At the time of the evaluation field mission, WFP was starting to conduct Omega analysis in some locations.¹⁹⁴ However, this needs to be contextualized, as in many cases the choice of modality was determined by feasibility rather than cost.

153. **Procurement of commodities:** Rice was replaced with sorghum/millet at the end of 2017 partly under pressure from donors as a cost saving measure. The EMOP 200777 budget revision on 9 June 2017 stated: "When we factor that the Country Office intends to procure approximately 3,200/MT of rice per month, shifting this tonnage to Sorghum/Millet will generate USD 800,000 savings/month...." However, as noted previously (in paragraph 89) this change had negative implications for beneficiaries. There is no evidence that these protection-related concerns were balanced against financial and other economic considerations, such as impact on time-burden for women.

154. The creation of a hub in Kano has arguably improved efficiencies. Its large storage capacity allowed WFP to buy food when prices were lowest, usually during harvest season, and pre-position them for later.¹⁹⁵ The WFP procurement plan provides an illustrative estimate¹⁹⁶ "The strategy to "buy and hold" will provide important savings to the programme. For example, if we compare the prices paid between November and January (Harvest) they are around USD 100/MT cheaper than other period of the year. Therefore, if we consider that with extra warehouse, we will be able to save USD 100/MT for the next 41,600 MT, we are estimating over USD 4.0M in savings." However, this calculation fails to take account of the costs of running the Kano hub.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ Internal Audit – Nigeria 2017.

¹⁹⁴ DRAFT Omega Analysis by CBT team in Maiduguri. Shared by email on 3rd December 2018.

¹⁹⁵ Interviews 523, 554, 68.

¹⁹⁶ Nigeria Country Office Procurement Plan Dec17-Sep18 v6.pdf.

¹⁹⁷ Due to the limitations of data availability the evaluation was not able to calculate these.

155. **Logistics costs:** The movement of commodities for in-kind distribution is costly, and transport is a large component of any WFP operation. Efficiency gains in transportation are therefore a significant factor in the cost of the operation. Annex N shows basic cost data for 2016 and 2017.¹⁹⁸ Between 2016 and 2017 the operation scaled up by a factor of 4.4 (in commodity value), while the cost for external transport increased by a factor of 12.8, and landside transport handling and storage by a factor of 13.8 (see Annex N). Part of this increase in landside transport handling and storage was presumably driven by the costs of operating the Kano hub, but the reasons could not be determined in full.

156. **UNHAS:** UNHAS operates an internal performance management tool that provides data on passenger number, seats filled, and related data on efficiency and effectiveness, including no-show numbers. Key revisions were done in March 2018 and in October 2018, introducing partial cost recovery, and penalties for helicopter no-shows,¹⁹⁹ significantly reducing the number of no shows on both services.²⁰⁰ An ECHO monitoring mission in November 2017 found that the operation was run as efficiently as possible under the circumstances. UNHAS was found to have adequate aircraft for the usage patterns and the context, to have booking systems and cargo consolidation processes that maximize payload on aircraft, and to have helicopter flight times that are optimized to utilize all contracted hours.

157. **Targeting overlaps:** There has been close cooperation with partners to identify and eliminate programming overlaps. During the second re-targeting exercise (see Annex M) WFP discovered duplication of operational areas with non-partner agencies and this was resolved through hand-over of beneficiaries. The introduction of SCOPE, with biometric registration, enhanced WFP internal control and verification capabilities. Having all WFP beneficiaries listed in a single platform enabled WFP to identify those benefiting from multiple WFP activities and eliminate some overlaps.

158. **Staffing:** The WFP operation started with the establishment of the Maiduguri area office. This was structured and staffed to operate independently and included the full range of WFP programmatic and administrative functions. The subsequent establishment of the Abuja country office in August 2016 led to significant overlaps and duplications in functional responsibilities, with nearly all units being present in both locations and often staffed at similar levels of seniority with significant cost implications. The country office has been engaged in a process of rationalization, which is still incomplete, with the finalization of the staffing review pending.

2.2.3 Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

Organizational capacity

159. There has been inadequate attention on gender within the Nigeria response, with a failure to implement corporate guidance and standards. WFP Nigeria has not yet complied with the corporate requirements to develop a country-level gender strategy and plan. The evaluation did not find evidence of any gender baseline conducted in Nigeria, while the WFP Nigeria Gender Action Plan was finally put on hold in relation to the development of the country strategic plan.²⁰¹

160. Involvement and support of both headquarters and the regional bureau in Dakar on gender has been uneven. A more meaningful engagement of headquarters on gender was observed in relation to the development of the country strategic plan with a mission to the country office and an extensive exchange of comments to ensure gender considerations were adequately reflected in the country strategic plan, while the regional bureau in Dakar conducted a gender support mission in May 2015.²⁰² The development of the WFP Nigeria country strategic plan brought about opportunities to redress some of these shortcomings, with greater investment in gender, including with the allocation of dedicated budgetary resources, which was not there before.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Only 2016 and 2017 figures were available.

¹⁹⁹ Partial cost recovery and no-show penalties had also been recommended by the ECHO monitoring mission: ECHO 2017 Monitoring report_Nigeria_November DG ECHO_UNHAS.

²⁰⁰ UNHAS Nigeria SAOP Annex 6 - cost recovery.pdf, email from CATO 05 Dec 2018.

²⁰¹ Zero Draft WFP Nigeria Gender Action Plan.

²⁰² Gender support mission for WFP Nigeria's country Office: Abuja, 21-25 May 2018.

²⁰³ WFP, 2019, Country Strategic Plan Nigeria.

161. Responsibility for gender in WFP Nigeria remained an “add-on” and inconsistently acted upon. The first gender focal point was as a supplementary responsibility for the partnership officer in Abuja in March 2017. It was only in August 2018 when the responsibility on partnership was transferred to another staff member that this freed up time and energy for more dedicated work by the gender focal point.²⁰⁴ In Maiduguri, the protection officer was by default also responsible for gender, though there was no evidence of any formal designation. The gender results network was inaugurated at the end of 2018, and there are now 11 staff members as part of the team.

162. The WFP gender focal point, supported by the protection unit, has started capacity-strengthening initiatives on gender targeted to the WFP country office and area offices. At the time of the evaluation, the plan was to start with supply chain, followed by finance, human resources and administration. The goal is to address gender-related issues of relevance to the unit and sensitize staff on the policies and tools that exist within WFP. Besides being mostly implemented in the past few months, the fact that they are not grounded in any formal gender action plan may undermine their effectiveness and continuation, as no accountability and leadership is there to push implementation forward.

163. Gender has been a great challenge across the Nigeria response, with no role model and guidance on it among United Nations agencies,²⁰⁵ poor understanding and capacity among partner organizations, and limited emphasis and resources by donors to work on it.²⁰⁶ National NGOs in northeast Nigeria have been scoring particularly poorly on gender, and efforts were made by WFP to strengthen their capacity. The due diligence assessment grid in use to check capacity of WFP cooperating partners since 2017 reflects considerations on gender. Field level agreements contains specific reference to the WFP Gender Policy as guiding partners’ activities on the ground and require partners to prioritize gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as the overall safety of WFP beneficiaries in the execution of the agreement.²⁰⁷ Other relevant initiatives to support partners’ capacity on gender include dissemination of guidance notes and checklists for gender mainstreaming.

Use of gender analysis in programme design and implementation

164. The extent of a gender analysis appears quite limited, with use in programme design and implementation also limited. All project documents display a gender marker code 2A. Exchange between the gender office in headquarters and the regional bureau in Dakar in the approval of the EMOP budget revisions clearly indicated that this was a mistake and that the regional EMOP originally only warranted a gender marker code 1. Up to Budget Revision No. 3, gender considerations are basically absent.²⁰⁸ With Budget Revision No. 4 (December 2015), the gender marker was formally revised and up-rated from 1 to 2A, but comments on the need to maintain 2A quality standards continued to be found, in particular in relation to Budget Revision Nos. 7, 9 and 12. Sex-disaggregated figures remained absent until Budget Revision No. 12.

165. WFP needs assessments disaggregate data by sex, age, and other diversity factors, but the extent of a gender analysis appear to be quite limited.²⁰⁹ In general, prioritization of young children and pregnant and lactating women is the only gender-specific reference often found in most of the assessments. Pregnant and lactating women receive nutrition sensitization activities that include cooking demonstration classes, the importance of utilizing available health services, and the need to increase diversity in their daily diets. Field visits in 2017 highlighted that men too were expressing an interest in joining nutrition-oriented informative activities and WFP intended to include them in such nutrition sensitization activities as a way to strengthen improved nutritional status for all household members as per good practice norms.²¹⁰ Evaluation interviews did indicate that for the BSFP children, while there are some men caregivers who would be getting the same information as women caregivers, the actual numbers of men caregivers in the programme is

²⁰⁴ WFP, 2019, Country Strategic Plan Nigeria.

