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DECENTRALIZED EVALUATION FOR EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

Decentralized Evaluation

Evaluation of Namibia National School Feeding Programme

2012-2018

Evaluation Report (Volume 1)

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Evaluation Managers, Gibson Munene, Gloria Kamwi



World Food
Programme



Prepared by

Tony Land, Team Leader | Warue Kariuki, Team member | Magano Neri, Team member |
Omondi Otieno, Team Member



Foreword to the Namibian School Feeding Programme Evaluation Report

*By the Minister of Education, Arts and Culture
and the Country Representative of the UN
World Food Programme.*



It is my pleasure to present the Namibia School Feeding Programme (NSFP) Evaluation Report. This evaluation was jointly commissioned by our technical partner, the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) and the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC), covering the period 2012 – 2018.

The Government of Namibia recognizes the importance of education in creating a prosperous industrialized nation by 2030 and accordingly allocates 22 percent of the national budget to education, annually. School feeding is one of the programmes that benefits from this allocation. The NSFP is one of many social protection programmes supported by the Government of the Republic of Namibia and a flagship programme for the MoEAC. School feeding plays a pivotal role in education by ensuring that learners, country-wide, receive a nutritious meal each school day enabling them to concentrate better in class, hence contributing to positive learning outcomes, increased retention in school and promotion of quality education for all and contributes significantly to the government's efforts towards achieving zero hunger.

The NSFP has expanded significantly since its inception in the early 1990s and currently reaches over 350 000 school going children in some 1,500 schools, country wide. This programme remains very relevant in the country, particularly due to the role that it plays as a social safety net by cushioning food needs of learners, thereby reducing the burden of parents, especially those from poor households.

This evaluation was undertaken by an independent group of consultants composed of international and national experts signifying the transparency and independence of their findings and recommendations. This report provides an in-depth assessment of the implementation and performance of the NSFP by establishing key milestones and challenges experienced as well as the effectiveness of WFP's Technical Assistance, thus establishing how the programme performed against its objectives as well as mapping the areas of possible improvement.

Some of the key recommendations emanating from this evaluation include: (i) to strengthen evidence building and learning; (ii) to address supply chain bottlenecks and optimise standard operating procedures; (iii) to ensure the long-term sustainability of the NSFP, action is required to ensure that adequate human resources are mobilized, trained and retained at all levels; (iv) to support the testing, adoption and implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding as envisioned in the National School Feeding Policy; and (v) to take actions to optimize technical assistance on school feeding from partners such as WFP to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of external support going forward.


The recommendations from the evaluation will play a significant role in informing, shaping and addressing the challenges faced by the program while optimizing good practices. Bringing efficiency and effectiveness in the management and implementation of school feeding is critical.


To achieve this, it is imperative that coordination and multisectoral participation is upheld in order to contribute to the betterment of the education of the Namibian Child.

We gratefully acknowledge all the stakeholders that were involved in this evaluation, the Evaluation Experts, our partner, the United Nations World Food Programme, other UN

Agencies, Civil Society, Private Sector and Ministries and Agencies (O/M/As) for their valuable input in this process. We wish to thank and appreciate in a special way, the work of the Evaluation Reference Group for their technical input, administrative and logistics support towards this evaluation. The contributions received during this evaluation are a demonstration of a multi-sectoral approach towards eradicating hunger in Namibia.

As the country prepares to intensify its fight against hunger, it is crucial that all Namibians and partners become part of the solution and champions in supporting education in its entirety.


Ester Anna Nghipondoka, MP
Minister of Education, Arts and Culture
December 2020




George Fedha
UN World Food Programme
December 2020
Namibia Country Office



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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the Evaluation Team, and do not necessarily reflect those of the World Food Programme. Responsibility for the opinions expressed in this report rests solely with the authors. Publication of this document does not imply endorsement by the World Food Programme of the opinions expressed.

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Executive Summary

Purpose - This is an evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme (NSFP) for the period 2012-2018, jointly commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC) and the World Food Programme (WFP) – Namibia Office. The evaluation is guided by 20 Evaluation Questions (EQs) distributed across considerations of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, Learning and Benchmarking.

Context – Namibia is the world's 35th largest country, comprising five agro-climatic regions. With an official population of 1.2 million males and 1.26 million females, Namibia has a low population density with 51.7 percent of the population projected to live in urban areas by 2020. With a median age of 21 years, national life expectancy for females is 67.7 years and 61.8 for males.

Namibia is a multi-party democracy divided into 14 administrative regions and 121 constituencies. The rule of law, press freedom and observance of human rights provide a firm basis for the prevailing political conditions of stability, peace, security and low levels of crime.

The country is categorised as upper middle-income. While experiencing steady economic growth over the last two decades, an economic slowdown in 2016 was attributed to a decline in diamond mining and construction, and consolidation of the public administration and defence sectors. Namibia was ranked 129th out of 189 countries on the 2017 Human Development Index. Poverty affects about 28 percent of the population while the national Gini coefficient is 0.60.

In 2015, 6.1 per cent of Namibians lived below the national food poverty line. In 2015 an estimated 578,480 people in rural areas were in need of food and livelihood assistance. While the 3-year average prevalence of undernourishment has declined significantly, stunting rates remain high at 24 percent. The prevalence of underweight children under five years remain 7.1 percent and under-five mortality rates is 5.0 percent.

National Development Plan 5 (NDP 5) and Vision 2030 include the achievement of gender equality as well as equitable access to political, social, economic and cultural prosperity for all. In 2015 Namibia ranked among the top tier of countries on the Gender Development Index (GDI) with a score of 1.01414. However, Namibia still faces significant gender related challenges.

Namibia supports six levels of education including pre-primary, lower primary (grades 1-4), upper primary (5-7), junior secondary (8-10), senior secondary (11-12), and tertiary (university, and technical & vocational training). School attendance is compulsory for the seven years of primary school, and school fees are prohibited for primary education. Dropouts before grade 7 are low, while net primary enrolment rates reached 96 percent for boys and 99 percent of girls in 2017.

Namibia's Vision 2030 is supported by NDP5, and the Harambee Prosperity Plan, that aim to end poverty and hunger by ensuring inclusive growth delivers gender equality and "*leaves no-one behind*". Relevant sector-level policy frameworks include: the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication, the Food and Nutrition Security Policy, the Namibia Agriculture Policy, the National Health Policy Framework, Sector Policy on Inclusive Education and the National Gender Policy.

WFP support in Namibia focuses on strengthening the capacity of government institutions to achieve the food and nutritional security of vulnerable populations through national school meals and shock responsive social safety net policies and programmes. Related areas of international cooperation are provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Main Expected Users - The intended users of this evaluation report include the Government of Namibia, the WFP, and other stakeholders in the private and not-for-profit sectors, with an interest in the NSFP.

Methodology - The evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach combining; i) Qualitative Data Collection; ii) Quantitative Data Collection; and iii) Cost Analysis. There was also a review of documents provided by WFP and MoEAC as well as analysis of data bases hosted by the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the NSFP Management Information System (NASIS). Data collection took place between 9th September and 2nd October 2019.

Key Findings - These are summarised below according to the seven evaluation criteria and twenty evaluation questions:

Evaluation Criteria 1: Relevance

EQ 1.1. To what extent was the school feeding programme relevant to the needs of learners (boys and girls) and the comparative expectations of men and women in schools and communities in different contexts ? The NSFP has been and remains relevant in terms of contributing to meeting food security needs and a safety net for vulnerable children and communities, by assuring one hot meal a day while at school. This has proven particularly important during the current economic downturn and on-going drought, and serves as a complementary measure to other social protection and drought relief measures. The programme has moreover contributed to creating demand for school, with learners enrolling, remaining in and completing school.

EQ. 1.2. To what extent was the NSFP aligned with and complementary to other Government policies and programmes including gender empowerment policies/programmes where/as appropriate? Feedback from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) present a mixed picture with respect to the level of NSFP alignment, and complementarity with other Government policies and programmes. Calls for enhanced coordination, coherence and collaboration have long been made and are reiterated in the just approved 2019 National School Feeding (NSF) policy. At national level, NSFP does feature in a number of higher level reporting frameworks and the programme is represented at a number of forums. MoEAC has some well established relationships with other Government departments. At the regional levels and at the front line of service delivery, the degree of collaborative effort is more limited, with the programme operating somewhat in a silo, and opportunities for joint action not always recognised.

