**Operational Context**

Despite its agricultural potential and significant agricultural exports, Uganda’s food insecurity levels remain classified as ‘serious’ by the 2018 Global Hunger Index. Ugandans consume 400 kcal less than they need each day. While stunting, underweight and wasting have declined in the past five years, undernutrition rates remain high. Uganda is the third largest refugee hosting country in the world with over 1.36 million refugees living in settlements.

WFP’s operations in Uganda are guided by the Country Strategic Plan (CSP, 2018-2022) which is aligned to Uganda’s National Development Plan II and Vision 2040 towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 17. Through the CSP, WFP addresses the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, supports the refugee response and strengthens social protection systems. WFP assistance is provided through direct implementation, evidence generation, knowledge sharing and capacity strengthening, while building strategic partnerships including through South-South Cooperation.

**Operational Updates**

- Throughout December, WFP reached 1.2 million refugees with emergency relief assistance, including 450,000 refugees with cash transfers and another 99,000 with specialized nutritious foods for the treatment and prevention of moderate acute malnutrition. WFP continued to work under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) which promotes Uganda’s progressive policy through a multi-stakeholder approach, boosting self-reliance and expanding opportunities for both refugees and host communities.

- With the objective to broaden the impact of its operations, WFP went through a robust cooperating partners selection process for the implementation of General Food Assistance (GFA) and nutrition activities in the refugee settlements. WFP Uganda will establish 3-year partnerships, with a vision of delivering quality assistance in the remaining period of its Country Strategic Plan (2020-2022). During the initial programme co-design phase, WFP and the selected partners will integrate cross-cutting elements in the activities, ranging from accountability to affected populations, protection, gender, environment and market systems.

- In a high-level conference, WFP engaged in consultations with the African Development Bank to explore potential areas of programme collaboration. Activities in the post-harvest management area emerged as promising opportunities.

- Trainings around gender, leadership, disability and inclusion were carried out in the Rhino Refugee Settlement, in these, Food and Cash Management Committees and in the West Nile region, 25 participants from WFP and cooperating partners’ staff were trained. These trainings will enhance leadership capacity of committee’s members by improving their understanding of the concept of gender and ensuring they apply it to specific gender action plans.

- Within the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), WFP’s field offices engaged in community dialogues around the relationship between gender, food security and nutrition.

* Beneficiaries figures are based on estimated figures

Photo Caption: A woman shows WFP food used to prepare school meals in the Kapuat Primary School in Napak district. Credits: WFP/Davinah Nabirye
Monitoring and Learning

- Between June and November 2019, WFP piloted Agent Banking as a new delivery mechanism for monthly GFA cash transfers to refugees in the Isingiro district. WFP conducted a case study of the model using baseline and endline data, comparing Agent Banking with the cash-in-transit model and in-kind food assistance. The case study found a range of positive results. At the household level, the introduction of the system improved access to assistance by shortening the distance to points of service, reducing waiting times, minimizing security risks, and enhancing convenience for beneficiaries. Only 6 percent of refugees using Agent Banking incurred transport costs to reach their point of service, compared to 55 percent of beneficiaries receiving in-kind food assistance. No Agent Banking beneficiary reported spending over one hour at the point of service, compared to 40 and 60 percent for beneficiaries receiving in-kind and cash-in-transit programmes, respectively. At the settlement level, the introduction of Agent Banking was found to be associated with increased market activity and market performance through positive spill-over effects, including increasing the volume of sales substantially for participating bank agents.

Impact of Limited Funding

- Due to limited funding, WFP suspended the Mother and Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) programme in the Karamoja region, one of Uganda’s poorest areas. The programme’s target population, including children and pregnant and lactating women, are those most at risk of malnutrition. WFP needs US$ 1.99 million to resume and maintain the programme for the next six months (January 2020 – June 2020).

- Overall, WFP requires US$ 63.1 million over the next six months to continue its operations in Uganda without interruption.

Donors

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