²⁰⁴ In between, there was also a gap of few months during which the staff member was on maternity leave and no replacement was arranged.

²⁰⁵ At the time of the evaluation fieldwork, the Gender Theme Group, headed by UN Women was just revived after two years of inactivity. Interview 898.

²⁰⁶ Interviews 378, 898, and 511.

²⁰⁷ WFP, 2018, FLA template.

²⁰⁸ WFP, EMOP 200777 Budget Revision 10.15 No 3.

²⁰⁹ WFP emergency food security assessments show gradual improvement on both gender and protection analysis.

²¹⁰ WFP, 2017, Standard Project Report 2017 EMOP 200777.

unknown.²¹¹ There was little programmatic attention to the needs of young unaccompanied women who constituted a large proportion of the caseload.

166. Assessments conducted in 2016 and onwards²¹² typically featured gender “in addition to” protection. A series of stand-alone assessments on gender were conducted in the framework of the vulnerability assessment and mapping gender and markets initiative led by the regional bureau in Dakar. These include the 2016 Lake Chad Basin region gender and market assessment, the case study of street food vendors in Maiduguri, and the case studies from Kano, Katsina (Nigeria) and Marad (Niger), both in 2017.²¹³ However, the evaluation found no major use of the findings of the vulnerability assessment and mapping gender and market assessments. Most recently two reports, (i) a Gender Analysis for a Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihoods Improvement Project in July 2018, and (ii) a Gender and Sustainable Agriculture in Borno State: Exploring Evidence for Inclusion Programmes and Policies for Food Security in October 2018 were jointly conducted by FAO, UN Women and WFP. Finally, the country strategic plan has allocated funds to conduct rapid gender analysis.

167. In line with the WFP Gender Policy, at least 50 percent of the recipients registered in SCOPE should be women, even if they are not the head of the household. A protection risk and gender assessment in relation to cash-based transfer was conducted by WFP in November 2016 and revealed no major change in women’s status as a result of being the designated heads of households and recipients of the cash transfer. Money was devoted to buying food and cooking and handling of food was already considered a women’s responsibility. However, at the household level, this was positively correlated with women’s increased ability to control and influence decisions in general, for example in relation to education, health, childcare, livelihood investment and savings.²¹⁴ WFP had the stated objective to maximize equitable selection of both men and women retailers. In 2017, it reported that – for the first time – women retailers had been included and constituted 25 percent of the total group of retailers.²¹⁵

168. The WFP co-led food security sector working group has been actively promoting the integration of gender, protection and accountability to affected populations in food security and nutrition interventions. The sector guidance recommends that sensitization and targeting activities be inclusive of women, youth and men. WFP is among the entities that supported the development of the minimum standards on gender for SAFE programming, while a number of other efforts were undertaken to ensure mainstreaming of gender-based violence prevention in food assistance programmes and in the food security sector more generally.²¹⁶ WFP is also one of the supporters and active stakeholders in the Gender-Based Violence Nigeria Road Map.²¹⁷

169. WFP Nigeria regularly reports on three corporate cross-cutting gender indicators, namely: (i) “Proportion of assisted women, men, and women and men together who make decisions over the use of cash, vouchers or food within the household”, (ii) “Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees”, and (iii) “Proportion of women project management committee members trained on modalities of food, cash or voucher distribution”. Overall, these are meant to measure progress towards “improved gender equality and women’s empowerment among WFP-assisted population”,²¹⁸ as well as progress towards the third objective of WFP Gender Policy, which reads “women and girls have increased power in decision-making regarding food security and nutrition in households, communities and societies”.²¹⁹

²¹¹ Though it is likely to be very small since many interviews mentioned that the majority of people targeted in general are women.

²¹² Examples of this include the WFP Protection Risk Analysis northeast Nigeria in April 2016, which also highlights gender dynamics more in general; and the WFP Protection Risk and Gender Assessment in the context of CBT.

²¹³ WFP, 2016, 2017, VAM Gender and Market Studies Series 2016 and 2017.

²¹⁴ WFP, 2017, Standard Project Report 2017 EMOP 200777.

²¹⁵ EMOP 200777 SPR2017.

²¹⁶ GBV sub-sector, 2017, Annual Report.

²¹⁷ Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies: Northeast Nigeria Road Map 2018-2019.

²¹⁸ This is one of WFP corporate results.

²¹⁹ WFP, 2018, WFP Corporate Results Framework – Outcome and Output Indicator Compendium 2017-2021.

Table 8: Performance against gender outcome targets (2016-2018)

Cross-cutting gender indicators	Project end target	GFA		
		2016	2017	2018
Proportion of households where women and men together make decisions over the use of cash, voucher or food	50	51	63	54
Proportion of households where women make decisions over the use of cash, voucher or food	25	20	19	31
Proportion of households where men make decisions over the use of cash, voucher or food	25	29	18	15
Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees	50	60	N/R	N/R
Proportion of women project management committee members trained on modalities of food, cash, or voucher distribution	60	60	N/R	N/R

Source: WFP SPRs 2016-2018. N/R = not reported.

170. Data from 2016-2018 standard project reports (Table 8) reveal that for all indicators WFP exceeded the set targets.²²⁰ The team could not assess the current situation with respect to the proportion of women in project management committees either in leadership positions or as members, as the interim data shared by the country office for 2018 did not contain updates on this.²²¹

171. Among the explanatory factors provided for these achievements in the standard project reports are the designation of women as entitlement holders and the promotion of women's active participation in food assistance activities, which are believed firstly to have a positive transformative and empowering impact, increasing women's status and decision-making capacity within families and communities at large, and secondly to enhance consensus for women's increased role in other areas. Moreover, greater gender balance in food assistance and nutrition teams made it easier for women beneficiaries to resort to them for information and consultation on food and nutrition assistance, thus possibly contributing to women having a greater ability to make informed decisions and exercise greater control over the assistance provided.

2.3. Factors and Quality of Strategic Decision Making

2.3.1 Role of Corporate Policies, Guidance, Tools, Processes and Systems

Regional bureau in Dakar and headquarters support

172. The WFP operation in Nigeria has relied heavily on support from the regional bureau in Dakar and headquarters. Prior to the establishment of the L3, responsibility for monitoring the emerging crisis fell to the regional bureau in Dakar. This included advising the Executive Director on when and how WFP should engage with the crisis response in northeast Nigeria.

173. The WFP regional bureau in Dakar and headquarters were considering opening an office in Nigeria as far back as 2006 and monitoring the crisis in Nigeria since at least 2013. However, although the regional EMOP was initiated in early 2015 in neighbouring countries supporting refugees from Nigeria, the decision to operationalize in Nigeria took time, as did the process of acquiring the necessary permissions from the Federal Government of Nigeria. As a result, WFP only became fully operational after August 2016, just before the famine alert in December 2016. While there are clearly a wide range of factors that explain this timeline, ultimately the fact remains that WFP arrived relatively late and at a point where famine had already occurred in some parts of northeast Nigeria.²²²

²²⁰ These are =50 for joint decision making at the household level, and >50 for leadership and membership in project committees.

²²¹ WFP, 2018, Nigeria 2018 Standard Project Report Logframe Outcome Indicators Results.

²²² FEWSET (2016) Famine risk in northern and central Borno State. A Famine likely occurred in Bama LGA and may be ongoing in inaccessible areas of Borno State. 13th December 2016.

174. There are different opinions on the extent to which this reflected a lack of information on the situation. Certainly, all access to northeast Nigeria was severely curtailed in the build-up to the crisis – including initially even the State capital Maiduguri. According to interviews, the key trigger for WFP engagement came when senior staff from the WFP regional bureau in Dakar and headquarters joined the Joint United Nations Multi-Sectoral Assessment in April 2016²²³ covering Borno and Yobe States. The mission findings served as the basis for the decision that WFP needed to take an operational position.²²⁴ Direct observation of the situation on the ground was reported as proving highly influential.

175. However, there was a rather extensive catalogue of early warnings that pre-dated the 2016 mission. This included the FEWSNET reporting on the impact of civil insecurity in northeast Nigeria on food security since February 2012 and IOM displacement tracking data since 2013. This early warning did trigger the decision of WFP to ramp up its presence in-country in 2015, albeit stationing just two staff in Borno State to support NEMA. However, critically it appears to have taken another nine months for the decision to be reached that it was appropriate for WFP to become operational. Part of this time-lag can be attributed to the period it took to establish the necessary understanding of the capacities and limitations of Nigerian response institutions and awaiting an official request for assistance to be made by the Nigerian Government.

176. The WFP operation, once established, was initially managed by the regional bureau in Dakar, with additional technical programme support and strategic guidance from headquarters. In-country leadership initially resided at the level of an emergency coordinator, reporting directly to the Regional Director of the regional bureau in Dakar. Operational task force meetings were regularly convened and chaired by the Regional Director in support of this.