EQ 1.3. Was the technical assistance provided by WFP relevant/ appropriate to the needs of the MoEAC at different levels? Technical Assistance (TA) support has been by and large relevant and appropriate to the needs of the MoEAC at different levels. Key indicators of relevance are that TA is grounded in sound diagnostic work, is client owned and demand driven, builds on WFPs comparative advantages such as supply chain management, data analysis and food systems, and is supported by a mature working relationship. The analysis of TA effectiveness however reveals some shortcomings in delivery approach and focus, which raise some questions with respect to relevance.

EQ 1.4. To what extent is the TA provided by WFP to the MoEAC aligned with and complementary to WFP support to other relevant national institutions? Technical assistance to the MoEAC in support of the NSFP constitutes WFPs main focus of assistance. WFP has also provided selected TA to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in the area of Food Security, and to the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) with respect to Social Protection. The NSFP is very much at the nexus between food security and social protection. WFP is strategically placed to support government to facilitate linkages between these policy arenas and to ensure that they are mutually reinforcing. Whilst this has been happening implicitly to some extent through the TA support provided to MoEAC, as well as to OPM and to MPESW, more could be done to ensure efforts are focused not only within each policy arena but between them as well.

EQ 1.5. Within the context of the national school feeding policy and other relevant policy frameworks, what adjustments are required to the design and implementation of the NSFP to make it effective in contributing to national developmental objectives? The evaluation of the NSFP across the different evaluation criteria has allowed for the identification of a number of adjustments with respect to programme design and implementation that could enable it to better contribute to national development objectives. The most relevant adjustments include i) enhancing coordination arrangements and opportunities; ii) rolling out the Home Grown School Feeding (HGFS) approach; iii) mainstreaming gender in programme design and implementation and v) strengthening the indicator framework to better capture results and improve the evidence base.

Evaluation Criteria 2: Effectiveness

EQ 2.1. To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved (those overall to the NSFP as outlined in the NSFP Road Map and M&E plan) and equitably distributed across target groups? At output level, programme performance has been mixed. The biggest reported concern is the late delivery of maize blend to schools. Late delivery has a knock-on effect on the ability of schools to serve meals on

a daily basis according to specified standards. With respect to arrangements for storage, preparation and serving of meals, there is clear evidence of improvement over the evaluation period but the very high targets set remain to be achieved. Many schools continue to serve food with substandard storage and cooking facilities and almost all schools do not have sheltered eating areas. Implements for cooking and eating are typically in short supply. The issue of cooks remuneration remains a challenge. Programme performance at outcome level is based on overall educational performance outcomes. Therefore it is not possible to establish direct attribution between programme outputs and wider educational outcomes. What is clear is that educational outcomes have improved over the evaluation period and that the programme has contributed to increasing levels of enrolment, attendance, retention and completion. The evaluation also identified a number of unforeseen and unintended outcomes such as perceived household dependency on the school meal, stigmatisation related to the programme being seen as a programme for the poor and, genderisation of community level roles and responsibilities with respect to school feeding.

EQ. 2.2. To what extent have the objectives of the WFP technical assistance been achieved? Despite good diagnostic work, the high level of ownership for the TA support provided to MoEAC, and a positive working relationship between MoEAC and WFP, there is a question mark over the effectiveness of the TA support provided in terms of building sustainable NSFP delivery capacity. At the TA output level, objectives have been largely achieved and TA support may be deemed effective. It is clear that the Ministry is very satisfied with the support provided and it is clear that many of the priority actions listed in the roadmap have been tackled. At the TA outcome level, however, the picture is more mixed. A major underlying reason relates to staffing constraints faced by the MoEAC. Simply put, the Ministry is constrained to mobilise the right numbers of persons with appropriate skills and competency to run the programme at all levels. This raises questions of sustainability and effectiveness of the capacity development model being used.

EQ. 2.3. To what extent has the project been successful in improving learning and ownership by government at all levels: National, Regional, Circuit and School? Improvements in learning and ownership lie at the core of capacity development. Sustainable capacity cannot be realised in the absence of ownership, whilst ownership without learning will not achieve performance improvement. With respect to learning, TA interventions included training events, study tours, knowledge sharing events, and the development of promotional materials. There was also the placement of short and long term experts. With respect to promoting ownership, TA support sought ways to broaden awareness, understanding, interest and support for the NSFP at all levels. Some of the learning events listed above could play a dual role, combining the delivery of technical knowledge with elements of advocacy and campaigning. Whilst it is possible to identify the potential role that these different interventions can play towards learning and ownership, it is much more challenging to assess the extent to which lasting ownership has been created across all stakeholder groups or how far learning has been translated into routinised performance improvement, although overall it may be discerned that understanding and ownership for the NSFP has broadened over the evaluation period.

Evaluation Criteria 3: Efficiency

EQ 3.1. How much does it cost (Government and communities) to implement the NSFP to achieve the outcomes that it has achieved? The average cost of school feeding borne by MoEAC at all levels is estimated at NAD 326.80 (USD 22.00)¹ per child per year. The total cost of school feeding including community level contributions and those from WFP is NAD 359.10 (USD 24.20) per child per year. These costs are a significant rise from the costs as projected in 2012, which estimated the unit cost on the learner would be NAD 282 (USD 18.96) – representing a 27.3% increase over a 5-year period.

EQ 3.2. What are the key cost categories and the drivers of costs within them? Capital, commodities, transport, staff, and administration remain the most relevant categories. Within these categories, commodities take up about 81% of the total costs leaving only 19% to be shared amongst the rest of the categories. While this might seem desirable, it might also signal an under investment in programme support components such as M&E, or on staffing.

EQ 3.3. To what extent did WFP capacity strengthening activities help improve the cost efficiency of NSFP? The team is unable to provide a robust response to this evaluation question as the criteria for judging the effect TA support could have on programme cost management is not well defined. Whilst WFP facilitated the

¹ 1 USD = 14.8434 NAD

conduct of a Cost Analysis in 2014, it is not clear how this information was subsequently acted on. Whilst TA supported the development of NASIS and the Monitoring & Evaluation Plan (MEP), the observed weaknesses in reporting through NASIS, impacting on the reliability and timeliness of data, will have limited the opportunity to use such data to manage costs. For example, data on actual food delivered compared to food ordered, and on actual consumption patterns at the school level is difficult to obtain.

EQ 3.4. Given the identified cost drivers, could the same outcomes be attained at lower costs, or higher outcomes achieved with same resources? Where are the opportunities for cost savings to improve efficiency without sacrificing effectiveness. It is the opinion of the evaluation that the overall unit cost per learner is optimal in its current state and a reduction below NAD 359 per learner per year could potentially reduce the quality of the programme. This is because the National Cost Assessment (NCA) was unable to establish any excesses in expenditure that might be of significant effect on the overall cost of the programme.

Evaluation Criteria 4: Impact

EQ 4.1. What are the long-term effects (positive or negative, intended or unintended) of school feeding on the lives of boys and girls, schools, households and communities? The NSFP results framework as reflected in the MEP only specifies results at the output and outcome levels. Therefore, there are no impact level measures specified for the programme. Accordingly, the evaluation has not been able to conduct a systematic analysis of results at the level of impacts. What is provided is a set of ideas and insights obtained during the course of the evaluation which provide pointers on possible longer term impacts of the programme with respect to i) boys and girls; ii) schools; iii) households and iv) communities. These are generally positive and include; i) the expectation that learners will progress to secondary school and eventually equip themselves with know-how and skills to progress to tertiary education and/or to allow them to compete in the labour market; ii) for households, the prospect of raising an educated and healthy child who will be expected to provide support to other family members, offering a pathway out of poverty and vulnerability due to savings in household income over time²; iii) for schools, the prospect of achieving better results across the school population and obtaining a reputation for being a performing and caring institution; iv) for communities, stronger performing schools can be expected to elicit pride and confidence in the functioning of their local institution. This might attract higher levels of participation in the School Board thereby strengthening links between the community at large and the school.

Evaluation Criteria 5: Sustainability

EQ 5.1. What are the critical factors for sustainability of the NSFP in the Namibian context? The future sustainability of the NSFP will depend on the presence of a number of factors, many of which have been referred to in the discussion of other evaluation questions. A selection of the most significant factors are examined with respect to NSFP relevance, performance, leadership and capacity. It is argued that if programme relevance can be demonstrated, if high levels of performance can be achieved and if capacity and leadership can be nurtured, then the sustainability of the programme in an evolving political, economic and environmental context is all the more likely.

EQ 5.2. What steps would MoEAC take to ensure full and effective management of the NSFP in the future? The Evaluation Team (ET) understands that the MoEAC took over the full management of the NSFP in 1996. The team has, therefore, approached the question from the point of view of assessing the current capacity of the NSFP delivery system and the effect this has had on programme performance. Broader public sector management challenges related to decentralisation and human resources management that impact on delivery are identified. Whilst challenges associated with the bedding in of new work processes associated with decentralisation are noted, opportunities in terms of enhanced coordination and accountability are recognised. The attraction and retention of staff to fully support programme implementation has remained a challenge. Instability in the workforce can undermine efforts to build sustainable capacity. This impacts on the functioning of some of the core delivery processes, particularly supply chain management, the management of information and M&E, and the storage, preparation and serving of meals at schools. The non-availability of the NSFP manual is a further weakness rendering it more difficult to assure and sustain standard operating procedures. It is noteworthy that programme

² See further page 3 in: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000102338.pdf>
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performance has depended heavily on local leadership and commitment at the school level to innovate and seek coping strategies, where core systems have failed to perform optimally.

Evaluation Criteria 6: Learning

EQ 6.1. How did implementation of the NSFP and other related actions affect the context of gender inequality in Namibia? Programme effects on gender are examined from the perspective of learners and the community at large. The analysis notes that whilst boys and girls have benefitted equally from the NSFP, there are sub-sets of learners that are at risk of not enjoying the full benefits. These relate to various aspects of vulnerability including, disability, the specific circumstances of pregnant learners, the requirements of the girl child to have access to appropriate menstrual management facilities and the stigma associated with older boys being perceived as poor and the impact this can have on their sense of masculinity are highlighted. With respect to the community at large, the analysis notes that the manner in which responsibilities are assigned to support school feeding duties tends to reinforce gender roles and stereotypes with women being predominantly involved in food preparation. Issues related to the opportunity cost for women providing free labour are also discussed, given that many cooks spend as much as 6-8 hours a day supporting school feeding, time which could be used to meet other household responsibilities and/ or seek alternative sources of paid income.

EQ 6.2. What are the key challenges and gaps experienced in implementing the activities identified in the 5-year road map, the NSFP M&E Plan, and the Technical Assistance agreements between WFP and MoEAC? In terms of identifying remaining gaps and challenges in implementation of the road map, MEP and TA agreements, a rapid stock-take of progress against the road map's five standards was conducted as a proxy for all three reference documents. The stock take acknowledges a good level of progress overall. However, there are many areas that remain a work in progress and a few, where action remains to be taken. It is noted that the updates conducted in 2014 and again 2016 have helped to keep the road map current and relevant providing a reference for MoEAC and WFP to routinely review where efforts have made impact and where additional effort is required. Based on a review of the gender analysis checklist, there was very little evidence of attention paid to gender integration in the roadmap. The checklist explored various categories that reflect how far the interests and needs of women, men, boys and girls were taken into account.

EQ 6.4. To what extent were good practices used when facilitating knowledge sharing and improving evidence-based programme design? With respect to the application of good practices in relation to knowledge sharing and evidence-based programme design, the ET notes that the concept of good practice is not defined. Various methods were indeed used to promote learning and knowledge sharing. The extent to which good practices were applied was however difficult to discern. The evaluation has confirmed the overall relevance of the support provided, the overall satisfaction of MoEAC and the generally high level of effectiveness. Going forward, WFP is encouraged to review the robustness of the way in which it plans its capacity development support, ensuring that it is underpinned by effective capacity diagnostic and accompanied by an explicit intervention logic and monitoring framework. The ET meanwhile has identified various actions that could be considered good practice with respect to improving evidence-based programme design. These include the diagnostic work carried out at start of evaluation period which led to the roadmap, the setting-up of NASIS as a management, learning and reporting tool along side the MEP, and the application of WFP's Cost Assessment Tool as a means for better understanding cost parameters.

Evaluation Criteria 7: Benchmarks for Design Improvements and Home-Grown School Feeding

EQ 7.1: With the envisaged expansion to include a home-grown school feeding component that links school feeding to smallholder farmers and enterprises, what should be the key design considerations given the lessons and experience with NSFP so far? The recently adopted National School Feeding Policy reconfirms Government commitment to adopting the HGFSF approach. Discussions on HGFSF are not new with the idea already in discussion at the time the Road Map was launched in 2012. Overall there is a good level of appreciation of what HGFSF entails and of the considerable challenges that will need to be addressed if the approach is to be viable. The Teams' consultations with stakeholders reaffirmed the high level of commitment of stakeholders to HGFSF, the appreciation of the challenges that need to be addressed and the opportunities that are already in place to build upon. It is noted that MoEAC plans to launch four pilots to test out different modalities in different

parts of the country and intends to do so with the support of WFP. The ET proposes the following set of design considerations: i) clarify the linkages between the different objectives of HGFSF; ii) accommodate regional contextual variations into a generic HGFSF approach; iii) take account of the cost implications of adopting the HGFSF Approach; iv) take account of current operational bottlenecks, recognising the additional complexity of the HGFSF; v) recognise the need to establish and maintain strong relationships with other state and non-actors; vi) identify a range of different value-chains, which offer potential to respond to the HGFSF agenda; vii) pay specific attention to gender dimensions of women's participation in HGFSF.

Overall conclusion

NSFP has evolved from a pilot initiative into a nationally funded and executed programme operational in all districts and reaching over 377,000 learners. This is a commendable achievement. MoEAC as custodian of the programme has reached out to WFP for technical support and guidance to assure application of good practice and improved results. Through this collaboration, a strong partnership has been forged. NSFP enjoys broad support and appreciation, with its contribution to relieving hunger and promoting access and retention unquestioned. It remains relevant particularly in a period of recurring drought and economic downturn, responding to core Government of Namibia policy frameworks whilst providing relief to learners and carers/ parents alike.

Yet the delivery system is operating sub-optimally, a situation that consequently undermines intended impacts. Where core systems under-perform, achievements depend heavily on local leadership and commitment at the school level to innovate and seek coping strategies. Systemic challenges identified already in 2012 have to some degree been overcome and it is clear that WFP TA support has helped MoEAC to address a number of these. Yet there are a number that persist – most notably challenges related to staffing at national and regional levels, which impact on sustainability, quality assurance and efforts aimed at continuous improvement.

Going forward, getting core delivery systems right has to be a priority, including paying attention to core capabilities for delivery, because it is these that will determine whether the programme performs to expectation or not. At the same time, there is reason to cautiously explore and test out a new generation NSFP guided by the Home Grown approach, mindful however of the additional complexity this is likely to arise. NSFP has the potential to be more than a feeding programme, by building on its strategic position within the school environment, and serving as a platform and catalyst for promoting social inclusion and community resilience. For that to work will require a much more deliberate effort to promote inter-sector/ agency collaboration/ cooperation at all levels. Gender in this context needs to be treated as an integral part of any change strategy/ intervention logic for the programme and any external assistance provided.

Recommendations

1. Evidence Based Decision-Making

To ensure programme decision-making is guided by evidence and learning, MoEAC, with support from its development partners should further enhance both the MEP and MIS of the NSFP. These enhancements include: i) Developing tools for measuring progress against MEP outcome 5 on nutritional and dietary status, possibly accompanied by periodic anthropometric assessments within select schools; ii) Integrating selected NSFP monitoring data into EMIS; iii) Expanding NASIS to include routine cost centre monitoring; iv) Incorporating indicators that recognise women's contribution to programme delivery; v) Recording the numbers of learners actually receiving a meal, by gender and age/ grade, on a daily basis; vi) Rectifying remaining bottlenecks/ adjustments with respect to NASIS functionality; vii) Developing a MoEAC dissemination strategy to routinely analyse, publish and communicate NASIS data to relevant users, including parents.

2. Guaranteeing Delivery of Fortified Porridge to Participating Schools

To ensure learners receive a meal each and every school day without exception, urgent actions are required to resolve existing supply chain bottlenecks and optimise standard operating procedures. Actions include: i) Conducting a diagnostic study of supply chain bottlenecks with a view to proposing a set of short term remedial actions and longer term solutions; ii) Developing procedures and assigning clear responsibilities to ensure the systematic, timely and routine quality checking of maize blend along the supply chain; iii) Reviewing existing guidelines and preparing a directive on the correct procedures to follow with respect to handling of expired and/ or spoiled maize bags; iv) Expediting the transfer of responsibility for procurement of transport services to regions in line with the on-going decentralisation process.