177. Strong technical and administrative support and guidance to the programme was provided by multiple regional advisors. The evaluation found significant regional bureau support in developing the Nigeria entry strategy in 2016, to extensive and continuous technical support in the forms of analysis, training and support missions, and development of guidance materials. For example, the regional bureau in Dakar's nutrition advisor was critical in designing the nutrition activity in collaboration with the regional nutrition coordination fora. Regular meetings were conducted between headquarters nutrition and regional bureau nutrition to ensure continuity of support to Nigeria. The regional bureau in Dakar cash-based transfer advisor has provided ongoing support to the cash-based transfer team throughout the operation. Technical advice and support in developing livelihoods programming were less apparent and there was no focal point to support the rollout of WFP capacity-strengthening tools and processes.

178. While the Nigeria response was part of the regional EMOP, very little evidence was found of a regional approach. Few synergies were exploited between neighbouring countries, with little evidence of shared information, analysis, lessons learned or shared resources.

179. The level of engagement by headquarters has varied widely. Evaluation interviews indicate that at the start, the then Executive Director of WFP had a very hands-on role. This included three visits to Nigeria, a direct channel of communication with the Federal Government of Nigeria and directing the decision to pursue a mobile money pilot. Subsequently, headquarters has employed a more hands-off approach. This is evidenced by the decline in the number of strategic task force meetings; from eight in 2016 to two in 2017 to one in 2018.

Corporate policies and guidance

180. WFP has a well-developed suite of technical and administrative policies and guidance to support the delivery of quality programmes in emergencies. To a large degree, the response capitalized on this in the delivery of the response and it was clearly well used in designing and delivering on nutrition, in-kind assistance, supply chain and human resources. Annexes M, N and O discuss this in more detail according to thematic area. However, a number of issues did emerge in the application of corporate guidance in Nigeria, which deserve highlighting.

181. Firstly, in some cases while the guidance was there, it was not adequately applied. Existing cash-based transfer guidance was available at the start of the operation that should have been used to support

²²³ WFP et al (2016) Joint United Nations Multi-Sectoral Assessment. Borno and Yobe States, Nigeria. April 2016.

²²⁴ WFP SPR 2016.

better programme design and implementation. The Cash and Voucher Manual²²⁵ outlines an appropriate process for risk analysis and response analysis including calculations of transfer values and cost effectiveness (Omega value), and how to select the transfer modality and delivery mechanism. Additional complementary guidance includes the Cash-Based Transfer Manual – Financial Management (July 2016),²²⁶ the Business Process Model²²⁷ and its “responsible, accountable, consulted and informed” (RACI) matrix, which details all the business process of cash-based transfer interventions (October 2016), Interim Guidance for Cash-Based Transfer Reconciliation and Transaction Monitoring (July 2017),²²⁸ and guidance on information and communication technology (ICT) capacity assessments.²²⁹

182. As already noted, much of this guidance was not used with serious repercussions for programme quality. The evaluation found that this is now being corrected, but only in 2018. Two main factors appear to have contributed to this situation developing. Firstly, processes were deliberately waived in order to facilitate the speed of scale-up. Secondly, this was compounded by the inexperience of staff at the start of the programme, who lacked a knowledge of proper procedure.

183. In December 2016, a mission from headquarters advised that the country office should introduce SCOPE, the WFP corporate beneficiary information management tool, to support the introduction of e-vouchers. This decision was in line with the WFP 2015 directive to ensure standardization of beneficiary information management across WFP.²³⁰ In practice WFP encountered several challenges with the SCOPE system and these have not been fully rectified.²³¹ A considerable number of SCOPE registration cards failed to work due to technical issues with smartcards, mPOS security keys and a failure to recognize fingerprints. A combination of late redemption and time-consuming problem solving meant that beneficiaries sometimes missed entitlements before the situation was resolved.

184. Further challenges in adherence to corporate guidance emerged as Nigeria was selected as a phase I country strategic plan pilot country. In retrospect the wisdom of this choice can be questioned, as it directed already over-stretched management capacity away from the core task of delivering the emergency response. In addition, the decision to develop a country strategic plan was premature and led WFP into an early commitment to a longer-term presence in-country. Several WFP stakeholders argued that the country strategic plan planning process diminished the option of a rapid post-emergency departure.

185. In some cases, questions were raised on the sufficiency or appropriateness of corporate guidance or tools. The existing WFP policy framework on humanitarian access and principles does not provide any guidance on implementation and more importantly on how to deal with trade-offs and compromises that might be necessary to secure access to the populations in need.²³² Though specific operational guidance has existed since 2017 and an inter-functional director-level advisory group on access and a technical access cell were established in 2015,²³³ the evaluation found little evidence of the impact of these on northeast Nigeria’s operations. Findings from a previous evaluation indicated staff discontinuity within the technical cell and limited knowledge of them in the field as possible explanatory factors.²³⁴

186. Guidance on the assessment, planning and monitoring of capacity strengthening is very limited. The systemic weakness of the organization in this area was well described in the 2017 evaluation “WFP Policy on Capacity Strengthening: An Update on Implementation”. These findings from Nigeria confirm that the findings of this evaluation remain entirely relevant and require corporate attention. Specifically:

²²⁵ WFP (2014) Cash and Vouchers Manual. 2nd Edition. Rome, Italy.

²²⁶ WFP (2016) Cash-Based Transfer Manual: Financial Management. July 2016. Rome, Italy.

²²⁷ WFP (2017) Beneficiary and Transfer Management Assessment Process: ICT Capacity Assessment Guidelines for cash-based transfers. Version 1.2, December 2017.

²²⁸ WFP (2017) Interim Guidance for CBT Reconciliation and Transaction Monitoring. WFP Policy and Programme Division (OSZ). July 2017.

²²⁹ WFP (2017).

²³⁰ WFP (2015) Standardization of Beneficiary Transfer Management in WFP. OED2015/015 date 11/9/2015.

²³¹ These challenges are not unique to Nigeria and appear long-running – see for example WFP country portfolio evaluations for Somalia and South Sudan. See also Annex M for further details.

²³² WFP, 2018, Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access.

²³³ The group includes the policy & programme, field security, emergency preparedness and support response, and supply chain divisions.

²³⁴ WFP, 2018, Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access.

- i. Capacity strengthening is not prominently positioned within the WFP organizational structure
- ii. The small capacity-strengthening unit has not been able to exercise strong leadership in policy implementation
- iii. There have not been any comprehensive efforts to strengthen related staff capacities or tailor resource-mobilization efforts to capacity strengthening needs
- iv. Despite some improvements, monitoring and reporting on capacity strengthening remain weak and inconsistent, limiting WFP ability to showcase and learn from its work.

187. The evaluation did not find that the country office had been able to draw on corporate guidance on the design and management of complaints and feedback mechanisms, or indeed that such guidance exists. Consequently, the pros and cons of each mechanism had to be (re)learned through experience and systems only slowly improved. The evaluation also notes that WFP targeting challenges may have been reduced if there were corporate guidance available on acceptable verification thresholds and targeting errors, for both inclusion and exclusion (see Annex M).²³⁵

Human resources

188. The WFP lack of presence in Nigeria prior to the response brought several human-resource challenges for the establishment and scale-up of the operation. A country office had to be populated from scratch in the midst of the ongoing emergency response. Initially, programme personnel were deployed from headquarters, the regional bureau in Dakar and other WFP offices on special request to provide technical support to the Federal Government of Nigeria. However, the subsequent evolution into an operational programme over 2016 meant that WFP had to utilize multiple channels to recruit several hundred personnel.

189. With no previous country presence, it appears the early months of the operation (2016 to early 2017) were mostly run by staff on mission or secondment and temporary duty assignment (TDY) arrangements.²³⁶ These temporary senior staff were tasked with both setting up and expanding operations, alongside onboarding national staff to establish more sustainable office structures. The effectiveness of temporary duty assignments was often high. For example, the successful deployment of experienced staff on extended missions or limited assignments is credited with establishing a functional supply chain.²³⁷

190. Equally stakeholders noted that the effectiveness of competent temporary duty assignments was compromised by lack of continuity and handover arrangements. Evaluation interviews indicate that across the programme personnel often arrived without clear definitions of roles and limited or no handover or briefing. Both the regional bureau in Dakar and headquarters provided significant ongoing involvement in trouble-shooting the implementation challenges, including engaging in multiple high-level meetings with the financial service providers. Recommendations from these missions were sometimes not operationalized by the Nigeria teams despite their appropriateness.

191. Once Nigeria was declared a L3 emergency, WFP was able to request staff from other offices and use the emergency roster to bring in consultants. At the time the L3 emergency was declared, five concurrent L3 emergencies were already stretching the ability of WFP to respond through the roster.²³⁸ The roster was also noted to include an uneven representation of different skill sets, partly related to its voluntary nature. Under-represented areas included staff with experience of cash-based transfers, protection and gender.

192. With support from headquarters and the regional bureau in Dakar, WFP started the process of hiring long-term national and international staff in 2016 and establishing three country offices – in Maiduguri, Damaturu and Abuja. Recruitment of international staff through the reassignment process faced numerous challenges. Some staff were reticent to be based in Maiduguri or Damaturu due to insecurity and poor living conditions. Staff at the main compound in Maiduguri were housed in communal tents for many months.

²³⁵ Similar findings come from the Evaluation of the WFP Regional Response to the Syrian Crisis (2015-2018) and Somalia: An Evaluation of WFP's Portfolio (2012-2017).

²³⁶ Interviews 208, 523, 554, 688.

²³⁷ Interviews 523, 554, 688.

²³⁸ These were Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Southern Africa, and South Sudan.

Furthermore, changes in United Nations allowances had reduced financial incentives for staff to work in hardship postings.

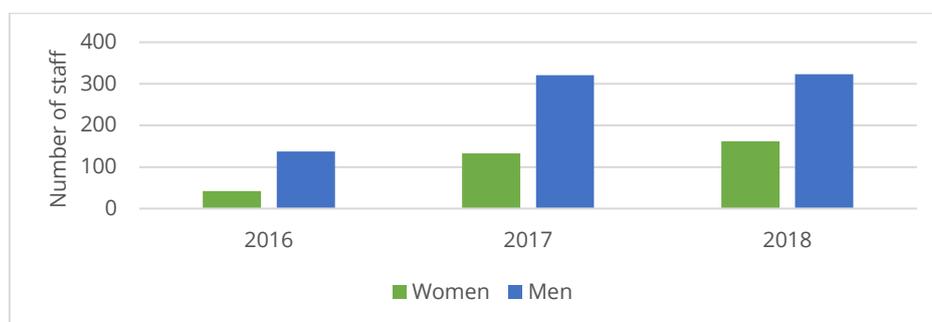
193. Consequently, personnel movement into and out of the operation during 2016 was high, with a reliance on temporary deployments from other WFP offices, and consultants, some of whom had no experience with WFP processes or corporate guidance. This affected some areas of the programme more than others. For example, the livelihoods team was originally staffed from other programme positions regardless of their experience with livelihood programming.²³⁹ The gaps in staff capacity and skills in specific roles impacted operational efficacy. It is notable that the best performing areas of the operation – such as common services and supply chain – benefitted from stable and experienced staffing from the outset. For example, the nutrition programme was also able to locate long-term staff by the end of December 2016, the majority of whom are still working with WFP Nigeria in the same roles.

194. Recruitment of national staff was comparatively slow, complicated because of the strict due diligence that the organization saw as necessary in the context of Nigeria. Recruitment lead times were said to be as long as six months,²⁴⁰ but could be justified when set against the risks of recruiting poorly vetted staff. Local recruitment of national staff was also challenging because Nigeria did not have a history of humanitarian operations, so applicants generally lacked emergency expertise even if appropriately qualified.

195. The agency was fully aware of the problem of onboarding staff that were totally new to WFP.²⁴¹ No national staff had experience of key WFP systems such as LESS and COMET²⁴² and operations were broadly commenced using paper-based systems that progressively migrated to WFP corporate systems. This reduced efficiencies and caused data gaps for 2016 that are apparent in the datasets obtained for this evaluation.²⁴³

196. The WFP Gender Policy and Action Plan (2015-2020) commits WFP to work “towards equal representation of women and men employees at P3 and NOC levels and below”.²⁴⁴ However, in the rush to staff the newly established WFP country office, the gender balance was disregarded, with negative implications for the organization’s capacity to reach out to the whole population - for example during assessment and monitoring. This is now being redressed through positive discrimination in recruitment processes (see Annex O). The percentage of women staff has increased from 23 percent in 2016 to 33 percent in 2018 of all staff in Nigeria (Figure 21).

Figure 21: WFP Nigeria country office staff by gender



Source: WFP HR stats, HR technology and analytics HRMOI.

197. Strong representations were made to the evaluation by donors²⁴⁵ on the frequent leadership changes within WFP Nigeria. Over the three years of the evaluation there were no less than three emergency coordinators, three Country Directors and two Deputy Country Directors. Only in 2017 was a stable senior management team in place. Furthermore, not all of the leadership team came with experience of managing

²³⁹ At the time of the evaluation field mission, WFP was recruiting specialized livelihood staff including a livestock veterinarian and an agronomist to support the livelihood activities under the CSP.

²⁴⁰ Interview 688.

²⁴¹ 2016_7_NfR Operational Task Force_2.pdf: Staff needs big scale-up, concern about large numbers of untrained non-WFP national staff.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ LESS stock data has obvious gaps in 2016 and could not be used for reliable analysis.

²⁴⁴ WFP, Gender and Human Resources.

²⁴⁵ Interviews 136, 902.

an emergency response of the scale of Nigeria. The initial reflex was to call on staff within the region – an area where programmes tend to be smaller-scale, more developmental and francophone. This significantly impacted on the ability of the programme to provide strategic direction.

198. This was further compounded by unclear responsibilities and reporting lines for staff. For example, a head of programme was appointed in Maiduguri in August 2016 and a head of programme unit in Abuja in January 2017. Confusion about who was making programme decisions ensued. When coupled with the regular change of senior leadership, the result was an overall lack of programmatic oversight. Available evidence suggests that this has improved over the years, but important challenges remain, particularly in relation to the allocation of responsibilities and reporting between the country office and area offices, including on gender and protection.²⁴⁶

2.3.2 Partnerships and Involvement of National and Local Stakeholders

Partnerships

199. WFP Nigeria has worked hard to establish partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including international and national NGOs as well as other United Nations agencies and other international organizations. Field level agreements to implement food distributions and nutrition support began in October 2016. By the end of 2016, WFP had 6 cooperating partners in place, increasing to 23 by the end of 2018 (Annex L). Partners implement general food assistance and nutrition activities, third-party monitoring and livelihood activities.

200. In the early stages of the operation, WFP experienced several challenges with the process to establish field level agreements as new staff were not familiar with the WFP corporate systems. This resulted in field level agreements taking extended periods before being signed or being signed without WFP undertaking sufficient capacity assessment of their partners. Some experienced partners dropped out once they located their own funding, as they found the WFP process too laborious.

201. Over time, the signing of field level agreements became more streamlined, as WFP developed appropriate partner capacity-assessment tools and established a dedicated technical proposal review committee (in Maiduguri) and a partnership committee (in Abuja). The process was still being streamlined during the evaluation field mission, with the most recent addition being the establishment of a cooperating partner field level agreement monitoring taskforce in October 2018 in line with corporate standards. This committee is tasked with monitoring cooperating partners and ensuring that the terms of the field level agreements are being properly carried out.

Coordination

202. WFP engages with a wide range of coordination mechanisms at both federal and state government levels. Nigeria has a complex coordination structure with national mechanisms managing the relationships with the humanitarian community, and state structures acting primarily at the operational level, and not necessarily mirroring the federal structure. Coordination responsibilities in Government, especially in 2015, were unclear and overlapping with multiple institutions tasked with national and state level emergency coordination. WFP operations were broadly coordinated with other United Nations agencies as part of the overall Humanitarian Response Plan.

203. WFP has also provided (co)leadership for a number of sectors. WFP and FAO co-lead the food security sector under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, with WFP supporting the funding of the food security sector lead position. WFP also leads the logistics and emergency telecommunication sectors and coordinates the civil military coordination (CMCoord) working group through the logistic sector. All the sectors led, or co-led, by WFP were recognized to be among the strongest coordination bodies. WFP is also a member of several other coordination fora including the nutrition sector, nutrition in emergencies working group, cash working group, and early recovery/livelihoods sector, as well as the protection, gender-based violence²⁴⁷ and child protection sectors at federal level and accountability to affected population at state level. There are currently two coordination structures specifically on gender, both of which have been recently

²⁴⁶ Interviews 567, 898.

²⁴⁷ UNHCR is the lead agency of the protection sector, while UNFPA is leading the GBV sub-sector working group.

reactivated: an all-stakeholders group on gender led by the Canadian International Development Agency, and a United Nations-specific gender theme group headed by UN Women. WFP is an active member of both. WFP is also one of the supporters and active stakeholders in the Gender-Based Violence Nigeria Roadmap.²⁴⁸

204. The added value of these groups was widely acknowledged. For example:

- i. The food security sector has developed guidance on targeting and food basket harmonization, which has been utilized by other sectors and working groups to improve programming. It was well regarded by stakeholders.
- ii. In the nutrition sector, WFP works closely with UNICEF at regional, national and state levels and this relationship has been critical for the appropriate design of WFP nutrition activities, and for WFP establishing itself in the Nigerian nutrition landscape.
- iii. WFP is also a member of the inter-agency network on PSEA and contributed to the development of the action plan to strengthen the PSEA framework for the northeast Nigeria humanitarian response. Moreover, it supported the establishment of interagency referral systems, standard operating procedures and community-based complaint mechanisms to mainstream PSEA among humanitarian actors in the country.²⁴⁹

205. However, sector level coordination challenges were also identified. The initial responsibility for leadership of the food security sector was taken by FAO. It was reported that it took at least a year before WFP was able to take up its coordination responsibilities. Stakeholders suggested that additional support from headquarters on establishing coordination structures would have been welcomed.