3. Sustaining Delivery Capacity

To assure the long-term sustainability of the NSFP, action is required to ensure that adequate human resources are mobilized, trained and retained at all levels. This is especially important in light of on-going decentralization to regions, intentions to expand the programme's reach beyond primary and introduction of new modalities such as HGSF. The following actions are proposed: i) Reviewing the minimum staffing requirements to support the implementation of the NSFP at national and regional levels, and carry out a time-bound recruitment drive; ii) Developing a NSFP training module and induction programme for all new staff joining the programme at all levels; iii) Reviewing and redrafting the Programme Manual, ensuring its distribution to all staff working on NSFP and availability on-line; iv) Exploring ways to motivate NSFP staff through the introduction of appropriate rewards, incentives and sanctions; v) introducing training on school feeding and health into teacher training curriculum at tertiary institutions.

4. Storage, Handling and Preparation of meals at School Level

To ensure that the storage, handling and preparation of meals meets expected standards as envisioned in the NSF policy, various actions should be undertaken that ensure schools have the necessary infrastructure and associated non-food items (NFI). Actions comprise: i) Distributing standard drawings, specifications, and guidelines for the construction/ upgrading of school kitchens, storerooms and handwashing facilities; ii) Including kitchens, kitchen equipment, storerooms and hand washing facilities as part of the basic infrastructure provided to schools in new builds, upgrades or expansions; iii) Issuing a directive and guidance on the availability of Universal Primary Education Grant (UPEG) for NSFP NFI purchases; iv) Developing updated guidance and a directive with respect to arrangements for remunerating NSFP cooks, in line with provisions of the NSF Policy; v) Exploring feasibility of utilising kitchens and storage facilities attached to school hostels where NSFP schools are in close proximity.

5. NSFP fulfilling its role as a vector for social transformation, gender equality and community resilience

To help realise the NSFPs potential as a vector for social transformation, gender equality and community resilience, various actions are proposed that will enable the programme to work in a more integrated manner with related policy frameworks and interventions. These include: i) Establishing the long recommended national NSFP coordination forum/ committee (or a sub-committee under an appropriate existing forum); ii) Convening an adhoc task force/ working group to explore specific opportunities for collaboration between the NSFP and relevant health, watsan, gender and social protection programmes; iii) Drafting and adopting a NSFP Gender Action Plan advocating for gender-transformative results in the NSFP; iv) Aligning the NSF policy with relevant Policy provisions relating to educationally marginalised children, to OVCs and the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy; v) Identifying specific activities to promote greater male engagement in school feeding activities; vi) Establishing strong connections with networks of gender focal points across government at all levels.

6. Programme Cost and Long-Term Financing

With ambitions to further scale up the programme to reach more learners, demand higher delivery standards including school feeding infrastructure and broaden the school feeding menu, further analytical work is required to understand current and future costs. The following actions are proposed: i) Commissioning a comprehensive school level cost assessment to determine the different resource mobilisation strategies used and arrangements made for storing, preparing and serving meals at different schools; ii) Commissioning a comparative analysis of alternative school feeding modalities to inform policy makers as to the costs and benefits of different modalities.

7. Home Grown School Feeding

To facilitate the testing, adoption and implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding as envisioned in the NSF policy, and cognisant of MoEAC intentions to launch a set of HGSF pilots, actions should be taken to support learning and to accompany the scaling up process. These include; i) Establishing a multi-actor reference/steering group, reflecting the different interests and role players in HGSF; ii) Drafting a clearly defined plan of action cum roadmap to guide the implementation of the pilot activities, cognizant of design parameters proposed in this evaluation; iii) Developing clear guidelines on the use of school gardens to support the NSFP; iv) Undertaking a mapping of all privately-sponsored school feeding initiatives to learn how sponsored schools are managing the storage, preparation, and quality assurance of a diversified menu; v) Ensuring that gender-sensitive indicators are developed that track changes in women's participation in the food production storage and distribution processes; vi) Developing an agreed conceptual framework of the scope of the HGSF concept.

8. Effective Delivery of Technical Assistance for Capacity Development

Given the overall positive contribution that WFP TA has made towards the NSFP, actions should be taken to assure the continued relevance and effectiveness of external support going forward. These include: i) Updating the revised Roadmap so that it takes full account of progress made to date, as well as identifying remaining and/ or new tasks/ challenges; ii) Introducing a framework for annual mutual reporting and accountability on effectiveness of the partnership; iii) Focusing future WFP support on strengthening capacities at the sub-national levels; iv) Developing a capacity strengthening/ development strategy to guide future TA support to the NSFP.

9. Promoting NSFP Inclusiveness and benefits for all learners

To ensure that the objectives and benefits of school feeding are well understood by all NSFP stakeholders, and that there is strong demand and ownership of school feeding among all learners and schools, actions are required to reinforce understanding as well as to facilitate the voices of participants to be heard. Actions should include: i) Developing an advocacy strategy to reinforce the message that NSFP is an inclusive programme that benefits all learners and all schools and is not only targeting the poor; ii) Establishing a school level complaints and grievance system that enables NSFP stakeholders to feedback concerns as well as to propose ways to improve programme operations.

Part 1: Introduction

1.1. Report Overview

1. This report documents the findings and results of a joint Government of Namibia/ World Food Programme (WFP) evaluation of Namibia's National School Feeding Programme (NSFP) covering the period 2012 – 2018.
2. The evaluation took place over the course of 2019, beginning with an inception phase in the first quarter of the year, and a data collection and data analysis/ reporting writing phase straddling the third and fourth quarters of 2019.
3. The evaluation was carried out by a team of four independent consultants who constituted the Evaluation Team (ET) and who were supervised by two Evaluation Managers (EM) on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC) and WFP.
4. The structure of the report is as follows:
5. **Section 1: Introduction** includes i) this overview; ii) an overview of the Evaluation Subject – The National School Feeding Programme; iii) a summary of the Namibia context; and iv) an overview of the evaluation approach and methodology.
6. **Section 2: Evaluation Findings** is sub-divided across the seven evaluation criteria and twenty evaluation questions. The section begins with the five questions that relate to Relevance. Thereafter findings are presented with respect to the three questions that relate to Effectiveness; the four questions that relate to Efficiency; the one question that relates to Impact; the two questions that relate to Sustainability; the three questions that relate to Learning and lastly the one question that relates to Benchmarking.
7. **Section 3: Conclusions and Recommendations** presents the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.
8. Annexes - A set of annexes are included in Volume 2 of this report.

1.2. Overview of the National School Feeding Programme

1.2.1. The NSFP

9. The NSFP provides a daily serving of fortified maize meal porridge to pre-primary and primary school learners.
10. The overall objective of the NSFP is to promote enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of boys and girls as well as to improve their nutritional well-being. The overall objective is stated as: *"to promote equitable participation in quality learning and education for all children in Namibia during all seasons by providing nutritious and healthy food through schools that are inherent part of the social and economic life and development of communities."*³
11. There are five (5) key outcomes, associated with the achievement of the NSFP objective. Four are directly related to educational performance while a fifth relates to learners' nutritional status. As stated in the NSFP MEP, the 5 outcomes are:

1	Access: All eligible primary learners are enrolled at schools, with progress measured by the increase in enrolment;
2	Adherence / reduced drop out: Enrolled learners adhere to school, with progress measured by reduced numbers of children dropping out;
3	Attendance: Enrolled learners attend classes regularly, measured by reduced rates of absenteeism;
4	Promotion: Enrolled learners successfully graduate to subsequent terms, measured by rates of children moving from one grade to the next and then transitioning to the next level of education (second cycle);
5	Food security: Guaranteed minimum caloric intake of all school learners during school days regardless of their household's capacity to provide food.

12. The NSFP, which started in 1991, began by targeting identified vulnerable both boys and girls only. In 1996, when the pilot programme was handed over to the Government of Namibia, access was progressively extended to all learners at pre-primary and primary levels. Today the NSFP is premised on universal access consistent

³ Quoted from the NSFP Baseline Survey Report

with rights-based approach. However, participation is voluntary with some schools and learners electing to opt out.