206. The responsibility for the civil-military liaison function for ground transport was assigned to the logistics sector, initially as support to the civil-military coordination mechanisms established by UNOCHA,²⁵⁰ then later as full responsibility for the facilitation of operations level liaison between humanitarian logistics actors and national military authorities.²⁵¹ The overall function involves consolidating road transport requests on behalf of all sector partners for weekly submission for clearance by the military.

207. Logistics sector minutes, as well as interviews, however, point to an increasing dominance of this process in controlling the delivery of any aid.²⁵² With only very light cargo being shipped by rotary wing services from UNHAS, the bulk of any commodity inputs to partners' operations is transported by road. The military places extensive restrictions on geography, cargo composition and quantities on such transport requests,²⁵³ arguably controlling the delivery of programmes through the cargo clearance process. From interviews it is not clear how, if at all, overall access negotiations on behalf of the humanitarian community expedite these processes. Furthermore, the logistics sector in February 2017 took over access mapping with the departure of the OCHA humanitarian affairs officer for access.²⁵⁴ It could be argued therefore that from the sector coordination perspective, the set-up in Nigeria was beyond what a "standard" logistics cluster coordination function performs.²⁵⁵

Contribution to national and local capacities

208. The original memorandum of understanding WFP had with the Government provided an entry point to conduct training in 2015 that helped build relationships with the Government and understand better the structure of the Government and its landscape. IR-PREP 200965 followed with an overall objective of strengthening the preparedness and response capacity of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Staff were seconded to work with NEMA and selected SEMAs. The 2016 standard project report indicates that during the two-month implementation period WFP carried out several activities, including training on the principles of cash-based transfer, beneficiary registration, food supply chain, food basket composition, food security

²⁴⁸ Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies: Northeast Nigeria Road Map 2018-2019.

²⁴⁹ WFP, 2017, Standard Project Report 2017 EMOP 200777.

²⁵⁰ Logistics cluster concepts of operations 2016 and 2017

²⁵¹ Logistics cluster concept of operations 25th June 2018.

²⁵² Logistics sector minutes 2016 to 2018, Interviews 193 and 247.

²⁵³ Logistics sector minutes 2016 to 2018, Interview 247.

²⁵⁴ Logistics sector minutes 7 Feb 2017.

²⁵⁵ Interview 193, logcluster.org.

and vulnerability assessment, emergency food security assessment methodology, data analysis, a review of the National Food Reserve Department, and data analysis.²⁵⁶ WFP also worked closely with NEMA and SEMA to train national volunteers to provide food assistance, warehouse management and storage of humanitarian assistance, beneficiary registration and distribution, and mainstreaming protection.

209. The results of the IR-PREP are, however, impossible to quantify, as there is no documentary evidence of indicators, process monitoring, or targets. The most notable qualitative outcome of the IR-PREP was the recognition of the political barriers to mobilizing a government-led response, including the fragmented resources and responsibilities within a federal system. This led WFP to become directly operational and begin establishing partnerships with other agencies to implement the programme. However, the evaluation found no rigorous capacity assessment to support this conclusion.²⁵⁷

210. Once WFP became fully operational, capacity-strengthening activities were mainstreamed into EMOP 200777. Throughout EMOP 200777, WFP has continued to work closely with the Federal Government of Nigeria, predominantly with NEMA and SEMA as well as the Ministries of Health and Agriculture. WFP and NEMA/SEMA have continued a strong working relationship, with one SEMA staff in each state designated to liaise between WFP and the Government. Together, WFP and NEMA/SEMA have carried out several joint emergency food security assessments and joint monitoring missions with the support of the National Bureau of Statistics. Evaluation interviews also indicate that, although NEMA/SEMA have a limited role in supporting the development of WFP operational plans, this joint approach to assessments has been effective at improving the Government's understanding of the food security situation in northeast Nigeria.

211. WFP also works closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, particularly with the NPFS on food security assessments including the Cadre Harmonisé. The Ministry of Agriculture supports data collection and analysis and is keen to take over the full Cadre Harmonisé analysis in time. In November 2018, WFP and the NPFS were in discussion about a country strategic plan memorandum of understanding to this effect. The Ministry of Agriculture also participated in the seasonal livelihood programming with a view to supporting agricultural livelihood activities where possible. WFP also collaborates with the Fadama III National Coordination Office under the Ministry of Agriculture for the implementation of the Fadama livelihood project.

212. The WFP nutrition team also works with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF on activities related to the revision of the community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) protocol to include moderate acute malnutrition treatment and prevention, with a draft protocol in discussion at the time of the evaluation field mission. The results of the implementation of the WFP pilot targeted supplementary feeding programme (TSFP) will be highly relevant in that regard.

213. Within the scope of supply chain management, capacity strengthening was given on emergency response capacity. Topics included overall supply chain management, coordination, warehouse management and storage, and the coordination of multi-sectoral convoys.²⁵⁸ WFP also participated in different fora to provide technical advice to enhance the government policies on food safety and quality.²⁵⁹ Over the years, WFP has also made various efforts to ensure the integration of protection and gender in food assistance activities, including building the capacity of partners and other actors at national and local levels. Among them, five capacity-strengthening events were conducted at the federal and state levels, including the State Ministries of Women and Social Welfare, on, among others, cross-cutting issues such as gender, protection and accountability to affected populations.²⁶⁰

214. In general, collaborating on capacity-strengthening and emergency-response activities simultaneously proved challenging for both WFP and government institutions. While these capacity-strengthening interventions were well received and relevant, interviewees have pointed to missed opportunities in not building government capacity for preparedness and emergency response more

²⁵⁶ SPR 2016.

²⁵⁷ However, it was noted that WFP conducted a capacity assessment of NEMA in 2010. This appeared to have been largely forgotten – or of limited relevance - in 2016.

²⁵⁸ EMOP200777, SPR 2016 and 2017.

²⁵⁹ Nigeria Executive Brief July 2017.pdf.

²⁶⁰ WFP, 2018, Nigeria Protection Mission Final Report.

holistically and at the national level.²⁶¹ Capacity-strengthening outputs seem to be mostly ad hoc, with no monitoring of their outputs or outcomes. Similarly, there is no documented capacity-strengthening strategy and the only documented assessment of the Government's capacity in emergency preparedness and response is from 2010.²⁶² However, WFP did facilitate a self-assessment of NEMA's monitoring and evaluation capacity in April 2017 to link to this element of capacity strengthening. One interviewee argued for a system level approach to capacity strengthening that addresses individual, organizational, and enabling-environment factors – rather than the current focus on individual capacity strengthening.²⁶³ Overall, there has been little real progress towards greater ownership of, or accountability for, meeting emergency needs amongst government institutions.

215. The WFP Nigeria Country Strategic Plan (2019-2022)²⁶⁴ includes capacity strengthening as one pillar, with a view to supporting government actors to manage food security and nutrition programme in line with national targets. The WFP Nigeria country office aims to strengthen partnerships with the Government through (continued) capacity-strengthening activities, including training of staff on procurement and commodity management, and by providing technical inputs into relevant policy processes (for example, food quality).²⁶⁵ A number of memoranda of understanding with ministries have been agreed, including engaging with the National Social Investment Office (NSIO) and others to support the Federal Government of Nigeria to manage social safety nets and therefore improve the food security, nutritional status and access to services for vulnerable people. However, the national country strategic plan capacity-strengthening plans were not evaluated as they fall outside of the scope of the evaluation.

2.3.3 Influence of Other Factors

Security and access

216. The access constraints in northeast Nigeria have made humanitarian action in the area highly challenging. Only 3 of 26 local government areas in Borno State were fully accessible to international humanitarian actors in 2015. Despite counter-insurgency operations by the Multinational Joint Task Force, Non-state armed groups continue to pose significant threats to civilian populations.²⁶⁶ In the course of 2016 and 2017 humanitarian access increased considerably, but it still remains heavily constrained in Borno State. In 2018, 3 local government areas remained completely inaccessible for United Nations and International NGO humanitarian services, whereas 26 are partially accessible and 37 are fully accessible.²⁶⁷ In the absence of safety assurances by non-state armed groups, the humanitarian community has remained heavily dependent on military escorts provided by the Nigerian security forces.²⁶⁸

217. Donors have increasingly pushed for increased access and stronger, strategic and consistent advocacy by the humanitarian coordinator and humanitarian country team members with the Government of Nigeria.²⁶⁹ This led in 2018 to the roll-out of the Humanitarian Country Team Humanitarian Access Strategy for northeast Nigeria and to the CMCoord Guidance. The access strategy delineates a sequenced approach that includes: principled engagement; community engagement; strategic access negotiations; operational and tactical access negotiations; and the distinction between humanitarian actors and the Nigerian security forces. Following the endorsement of the strategy, six OCHA-led one-day training sessions were conducted in 2018 for humanitarians, government staff and the security forces. In addition, two workshops were reportedly organized by DFID and USAID.