13. Programme delivery is guided by a recently adopted National School Feeding Policy (including an implementation plan), approved on 26 March 2019, as well as by a Roadmap prepared in 2012 and an MEP drafted in 2013.
14. NSFP is delivered through a network of actors at national, regional and school/ community levels. Overall responsibility for the programme falls on the MoEAC at national level, the Regional Councils through their Directorates of Education at regional (and circuit) level, and the principals and boards of the primary and combined schools at community level. Various non-state actors including suppliers, benefactors and community members work with the Government to deliver the programme. In this respect, NSFP is a partnership between the Government and community.

1.2.2. History

15. The NSFP started as a pilot project in 1991 in two regions. Today it is fully operational across urban and rural schools in all 14 regions. The reach of the programme has expanded considerably with an increase in the number of boys and girls participating from 78,000 in 1996, to 270,000 learners in 2011 and to over 377,000 today.
16. Since 1996, the programme has operated as a fully funded and executed Government programme. However, in 2012, the Government invited WFP to provide technical assistance to support efforts to improve the overall operations and impact of the NSFP. Three cooperation agreements have since been signed, the first covering the period 2012-2015; the second covering the period 2015-2018: the third covering the period 2018 – 2022.
17. This evaluation is concerned with the period of activity spanning 2012-2018. It should be noted that this is the first time the NSFP is being systematically evaluated. Reviews and updates of the programme road map drafted in 2012 were conducted in 2014 and 2016. Moreover the roadmap was developed on the basis of a diagnostic exercise carried out in 2012 to assess the current capacity and performance of the programme⁴. This evaluation has drawn substantially on the road map as baseline and core reference for assessing progress over the evaluation period. A cost analysis conducted in 2013 has also provided baseline data against which the current cost analysis can be compared.

1.3. Context⁵

18. **Geography and Demographics:** with an area of 825,615 km², Namibia is the world's 35th largest country. A map of the country is provided in Annex 3. Namibia is divided into five agro-climatic regions including the Central Plateau, Namib desert, Great Escarpment, Bushveld, and Kalahari desert. With an official population of 1.2 million males and 1.26 million females, Namibia has a low population density with 51.7 percent of the population projected to live in urban areas by 2020⁶. With a median age of 21 years, the national life expectancy for females is 67.7 years and 61.8 for males⁷.
19. **Political Environment:** Namibia is divided into 14 administrative regions and 121 constituencies. It is a multi-party democracy that scored 77 out of 100 for citizen freedom, civil liberties and political rights in the 2018 Freedom of the World Review⁸. The rule of law, press freedom and observance of human rights provide a firm basis for the prevailing political conditions of stability, peace, security and low levels of crime.
20. **Macro-Economic Environment:** Namibia is categorised as a higher middle-income country. While it experienced steady economic growth over the last two decades, with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) that rose from US\$8,967 in 2012 to US\$9,542 in 2017⁹, an economic slowdown in 2016 was attributed to a decline in diamond mining and construction, and consolidation of the public administration and defence sectors. As a result, real-GDP growth contracted by 0.9 percent in 2017 to 0.1 percent in 2018 due to a sharp reduction in public spending caused by falling revenue and weak demand in trading partner economies. Pressures on the public purse are set to continue due to a rise in the fiscal deficit from 6.3 percent of GDP in

⁴ The report of the diagnostic exercise, which used the World Bank's SABER diagnostic tool, can be found at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/971651468185388172/pdf/100073-WP-ADD-SERIES-PUBLIC-SABER-School-Feeding-Namibia.pdf>

⁵ This sub-section draws on information presented in the Inception report

⁶ Namibia Statistics Agency (2014). Namibia Population Projections 2011-2041.

⁷ UNDP. 2017. Human Development Report, Namibia.

⁸ Freedom House. 2018. Freedom of the World.

⁹ World Bank. 2018. Namibia Overview.

2015 to 8.1 percent in 2016¹⁰, and a decline in Southern African Customs Union (SACU) revenues that are projected to fall by a further 10 per cent between 2016-2017 and 2019-2020¹¹.

21. **Poverty and Unemployment:** Namibia was ranked 129th out of 189 countries on the 2017 Human Development Index¹². Poverty affects about 28 percent of the population due to a combination of high levels of unemployment (43 percent of youths, 38 percent women and 30 percent men)¹³, and household income disparities that are indicated by a national Gini coefficient of 0.60 that is ranked 7th highest in the world¹⁴. While absolute poverty has declined from 37.5 in 2003 17.4 per cent in 2016¹⁵, it remains pervasive, especially in rural areas where livelihoods are affected by recurrent climate variability that prevents people from achieving food security.
22. **Food Security and Nutrition:** In 2015, 6.1 per cent of Namibians lived below the national food poverty line of NAD 293.1 per adult equivalent per month and could not afford the minimum calorific needs of 2,100 kilocalories (8,820 kilojoules) per day. The 2015 Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee estimated 578,480 people in rural areas were in need of food and livelihood assistance. While the 3-year average prevalence of undernourishment has declined significantly from 37.4 percent in 2009-11 to 25.4 percent in 2015-17¹⁶, stunting rates remain high at 24 percent, and range locally from 19 to 40 percent indicating high geographical concentrations of undernutrition in areas facing food shortages over long periods and poor access to health services and care¹⁷. In addition, the prevalence of underweight children under five years remain 7.1 percent and under-five mortality rates is 5.0 percent.
23. **Gender and Women's Empowerment:** The development objectives and aspirations set out in the Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5, 2017–2022) and Vision 2030 include the achievement of gender equality as well as equitable access to political, social, economic and cultural prosperity for all. In 2015 Namibia ranked among the top tier of countries globally on the Gender Development Index (GDI) with a score of 1.01414¹⁸ based on analyses of male-female differences in life expectancy, years of schooling, income parity, and command over economic resources. While this is significantly better than for most other Sub-Saharan African countries where the GDI averages nearer 0.88, Namibia still faces significant gender related challenges. Examples include high maternal mortality rates, a higher prevalence of HIV and AIDS among women, high rates of gender based violence and sexual exploitation of women and girls, social and economic gender inequalities, and teenage pregnancies that affect access to education. For example, about 3 500 pupils fell pregnant between 2017 and 2018, leading to more than 2 000 of them dropping out of school during the same period. A recent report¹⁹ submitted to the National Assembly shows that about 1 440 fell pregnant in five northern regions in 2018, while about 2 000 pupils fell pregnant in 2017.
24. **Education System:** MoEAC support six levels of education in Namibia including pre-primary, lower primary (grades 1-4), upper primary (5-7), junior secondary (8-10), senior secondary (11 & 12), and tertiary (university, and technical and vocational training). Under the Namibian Education Act (2001) school attendance is compulsory for the seven years of primary school for children between the age of six and sixteen, and school fees are prohibited for primary education. As a result, dropouts before grade 7 are low and the Namibia Education for All Development Index (EDI) increased by 5.4 percent between 1999 and 2015²⁰. High net primary enrolment rates were indicated in 2017, reaching 96 percent for boys and 99 percent of girls. However, dropout rates remain high, especially among children from the poorest economic quintile, with just 74 percent of boys and 81 percent of girls completing primary school education²¹. Following a significant fall in 2010, the allocation of government spending to education increased slightly from 21.6 percent of the national budget in 2007 to 22.4 percent in 2015, representing 9.3 percent of GDP²². Nevertheless, the evaluation coincides with a period of intense fiscal pressures on reducing public spending.
25. **National Policy Frameworks:** Namibia's Vision 2030 aims to create a prosperous industrialized country where peace, harmony, health, food security and political stability prevail, and outlines the country's national policy priorities towards achieving its sustainable development goals (SDGs). It is supported by NDP5²³, and

¹⁰ Africa Development Bank. 2019. Namibia Economic Outlook.

¹¹ UNICEF. 2018. Efficiencies in Public Spending, Namibia.

¹² UNDP. 2017.

¹³ Namibia Statistics Agency. 2017. Key Highlights of the Namibia Labour Force Survey 2016 Report

¹⁴ UNDP. 2017.

¹⁵ Namibia Statistics Agency (2016). *Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2015/2016*.

¹⁶ FAO-STAT. 2016. Namibia National Data.

¹⁷ Republic of Namibia. 2017. Zero Hunger Strategic Review.

¹⁸ UNDP. 2017. Human Development Report

¹⁹ <https://www.namibian.com.na/194926/archive-read/Teenage-pregnancy-SOS>

²⁰ UNESCO. 2015. Education For All Global Report.

²¹ Education Policy and Data Centre. 2018. Namibia National Education Profile.

²² MoEAC-UNICEF. 2017. Public Expenditure Review of Basic Education in Namibia.