²⁶¹ Interview 523.

²⁶² WFP (2010) DRAFT – Emergency Preparedness and Response Capacity Assessment Mission: Nigeria. 10th-21st May, 2010.

²⁶³ Interview 930.

²⁶⁴ CSP – DRAFT June 2018.

²⁶⁵ Country Office Nigeria Annual Performance Plan 2018.

²⁶⁶ Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin region - S/2017/764, 7 September 2017.

²⁶⁷ Humanitarian Access Strategy, April 2018.

²⁶⁸ OCHA, 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan Nigeria (February 2018).

²⁶⁹ 2017, Joint Letter to WFP Leadership in Nigeria; 2018, Joint Donor Letter to the Attention of the Chair of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Emergency Directors Group (EDG) on 'Improving Humanitarian Advocacy & Operational Response in North-East Nigeria; and interview 378.

218. At the time the evaluation took place, WFP was working on the development of an organization-specific access strategy, based on the premises of ICRC Safer Access Framework (SAF).²⁷⁰ This covers issues including WFP visibility, presence in remote locations, the use of armed escorts and military assets as a last resort and staff security procedures. The great majority of the organizations operating in northeast Nigeria have adopted a low visibility strategy since the beginning of the crisis. However, the evaluation team was not able to trace the decision-making process underpinning this, thus could not verify the rationale. According to informants however, organizations assumed since the beginning that they were a target, and in the absence of any dialogue and safety assurance by the non-state armed groups, they simply opted for low visibility.²⁷¹

Resourcing

219. The data show that all the Nigeria operations, including the EMOP and support to common services, were relatively well resourced (Figure 6). With the exception of the resource related pipeline break in 2017 (see Annex N), the operation did not report lack of resources as a major constraint to implementing operations. To some extent the opposite situation prevailed in 2016 – with WFP adopting a cautious approach while donors were arguing for them to rapidly scale up and absorb available funding.²⁷²

220. A number of factors contributed to the positive funding environment from 2016 onwards. In part this was a reaction to the growing information of the severity of the situation in northeast Nigeria. Packaging Nigeria as part of the “Four Famine” appeal at global level was credited as influential – bringing Nigeria to the same level of attention as Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. Similarly, the decision to declare it as a L3 emergency further consolidated donor attention on the crisis and contributed to successful fund raising, as did the Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region.²⁷³

221. Appropriate use was made of a variety of advance funding mechanisms to both kick-start the operation and smooth the flow of multi-lateral funds. The Immediate Response Account (IRA) was used to support both the IR-PREP and IR-EMOP. GCMF pre-financing mechanism was used to procure locally as well as internationally ahead of fund receipts. During 2017 when donor funds were not coming in fast enough²⁷⁴ for the scale-up of the operation, the GCMF pre-financing proved particularly useful. In 2018, the Nigeria country office was advanced USD 90M from Internal Project Lending, allowing access up to two full months in advance of the formal contribution confirmation. In line with normal practice funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was drawn on to support UNHAS. WFP decided to stand back and did not compete for the limited funds available in the Nigerian Humanitarian Fund

Political environment

222. The support provided in northeast Nigeria operates within a challenging political context. Several stakeholders contended that prior to 2015 there was limited political will of the Government to support populations in northeast Nigeria and that this contributed to the delayed start-up of the response. Political elections in 2015 subsequently created space for WFP operations and recognition of humanitarian challenges and was followed by the signing of the Host Country Agreement on 22nd August 2016. Complementary international advocacy was important in gaining Nigerian approval.

223. The impact of the 2019 election in Nigeria is hard to predict. A decision has been taken to extend the L3 declaration to March 2019, after the February election date. Several stakeholders argued that the political narrative was over-stating improvements in physical and food security. Consequently, the Federal Government of Nigeria was perceived as advocating for a scale-down of relief and a transition to return of those displaced and livelihood support.

²⁷⁰ The ICRC SAF consists of eight elements and actions to increase acceptance, security and access to people and communities in need. <http://saferaccess.icrc.org/>.

²⁷¹ Interviews 692, 737, 163, and 740.

²⁷² Interview 136, 535.

²⁷³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/oslo-humanitarian-conference-nigeria-and-lake-chad-region-raises-672-million-help>.

²⁷⁴ WFP SitReps through 2017.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

224. The context of Nigeria, as a lower middle-income country, raised specific challenges on how WFP should position its response to the crisis. The initial strategy adopted by the regional bureau in Dakar – in working to support a government-led response – appears to have been a reasonable starting point. However, ultimately political factors dictated the need for WFP-led food and nutrition assistance programmes. This happened late, and WFP was not able to bring operations to scale before famine-like conditions had already occurred, despite early warning of the deteriorating food and nutrition situation in northeast Nigeria being available far in advance of the crisis.

225. There is a high probability of other major, acute food crises in other non-presence middle-income countries, where WFP will be faced with similar challenging decisions on strategic positioning. This leads to a conclusion that corporately WFP reflect on how it should respond in situations where there is no established country office and conditions warrant lifesaving interventions. This requires a strong understanding of the local context, not only the food and nutrition situation, but also the institutional context, including the capacities and limitations of national agencies charged with responsibility for mounting an emergency response.

226. A second main conclusion is that, once WFP committed to an operational response, it managed to rapidly scale up its operations from scratch. The ability of WFP to scale up from scratch to a million beneficiaries by the end of 2016 deserves, and attracted, due credit. Overall food insecurity in northeast Nigeria has stabilized since 2016 and this can credibly be associated with the large-scale WFP food assistance.

227. The effective scale-up was underpinned by the strong performance of key functional areas. On the administrative side, the regional bureau in Dakar and headquarter teams performed well in addressing the bottlenecks to recruiting and onboarding a large complement of national staff, aided by the use of waivers on selected processes. WFP has placed a strong and appropriate emphasis on risk analysis. Risk analysis was in place from the start of the programme. The progressive efforts by WFP to establish an open and transparent dialogue with the affected population through improved information sharing and sensitization, and multiple complaint and feedback mechanisms are welcomed. This contributed to WFP capacity to monitor and oversee the assistance provided.

228. The supply chain and logistics functions performed well, with the exception of a temporary resource-related pipeline break. Establishing a GCMF hub in Kano was an exemplary decision that took into account the local market characteristics, the funding challenges, and optimized transport links to the field. This was a strong factor in uninterrupted procurement and delivery to the field throughout the operation.

229. Large elements of the programmatic response were well designed. Once WFP was established, vulnerability assessment and mapping made important contributions to the overall understanding of needs in northeast Nigeria. The analysis of protection issues was also strongly and appropriately prioritized. The nutrition response was designed appropriately given the operating context. The decision to implement direct distributions under the rapid response mechanism was an appropriate means to start up operations until cooperating partners established themselves in-country.

230. The WFP common services was clearly one of the most effective elements of the WFP portfolio – and one that is generally under-acknowledged. UNHAS was universally appreciated and widely seen as essential in enabling humanitarian access to northeast Nigeria. UNHAS over-performed against targets at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness. Similarly, the emergency telecommunication sector's common services were appropriate and essential in enabling humanitarian operations, and were well delivered. The services provided by the logistics sector were widely appreciated, with some questions on cost-efficiency.

231. In common with the United Nations response as a whole, WFP has struggled to adhere to humanitarian principles. A lack of leadership and commitment hampered access to areas and populations outside the military control, and seriously undermined a neutral, impartial and operationally independent

humanitarian response. A contributory factor to this situation was a generally poor understanding of humanitarian principles amongst WFP, United Nations and cooperating partner staff. Given the strong field presence of WFP there was a missed opportunity for WFP to advocate for the humanitarian principles at field level, with both cooperating partners and the national authorities.

232. Humanitarian assistance is largely implemented in highly militarized areas, and through the support of, or under the direct protection of, the Nigerian security forces. The United Nations in Nigeria was not a strong enough advocate on the need to ease some of the restrictions to humanitarian assistance. This negatively impacted on the reputation of WFP with key stakeholders, including donors and INGO partners. However, absolute adherence to the principles is not always practical in practice, as trade-offs are an inherent part of humanitarian action. Furthermore, there are recent efforts to adopt a more strategic approach to humanitarian principles and access.

233. Beneficiary targeting and registration have been problematic throughout the operation. There is evident confusion and frustration over the WFP targeting processes at country level and the duration and reasons for multiple re-targeting exercises. Communication with partners and communities was inadequate. Country level guidance has been poorly implemented with inadequate information sharing, consultations and accountability; and there has been the possibility of abuses and discrimination by community leaders.

234. In some cases, WFP fell short of its own standards and guidance in some areas – commonly related to the rapid scale-up of the response. While some waivers granted against corporate norms were appropriate in the interests of timeliness, in other cases this led to significant programme quality deficits from the outset. Further guidance would help to distinguish where and when waivers may be appropriately granted. Significant quality concerns included the following issues:

- Established WFP guidance on the choice of cash-transfer delivery mechanisms was ignored, and poor decisions followed. The major problems with the mobile money transfers could clearly have been avoided through better assessment.
- There was inadequate prioritization of gender issues. There was minimal staff capacity and consequently limited gender-specific analysis to inform WFP programmes. Gender has been addressed as an “add-on” to other staff responsibilities and the treatment of gender in project documents has generally been inadequate.
- Investment in protection expertise meant that there has been an understanding of protection concerns affecting WFP beneficiaries since the early stage. However, there has been slow and inadequate action to address identified protection concerns.

235. While some quality trade-offs are understandable in the context of the rapid scale-up of a major operation from scratch, what is less understandable is the length of time taken to implement corrective measures. While the WFP country office has recognized these issues for some time, many of the corrective actions are still on-going. Overdue assessments on the cash-based transfer modalities are being conducted. There is a recent improvement in the resources dedicated to the analysis of gender in developing the country strategic plan, as well as a revitalization of coordination efforts on gender and greater support provided across all WFP activities and functions.

236. While multiple factors have contributed to these shortfalls, one factor stands out. Regular changes in senior leadership at the country level, coupled with unclear responsibilities and reporting lines for staff in the Maiduguri and Abuja offices resulted in an overall lack of programmatic oversight and compromised credibility with donors. Some key positions were staffed by relatively inexperienced staff. The use of temporary duty assignment staff and short-term deployments from headquarters and the regional bureau in Dakar provided only a partial solution to management needs due to lack of continuity and inadequate handover. Nor did oversight from the regional bureau in Dakar substitute for the limitations of in-country leadership. Conversely, many of the functional areas where WFP has performed best were led by experienced staff, who were appointed early and have remained in post.

237. A key cross-cutting issue that emerged from the evaluation was the centrality of effective partnerships and strong coordination. The complexity and scale of the food security crisis in northeast Nigeria requires a response that effectively draws together the contributions of multiple government, international and non-governmental agencies. While there were many specific examples of multi-agency action, there are important opportunities to further develop and strengthen coordination. Improved operational coordination

is required between the WFP and government agencies on food assistance planning and delivery, while stronger inter-agency planning and coordination could contribute to greater impact in diverse areas including the promotion of humanitarian principles, transition planning and capacity strengthening.

238. Given the limitations of budget data, it is hard for the evaluation to reach definitive conclusions on cost efficiency. A lack of granularity in the budget and expenditure data prohibited any meaningful quantitative analysis. Furthermore, some of the claims made by WFP for cost savings appear insufficiently substantiated. The new country strategic plan budget clearly addresses this deficiency and will hopefully improve the ability to scrutinize cost efficiency in future. With this significant change ongoing, no additional recommendations are offered on improving cost efficiency analysis by this evaluation.

239. The country strategic plan has placed increasing attention on the role of WFP in supporting the capacity strengthening of national institutions, with a shift from direct operational engagement to transferring know-how and experience to national and local institutions and to communities. However, this has not yet been matched by investment in staff capacities, resources or guidance. While there is evidence of consultation and partnership with several government institutions and ministries, there is no clear vision for a handover strategy. Capacity-strengthening support has remained ad hoc and no proper assessment of the capacity of Nigerian institutions has been conducted, or a plan developed, to support the goal of supporting national ownership of the response.

240. Overall, it was difficult to see a clear strategy on how to successfully ensure that the beneficiaries are either transitioned to government support, provided with sustainable livelihood opportunities, or provided with other avenues for self-reliance. The WFP Country Strategic Plan (2019-2022) is based on a scenario of increased security and stability in northeast Nigeria, which will allow WFP to phase out its direct operations over the first three years of the plan through “a gradual increase in gender-transformative livelihood support and nutrition-sensitive activities, with the aim of promoting self-reliance and resilience”. A primary exit strategy of transitioning out through household level livelihoods interventions is of doubtful effectiveness in the current circumstances.

241. At the same time, large numbers of people remain highly food insecure and vulnerable to continued conflict. WFP operations fell short of reaching the targeted number of beneficiaries. Moreover, large gaps in the overall humanitarian response in the food assistance, nutrition support and livelihood recovery sectors exist. The transition to livelihoods appears to be at least partly driven by political priorities and perceived reductions in donor funding rather than an underlying improvement in the situation. As the largest food security actor, a WFP scale-down will significantly affect the food security of beneficiaries, many of whom are still reliant on humanitarian assistance. Given the continuing high rates of food insecurity and the highly unpredictable security context, lifesaving assistance is a continuing priority and WFP needs to advocate vigorously for these needs to be met in full.

3.2. Recommendations

242. Recommendations are provided below. These are directed to WFP at different levels. Corporate level recommendations draw on the Nigeria findings and conclusions to suggest improvements at headquarter and regional bureau levels, while programme level recommendations are directed for the specific consideration of the Nigeria country office.

243. **Recommendation 1:** WFP should enhance coverage of, and preparedness plans for, major emergencies in countries where WFP does not have a presence.

244. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- Information on the deteriorating food and nutrition situation in northeast Nigeria was available far in advance of the crisis
- Famine (or “famine-like) conditions occurred in Nigeria before WFP had established itself in-country
- There is a high probability of other major, acute food crises in other non-presence middle-income countries, where WFP will be faced with similar challenging decisions on strategic positioning.

245. It is recommended that WFP headquarters (OSE), in conjunction with the regional bureau, should:

- a) Review the responsibilities for, and coverage by regional bureaux of, countries where WFP does not have a presence.
- b) Consider posting WFP “antenna” staff in countries where WFP does not have a presence, identified at risk of food security crises (for example, by the Corporate Alert System), with responsibilities for early warning, establishing partnerships and capacity assessment. Arrangements should be explored for attachment to United Nations agencies (resident coordinators’ offices, UNDP, FAO, UNICEF) and/or national counterparts, to further enhance partnership
- c) Develop and regularly update scenario-based contingency plans for expanding the WFP footprint in countries where it does not have a presence.
- d) Consider developing short papers on key lessons from past operations in similar contexts to aid the start-up of the response.

246. **Recommendation 2:** WFP should strengthen the corporate capacity to rapidly deploy sufficiently experienced staff to lead and manage the in-country emergency response, on a sustained basis.

247. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- There was frequent turnover of the senior leadership team throughout the programme
- The use of temporary duty assignment staff and short-term deployments proved only a partial solution to management needs due to lack of continuity and handover
- Some key positions were staffed by relatively inexperienced staff
- Collectively, staffing issues impacted on the ability to develop a consistent strategic vision and provide ongoing management oversight.

248. It is recommended that WFP headquarters (HR/OSE) should:

- a) Urgently develop a pool of qualified and trained leadership staff available for medium- to long-term deployments at three months’ notice in L3 emergencies, including an emergency coordinator, head of programme, Country Director and Deputy Country Director
- b) Review and revise the emergency roster to: (i) ensure that there are sufficient numbers of staff available and that they are available; (ii) ensure that there is an appropriate balance of functional skills; (iii) ensure that the rules that govern the selection into the emergency roster are clarified; and (iv) consider opening the roster to external staff
- c) Review arrangements for effective handover from outgoing temporary duty staff and temporary duty replacements and long-term staff.
- d) Institutionalize arrangements for the rapid onboarding of national staff through predefinition of mandatory training and induction packages, specifically on core corporate tools including COMET and LESS.

249. **Recommendation 3:** WFP should strengthen support to country offices in planning, delivering and reporting on capacity strengthening of national institutions in emergencies.

250. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- No proper assessment of the capacity of Nigerian institutions has been conducted, or a plan developed, to support the goal of supporting national ownership of the response
- Capacity-strengthening support has remained ad hoc
- There has been no real progress in building either national capacities or accountability
- The country strategic plan has placed increasing attention on the role of WFP in supporting the development of national institutions. However, this has not been matched by investment in staff capacities, resources or guidance

- There is no focal point for capacity strengthening within the regional bureau in Dakar.

It is recommended that WFP headquarters (OSZ) and WFP Nigeria should:

- a) Position capacity strengthening more prominently and develop a corporate resource mobilization strategy that addresses WFP global capacity-strengthening funding needs at headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels
- b) Follow-up the implementation of specific recommendations of the strategic evaluation of the WFP Policy on Capacity Development (2009).²⁷⁵ This includes: (i) the provision of concrete and practical tools and guidance on capacity strengthening; (ii) enhanced internal capacity; (iii) heightening monitoring, evaluation and reporting of capacity-strengthening work
- c) Appoint a focal point within regional bureaux and country offices to support the implementation of the WFP capacity development policy.