²³ Republic of Namibia. 2017. Namibia's 5th National Development Plan, 2017/18-2021/22.

the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP, 2016–2020)²⁴, that aim to end poverty and hunger by ensuring inclusive growth delivers gender equality and “*leaves no-one behind*”. Under the NDP5 and HPP, Namibia’s sector-level policy frameworks include: the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication (BPWRPE, 2016) of the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) toward SDG1 – No Poverty²⁵; the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry’s (MAWF) Food and Nutrition Security Policy (1995, currently being updated) and 2015 Namibia Agriculture Policy (SDG2 – Zero Hunger)²⁶; the Ministry of Health and Social Services’ (MOHSS) National Health Policy Framework (2010- 2020) (SDG3 – Health and Wellbeing)²⁷; MoEAC’s Sector Policy on Inclusive Education (2013)²⁸, and draft School Feeding Policy (2017-2022) (SDG4 – Quality Education); and the 2010-2020 National Gender Policy of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) (SDG5 – Gender Equality)²⁹.

26. **Social Protection:** Supported by the NDP5 and BPWRPE, Namibia has one of Sub-Saharan Africa’s most comprehensive social protection systems that plays a critical role in its economy and society. A universal non-contributory old-age pension is provided for all Namibians aged 60 years and older under the National Pensions Act (1992). Targeted social-protection instruments provide social assistance schemes for children, orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), school-children (through school feeding), foster families, people living with disabilities and HIV-AIDS, war veterans, marginalized communities and populations affected by hunger. Social insurance schemes include sick and maternity leave, death benefit and employee compensation funds and accident insurance.
27. These programmes have a significant impact on reducing poverty as well as preventing hunger and malnutrition. Data from the Namibia 2015-2016 Household Income and Expenditure Survey indicated that old age pensions, child foster care and veterans’ grants constituted 65 per cent, 60 per cent and 54 per cent respectively of the expenditure of extreme poor households. Concentration curves for all social assistance grants other than the war veterans’ subvention are progressive with the greater share of transfers going to poorer households in Namibia. For example, the poorest 40 per cent received 51 per cent of child disability grants, 48 per cent of child maintenance grants and 47 per cent of old age pensions³⁰. The World Bank’s 2017 fiscal incidence analysis of the distribution of taxes and transfers in Namibia found in-kind transfers by the state contribute to significant reductions in poverty and inequality with free education and primary school meals supporting poorer households with more children³¹. However, while wide-ranging, the draft National Social Protection Policy (2019-2024) identified the need to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of social protection instruments through closer coordination, establishment of an integrated social registry and improved monitoring and evaluation.
28. **International Assistance:** WFP support in Namibia focuses on the capacity strengthening of government institutions to achieve the food and nutritional security of vulnerable populations through national school meals and shock responsive social safety net policies and programmes informed by national policy dialogue and dissemination of good practices, and promotion of South–South learning. Related areas of international cooperation by other agencies present in Namibia include: UNICEF’s technical assistance for child and social protection, gender parity in access to education, reproductive health, public immunisation, and the realisation of the rights of children and adolescents; FAO’s focus on policy, legal and institutional instruments for food and nutrition security, sustainable agricultural production among medium and small-scale producers, linking farmers to markets, and improving national preparedness to agricultural threats and crises; and the UNDP’s support for job creation and poverty reduction, improved accountability and participation in democratic governance and strengthening national capacities to manage environmental degradation and climate change impacts.

1.4. Evaluation Methodology and Limitations

1.4.1. Purpose

29. This is an evaluation of the NSFP for the period 2012-2018 and of the Technical Assistance support provided to it by the WFP. It has been jointly commissioned by the MoEAC and WFP – Namibia Office. The objectives of the evaluation are:

²⁴ Republic of Namibia. 2016. Harambee Prosperity Plan, 2016/17-2019/20.

²⁵ MPESW. 2016. Blue Print on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication.

²⁶ MAWF. 2015. Namibia Agriculture Policy.

²⁷ MOHSS. 2010. National Health Policy Framework.

²⁸ MoEAC. 2013. Sector Policy on Inclusive Education.

²⁹ MGECW.2010. National Gender Policy.

³⁰ Namibia Statistics Agency (2018). Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2015/16.

³¹ World Bank (2017). Does Fiscal Policy Benefit the Poor and Reduce Inequality in Namibia?

- Accountability – to assess the extent to which the milestones outlined in the Road Map, monitoring and evaluation plan and WFP Technical Assistance (TA) agreements were achieved;
 - Learning - to identify the reasons why results were, or were not achieved, in order to draw lessons, derive good practices for learning, and inform operational and strategic decision-making.
30. The evaluation is guided by 20 Evaluation Questions distributed across considerations of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, Learning and Benchmarking (see annex 2 for the Evaluation matrix and annex 1 for TORS).
31. The TORs and Inception Report initially included an evaluation question on developing performance indicators for Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) (EQ 7.2). This was subsequently dropped from the scope of the evaluation, following guidance from the evaluation managers. In consultation with the Evaluation Managers during the Inception Phase, it was also agreed that EQ 6.3. on use of lessons to inform evidence-based decision-making would be incorporated into EQ 2.3. on effectiveness of learning and ownership, and would not be reported on separately.
32. The intended users of this evaluation report include the Government of Namibia³², the WFP, and other stakeholders in the private and not-for-profit sectors, with an interest in the NSFP.

1.4.2. Approach and Methodology

33. The evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach combining three main elements:
34. **Qualitative Data Collection** – This was conducted by the evaluation team and was structured around a set of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)³³ and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with various programme actors and stakeholders. Data collection was carried out at the national level in Windhoek and in five regions (Kavango West, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Otjozondjupa and Erongo) at the regional headquarter and school levels. (See annex 5 for further details).
35. **Quantitative Data Collection** – A statistically representative sample of 137 schools plus a purposive sample of 660 households was drawn in order to conduct a comprehensive quantitative survey across all 14 regions of the country. The survey comprised 4 tools administered to school principals, NSFP school focal points, NSFP cooks and household heads. The survey was administered by 24 research assistants who underwent a 2 day training and who were supervised remotely by the Evaluation Team together with the WFP Namibia Country Office and the Regional Bureau, Johannesburg. (See annex 6 for further details).
36. **Cost Analysis** – Guided by WFP’s Cost Analysis tool for school feeding programmes, and with backstopping support from the Regional Bureau, Johannesburg and WFP headquarters, the evaluation team collected data on various cost components of NSFP delivery. This information was collected through documentary review, KIIs as well as the quantitative survey. For reasons of expedience, and taking account of data availability, costs were obtained for school year 2017 only. (See annex 7 for further details).
37. Besides these three main methods, the evaluation team also undertook an elaborate review of in excess of 70 documentary sources provided by MoEAC and WFP (see annex 16 for bibliography), as well as analysis of two core data bases hosted by the Education Management Information System (EMIS)³⁴ and the NSFP Management Information System (NASIS)³⁵.
38. Such an approach has allowed for cross-fertilisation of information, some that is best elicited through semi-structured discussions where the lived experiences, views and perceptions of stakeholders can be revealed. Such qualitative insight helps to “tell the story” but risks subjectivity and lack of representativeness. Complementary data collected through the quantitative survey offers an opportunity to generate statistically valid findings that are generalisable over the entire population. However, whilst offering evidence on the “what”, such survey data is not as useful in explaining the “why and how”. This is where qualitative information is particularly insightful in contextualising hard data. The effectiveness of both is reinforced through consultation of secondary sources that offer further breadth and depth of knowledge on the subject thereby providing the general backdrop against which quantitative and qualitative data can be examined and

³² The principal user of the evaluation within the Government of Namibia is the MoEAC and the Regional Directorates of Education. Other users within the government system include central agencies (such as the Ministry of Finance, the Office of the President and the National Planning Commission), the Regional Councils including the office of the Chief Regional Officer, and line ministries including those responsible for health, water, gender, agriculture, social protection, and child welfare.

³³ 15 KIIs were conducted at the national level, 9 KIIs conducted at regional level and 32 KIIs at school level. 4 FGDs took place at regional level, while at school level 10 FGDs were organised. Further details are available in annex 5.

³⁴ EMIS is the MoEACs management information system from tracking progress on core educational indicators and from which statistical information and reports are generated for planning, decision-making and reporting purposes.