251. It is also recommended that WFP Nigeria should:

- d) Work in partnership with other development agencies that target the same national institutions for capacity strengthening, to develop a coordinated capacity-strengthening strategy that identifies WFP areas of comparative advantage as an integrated contribution to a comprehensive strategy.

252. **Recommendation 4:** WFP should maintain a core strategic focus on addressing the immediate needs of affected populations in northeast Nigeria in line with the country strategic plan commitment to provide lifesaving emergency assistance.

253. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- Large-scale emergency needs continue in northeast Nigeria, and the security situation remains unstable and precarious
- WFP provides the bulk of food assistance in northeast Nigeria and this assistance has been credited with stabilizing the food security situation
- WFP is the largest food security actor; therefore, a WFP scale-down will significantly affect the food security of beneficiaries, many of whom are still reliant on humanitarian assistance
- Recent food security assessments indicate that in many areas, if food assistance is removed, the food security situation would be classified at least one level worse
- The transition to livelihoods appears to be at least partly driven by political priorities and perceived reductions in donor funding rather than an underlying improvement in the situation.

It is recommended that the WFP Nigeria should:

- a) Advocate clearly to stakeholders on the necessity for the provision of sufficient food and nutrition assistance, provided in coordination with partners, to meet assessed needs
- b) Provide a clear and transparent line of sight in the relationship between the total number of people assessed as requiring food and nutrition assistance and WFP operational planning figures
- c) Revise the current plans for transition from general food assistance to livelihoods support in line with a careful contextual analysis of the viability of livelihood opportunities, implementation capacities of cooperating partners and evidence of effectiveness
- d) Coordinate with government, development and community partners in producing a strategy for transitioning from a L3 emergency response to livelihood support. This should take account of the local context and be based on the comparative advantages of partners.

²⁷⁵ WFP Office of Evaluation. 2017. *WFP Policy on Capacity Development: An Update on Implementation (2009)*. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfps-capacity-development-policy-policy-evaluation-terms-reference>.

254. **Recommendation 5:** WFP should appropriately promote the application of humanitarian principles and equal access to food and nutrition assistance in line with the country strategic plan commitment to a principled approach to gaining and maintaining humanitarian access.

255. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- Humanitarian assistance is largely implemented in highly militarized areas, and through the support of, or under the direct protection of, the Nigerian security forces
- The Nigeria response has not been neutral or operationally independent
- This lack of neutrality negatively impacted on the reputation of WFP with key stakeholders
- The United Nations in Nigeria has not been vocal enough on the need to ease some of the restrictions to humanitarian assistance
- A contributory factor to this lack of neutrality was a generally poor understanding of humanitarian principles.

It is recommended that WFP headquarters (OS/OSZ), regional bureau and WFP Nigeria should:

- a) Develop and disseminate practical guidance for senior field staff on the application of its corporate policies on humanitarian principles and access, including criteria for making context-specific decisions on balancing the principle of humanity with other humanitarian principles
- b) In coordination with other United Nations entities in Nigeria, contribute to training of staff, partners and the Government in the application of humanitarian principles in Nigeria
- c) Complete the WFP access strategy, based on the premises of ICRC Safer Access Framework and the United Nations humanitarian strategy for Nigeria
- d) Define responsibilities and establish capacities in WFP for integrating humanitarian principles and access in programme operations in WFP Nigeria.

256. **Recommendation 6:** WFP should reinforce efforts to mainstream gender within the programme and build partnerships to deliver on the country strategic plan commitment to strengthen gender-transformative programming.

257. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- The rapid scale-up of the programme occurred partly at the cost of compromises in quality
- Gender has been addressed as an “add-on” to other staff responsibilities
- The treatment of gender in project documents has generally been inadequate
- The corporate requirements to develop a country-level gender strategy and plan have not yet been fulfilled
- The extent of gender analysis in programming is quite limited
- Internal training for WFP staff has only recently commenced.

258. It is recommended that WFP Nigeria should:

- a) Appoint a fulltime gender officer, with a clear separation of functions from protection
- b) Develop a country-level gender baseline and action plan.

259. **Recommendation 7:** WFP should clarify and improve its targeting approach.

260. The rationale for this recommendation draws on the evaluation findings and conclusions that:

- There are high levels of confusion and frustration over WFP targeting processes; beneficiaries expressed concern over the impartiality and transparency of community leaders; and the criteria for livelihood targeting remain unclear, especially given the relatively small number of beneficiaries

- Staff reported inadequate corporate guidance on which to base the local targeting strategy.
261. It is recommended that the WFP Nigeria and WFP headquarters (OSZ) should:
- a) Develop a communication strategy for improving the exchange of information on targeting approaches with cooperating partners and affected populations
 - b) Review, revise and develop corporate policies and guidance on the targeting of food assistance, including acceptable verification thresholds and targeting errors, for both inclusion and exclusion errors.

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ACF	Action Contre la Faim
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
BOWDI	Borno Women’s Development Initiative
BR	Budget Revision
BSFP	Blanket Supplement Feeding Programme
CAID	Christian Aid
CBT	Cash-Based Transfers (modality)
CCS	Country Capacity Strengthening
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFM	Complaint and Feedback Mechanism
CH	Cadre Harmonisé
CILSS	Comité Permanent Inter-États De Lutte Contre La Sécheresse Dans le Sahel (Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)
CivMil	Civilian Military
CMAM	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
CMCoord	Civil-Military Coordination
COMCEN	Communications Centre
COMET	Country Office Tool for Managing Programme Operations Effectively (WFP)
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
CP	Cooperating Partner
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CSI	Coping Strategies Index
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DoE	Director of Evaluation (WFP)
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DSC	Direct Support Cost
EB	Executive Board (WFP)
EFSA	Emergency Food Security Assessments
EFMOM	Expanded Food Security Outcome Monitoring
EM	Evaluation Manager (OEV)
EMOP	Emergency Operation
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
EQAS	Evaluation Quality Assurance System

ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
EU	European Union
EW	Early Warning
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations)
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGN	Federal Government of Nigeria
FLA	Field Level Agreement
FMARD	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
FO	Field Office
FS	Food Security
FSOM	Food Security Outcome Monitoring
FSP	Financial Service Provider
FSS	Food Security Sector
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
GEEW	Gender Equality and Empowerment for Women
GFA	General Food Assistance
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HQ	Headquarters (WFP)
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICEED	International Centre Energy and Environment Development
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IMC	International Medical Corps
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
INP	Integrated Nutrition Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated (Food Security) Phase Classification
IR	Inception Report
IRC	International Rescue Committee

IRG	Internal Reference Group
ISWAP	Islamic State's West Africa Province
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
JANFSA	Joint Approach to Nutrition and Food Security Assessment
JAS	Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad
KII	Key Informant Interview
L3	Level 3 Emergency
LCB	Lake Chad Basin
LESS	Logistics Execution Support System
LGA	Local Government Areas
LTSH	Landside Transport Handling and Storage
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAD	Minimum Acceptable Diet
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
MICS	Multi-indicator Cluster Survey
MNJTF	Multi National Joint Task Force
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
mPOS	Mobile Point of Sale
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
MT	Metric Ton
MUAC	Mid-Upper Arm Circumference
mVAM	Mobile Vulnerability, Assessment and Mapping
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NDMF	National Disaster Management Framework
NDRP	National Disaster Response Plan
NE	Northeast (Nigeria)
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGN	Nigeria Naira (currency)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHGSF	National Home-Grown School Feeding
NiEWG	Nutrition in Emergencies Working Group
NNHS	National Nutrition and Health Survey
NPFS	National Programme of Food Security
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSAG	Non-State Armed Group

NSIO	National Social Investment Office
NSIP	National Social Investment Programme
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations)
ODOC	Other Direct Operating Costs
OEV	Office of Evaluation (WFP)
OPN	Oxford Policy Management
OSE	Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division
OSZ	Policy and Programme Division
PCNI	Presidential Committee of the North-East Initiative
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
PLW	Pregnant and Lactating Women
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
PSA	Programme Support and Administration
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PUI	Premiere Urgence Internationale
RBD	Regional Bureau for the Central and West Africa (in Dakar)
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger
RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
SAF	Safer Access Framework
SAFE	Safe Access to Fuel and Energy
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SBCC	Social Behaviour Change Communication
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEMA	State Emergency Management Agency
SER	Summary Evaluation Report
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
SMART	Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions
SO	Special Operation
SO	Strategic Objective
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SPR	Standard Project Report
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TDY	Temporary Duty Assignment
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
TSFP	Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme

UHC	Universal Healthcare
UN	United Nations
UN SWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VAM	Vulnerability, Assessment and Mapping
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme (United Nations)
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization (United Nations)
WINGS	Information Network and Global System (WFP)

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