³⁵ NASIS is a dedicated management information system set up to support implementation of the NSFP. It collects data primarily in relation to programme indicators set at the output level which can inform programme managers on the state of programme performance at the school and regional levels.

interpreted. The data obtained from the two core MIS's – EMIS and NASIS has offered additional statistical information collected over time, complementing the data collected from the survey tools and offering an historical perspective over the period of evaluation. Triangulation through which data obtained from different sources is compared and contrasted was a key process applied throughout the data collection and data analysis process.

39. **Data Validity and Reliability** – Every effort was made to ensure data validity and reliability. Triangulation is a recognised method to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources. The sample size for the quantitative survey was arrived at through consultations and guidance of the National Statistics Agency (NSA). With respect to data reliability, the ET assumed data obtained from EMIS and NASIS to be reliable. However, the robustness and accuracy of NASIS data in particular is noted. Data sets obtained from the quantitative survey were compared with specific data from NASIS to identify areas of convergence and divergence. Data from the quantitative survey was collected using digital data collection techniques and was subject to a data cleansing exercise to ensure accuracy and completeness. Close field supervision during the course of data collection also ensured real-time troubleshooting of any problems arising. Qualitative data collection was guided by lists of semi-structured questions and the practice where possible was to ensure that two team members participated in each KII or FGD to ensure accuracy and consistency of asking questions and recording responses.
40. **Gender Considerations** – The ET ensured gender considerations were taken account of in the design and administration of data collection tools, more especially for the quantitative survey. This included: i) ensuring questions allowed for collection and analysis of disaggregated data and information; ii) where appropriate, community level FGDs were organised with separate groups of men and women; iii) research assistants were recruited in a manner that ensured gender balance; iv) RA's were trained in gender sensitive data collection methodologies and were provided with a guidebook including a specific section on gender awareness and sensitivity; v) questions were crafted in a way that elicited responses that helped draw the different perspectives, experiences and needs of men, women, boys and girls.
41. **Ethical Safeguards and Measures** - Quantitative and qualitative data collection followed WFP DEQAS standards and protocols to ensure methodological appropriateness, accuracy and rigour. Ethical considerations were applied systematically. For both the quantitative and qualitative survey, RAs and ET members began by introducing themselves. Respondents were informed of the objectives of the survey, how the information would be used and of the confidentiality and anonymity of data collected. It was also made clear that respondents could curtail the interview at any point. Where learners were involved, the consent of teachers and/or parents was obtained prior to arranging the interviews.
42. **Impartiality and Independence** – The TORS expressly requested impartiality and independence in the conduct of this evaluation. The ET comprises four experienced independent consultants who have no prior relationship with the NSFP, the MoEAC or WFP in Namibia. The evaluation was conducted with professionalism, integrity and objectivity with the aim of obtaining a broad base of evidence from a wide range of sources upon which conclusions and recommendations could be drawn. The ET worked as a close knit team, collecting and analyzing data jointly and formulating conclusions and recommendations based on shared understanding and the reaching of consensus under guidance of the team leader.

1.4.3. Data Collection Mission

43. Data collection was spread over a four week period from 9th September through 2nd October 2019 (see annex 8 for detailed programme):

1.4.4. Limitations

44. A number of limitations and constraints were encountered in the data collection process:
45. **Quantitative Survey** - Various sampling and logistical challenges were encountered. In particular, due to a malfunction with one of the data entry tablets, one set of survey results from a selected school had to be scrapped so the sample was drawn against 136 rather than 137 schools. With respect to other challenges, remedial actions were identified and therefore the impact on the integrity of the survey is not considered to have been significant.
46. **Qualitative Survey** - Overall the qualitative survey met or exceeded expectations, especially at the regional (Education Directorates) and school levels (teaching staff, cooks, board members and learners). The main limitations encountered included: i) limited availability of MoEAC staff to engage with the team impacting on the ability of the ET to tap into institutional memory; ii) limited number of regional level government departments that availed themselves to meet the team; iii) difficulties to mobilise groups of parents to meet the evaluation team.

47. **Cost Analysis** - Various challenges were encountered in obtaining financial data from all levels. This included non-availability of data, incompatible or inconsistent financial data sets, and the need to make cost calculations based on broad assumptions where costs were highly variable and not aligned to any fixed parameter³⁶.
48. **Documentary Sources and MIS** - Whilst most required documentary sources were made available to the team in good time, significant delays were encountered in accessing the two key MIS (EMIS and NASIS). There were also concerns regarding data reliability (NASIS) and consistency with comparative data on EMIS. A number of key reports derived from NASIS data that were required for trend analysis were also not availed to the team.
49. A number of the mitigation measures to address the limitations noted above have been mentioned and are further discussed in the corresponding annexes.
50. It is also important to note that the team that has carried out this evaluation was not the team that prepared the inception report and corresponding evaluation design. Therefore the in-coming team had to adopt an inception design which they had not participated in developing. Overall, this did not create difficulties as the inception design was well developed. However, the new team had to invest considerable time in resolving a number of unforeseen methodological issues related to the quantitative survey tool that should have been resolved at inception and which drew attention of the team away from other priority actions in the initial stages of data collection. This impacted on the ability of the team to focus evenly on all of the evaluation questions. As a result, a number of evaluation questions have not been investigated with the same level of detail and attention as others. Whilst the new team was able to familiarise itself with the evaluation methodology proposed in the inception report, some departures from the proposed approach have been inevitable based on circumstances encountered on the ground, data availability and the professional judgement of the team. However, this did not affect the credibility of the report.

Part 2: Evaluation Findings

2.1. Evaluation Criteria 1: Relevance

51. The TOR set out five evaluation questions linked to this first evaluation criteria on Relevance. These are:

- To what extent was the school feeding programme relevant to the needs of learners (boys and girls) and the comparative expectations of men and women in schools and communities in different contexts (rural, urban, agroecological, livelihood)?
- To what extent was the NSFP aligned with and complementary to other Government policies and programmes including gender empowerment policies/programmes where/as appropriate?
- Was the technical assistance provided by WFP relevant/ appropriate to the needs of the MoEAC at different levels?
- To what extent is the TA provided by WFP to the MoEAC aligned with and complementary to WFP support to other relevant national institutions?
- Within the context of the national school feeding policy and other relevant policy frameworks, what adjustments are required to the design and implementation of the NSFP to make it effective in contributing to national developmental objectives?

2.1.1. To what extent was the school feeding programme relevant to the needs of learners (boys and girls) and the comparative expectations of men and women in schools and communities in different contexts (rural, urban, agroecological, livelihood) [EQ 1.1.]?

52. The resounding message the ET received from the majority of stakeholders interviewed at all levels is that the NSFP is most definitely a relevant and important programme. In fact, there were no dissenting voices at all. Asked whether the programme had reached the end of its useful life or whether it was time to replace it with another type of intervention, such as a cash transfer programme, responses indicated rather that the programme in its current form remains all the more important today given the current economic context and effects of drought on household livelihoods and resilience. That did not mean that stakeholders did not see

³⁶ For example, local arrangements at school level for compensating cooks or collecting firewood
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opportunities for adapting or improving the modus operandi to safeguard and reinforce relevance and indeed effectiveness. Various nuances and caveats to this general finding are highlighted below:

53. **Urban – rural divide:** The value of the NSFP is most clearly felt in rural areas, but all the same remains important for cohorts of learners in more urban settings. In this respect the difference in levels of participation in the programme between rural and urban areas is noted. Whilst in rural contexts, almost all learners participate in the programme, in urban contexts, the numbers of participants are substantially lower (even constituting a minority of learners), with considerable numbers of learners bringing their own meals from home. This is indicative of greater socio-economic stratification in urban contexts with a higher incidence of learners belonging to homes that are able to provide. At the same time, there can be a tendency in urban schools to forget that there are children coming from informal settlements or townships who face similar socio-economic challenges to rural children. There was also the challenge of wider socio-economic inequalities and hence more issues of stigmatisation in urban schools.
54. **Contribution – attribution:** The analysis of programme effectiveness (see further chapter on EQ 2.1.) points to the fact that educational outcomes at primary school levels have improved over the course of the evaluation period. Most significantly, indicators point to improvements in terms of access, attendance and progression even though levels of drop-out and absenteeism remain concerning. The analysis suggests a plausible link between availability of the school feeding programme and the recorded improvements in educational outcomes. However, whilst it is safe to claim contribution, it is less easy to establish attribution. Anecdotal findings suggest the critical role the programme plays in incentivising boys and girls to attend school and for certain cohorts of learners, availability of the school meal is a deal clincher. A number of schools in rural areas which were unable to provide meals noted higher levels of absenteeism with learners absconding as soon as they realised that food was not available. The evaluation however established that other factors can determine levels of school participation and conversely dropout rates and absenteeism. As reported later on in this report, for the girl learner, availability of separate toilet facilities and opportunities for menstrual management are contributing factors, whilst learner pregnancy is also a factor. Other contributory factors include distance from school. The NSFP is not able to directly influence such trends, and may therefore not be considered fully determinant in influencing levels of participation in school. In this respect, one may conclude that the NSFP is necessary but not sufficient for driving educational outcomes.
55. **Changing tastes and expectations:** The serving of a fortified maize blend porridge has been the mainstay of the programme since its inception. As the evaluation found, for many learners and in particular those facing dire economic circumstances and food insecurity, the plate of porridge is welcome and may well represent the only meal of the day. However, there have been increasing calls to diversify the food that is served suggesting a diminishing level of satisfaction with the current offering. Those calls come from different quarters – from the learners themselves and their carers/ parents, from teaching staff and from the government and society more widely. The call for diversification is driven by different considerations including i) improving the nutritional value of the meal served; ii) taking account of regional and cultural preferences; iii) improving the general taste and appeal of the meal to respond to expectations of learners and parents, including breaking the stigma associated with the programme as being for the poor and vulnerable; iv) creating opportunities for local economic development. To remain relevant, the programme has to take cognisance of these expectations. The piloting of the HGSP approach is indicative of the programme adjusting to these calls for change.
56. **Complementarity to other socially protective interventions:** The question was asked whether the NSFP was still needed given the availability of other social protection interventions including various cash transfer initiatives aimed at children, especially OVCs, the disabled and the elderly. Stakeholders responsible for the delivery of these programmes were emphatic that the NSFP plays a strategic complementary role. This was explained in terms of it i) relieving burden on existing cash transfer payments through the provision of a daily assured hot meal for learners; ii) ensuring that vulnerable learners do indeed receive a meal; iii) facilitating the identification of vulnerable or at-risk learners through the programme which might otherwise have been missed through mainstream identification and registration processes. Indeed it was noted that schools offer a level of engagement and interaction with the community that other programmes are unable to achieve due to lack of presence at this level.
57. **Educational versus health and related well-being benefits:** The NSFP is regarded primarily as an intervention aimed at promoting educational outcomes. In this respect the relevance of the programme has been affirmed, notwithstanding some caveats. The programme also seeks to improve health outcomes by improving the nutritional status and well being of learners. As discussed already, anecdotal evidence points to the contribution the programme makes to assuring learners receive at least one nutritious meal a day. Tools for measuring the precise contribution the school meal is having on the nutritional and dietary wellbeing of learners and how this contributes to their overall health status are however not in place. It would seem important to put such tools in place in order to establish the relative and absolute contribution of the NSFP to non-educational outcomes. This would introduce a further perspective on programme relevance. It is also noteworthy how the programme can serve as a platform to promote healthy life-styles including eating

balanced and nutritious meals and establishing backyard gardens to diversify food intake. Anecdotal evidence suggests where efforts are made to link school feeding to lifeskills lessons and to school gardens, positive impacts can be made with learners gaining appreciation of healthy eating, food production and also water management. Learners can be effective vectors of change bringing home positive messages and practices to their homes.

58. **Community Participation:** It is to be noted that achievement of most of the indicators related to Output 2 of the NSFP MEP (see further chapter on EQ 2.1.) depends on community contributions. The provision of storage and cooking facilities, cooking equipment, fuel, and volunteer cooks is by and large a community responsibility, although funding can be and is obtained from other sources too. Notwithstanding challenges of community mobilisation, dissatisfaction with levels of cooks' compensation and some identified negative impacts on gender relations (discussed further under EQ 2.1. and EQ. 6.1.), this commitment and effort at community level may be considered an indicator of the appreciation of the value and thereby the relevance of the NSFP.
59. **Current context of economic downturn and drought:** A clear message received from across different stakeholder groups at national, regional and local level, is that the relevance of the programme, particularly with respect to mitigating hunger, is greater today than it has been in the past due to the economic downturn and drought. This has reduced income earning opportunities and devastated local food production leaving households food insecure. The on-going drought relief measures attest to the severity of the situation and reinforce the critical role the school feeding programme is playing as a complementary measure, especially in the most drought affected regions of the country. It was however not possible to establish further insight on the comparative importance of the NSFP across different agro-ecological areas.
60. In summary, the NSFP has been and remains relevant in terms of contributing to meeting food security needs and a safety net for vulnerable children and communities, by assuring one hot meal a day while at school. This has proven particularly important during the current economic downturn and persistent drought, and serves a complementary measure to other social protection and drought relief measures. The programme has moreover contributed to creating demand for school, with learners enrolling, remaining in and completing school.

2.1.2. To what extent was the NSFP aligned with and complementary to other Government policies and programmes including gender empowerment policies/programmes where/as appropriate [EQ 1.2.]?

61. Feedback from KIIs and FGDs at the national, regional and community/ school level present a mixed picture with respect to the level of NSFP alignment, and complementarity with other Government policies and programmes. Calls for enhanced coordination, coherence and collaboration have however been made since the drafting of the NSFP Road Map and are reiterated in the approved NSF policy.
62. At national level, NSFP does feature in a number of higher level reporting frameworks and the programme is represented at a number of forums. For example it is described as contributing to Namibia's Vision 2030, the national development plans, the Harambee Prosperity Plan and the Namibian Zero Hunger Strategy, whilst being represented in forums related to food security, social protection and safety nets, child protection, education and gender equality. And it is acknowledged that MoEAC has some well established relationships with other Government departments at the national level and with respect to particular thematic or multi-agency initiatives (see para 65 below).
63. At the regional levels, however, and at the front line of service delivery, the degree of collaborative effort is more limited, with the programme operating somewhat in a silo, and opportunities for joint action not always recognised. That said, there was an evident readiness for closer cooperation and collaboration as well as shared actions amongst participants interviewed at the regional level. For example, in one region, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) representative emphasised the readiness of the Ministry to engage with MoEAC at a practical level to support school gardens and HGSF-related initiatives. There was also general acknowledgement that decentralisation should in time facilitate inter-sector collaboration under direction of the Chief Regional Officer (CRO).
64. There is equally evidence of missed opportunities to collaborate and a need to make more purposeful steps to promote joint action. Promoting and sustaining inter-agency and inter-sector collaboration, and thereby assuring policy alignment and complementarity is, however, by no means easy. It is easily identified as a shortcoming but often proves difficult to tackle. The MoEAC is the first to acknowledge the challenges facing a line Ministry to convene other line Ministries and accepts that more needs to be done to promote synergy and to develop its internal capabilities to facilitate collaboration, cooperation and convening.
65. Positive developments noted by the ET in its discussions with stakeholders include:

- Broad engagement of stakeholders in the drafting of the NSF policy, which created a valuable opportunity to open the doors of the NSFP to a wider audience and to interrogate potential linkages and synergies with other policy frameworks and programmes;
 - Engagement with the private sector, as well as other relevant line ministries, on the topic of the HGSF agenda, roles, responsibilities and operational modalities;
 - Inclusion of the NSFP within national frameworks and platforms such as the National Disaster Risk Management Committee and the Ministry of Poverty's Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication initiative.
 - Initiatives taken at the school level to engage various stakeholders to support the delivery of the NSFP, as highlighted later on in this report.
66. However, less progress has been made in other areas. For example:
- The recommended NSFP multi-stakeholder forum identified as a priority in 2012 has still not been established³⁷;
 - There are a number of operational bottlenecks, which could benefit from closer inter-sector collaboration, an example of which relates to addressing issues of food safety and hygiene.
 - Forging more purposeful productive partnerships with social protection, health and gender as further discussed below:
67. **Alignment and Complementarity with Social Protection** – The ET met with various Social Protection (SP) stakeholders at national and regional level, including the MPESW as custodian of the (draft) social protection policy to understand the extent to which the NSFP is recognised as part of the social protection landscape, and what more could be done to strengthen the operational linkages between existing social protection interventions and the NSFP.
68. The NSFP may be regarded as part of the social protection landscape in so far as it contributes to improvements in children's health, nutrition and education, and subsequently lead to long-term effects on productivity and earnings. The NSFP is indeed recognised in various policies and action plans such as the Harambee Prosperity Plan, the National Development Plan (NDP5), the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication, the Zero Hunger Road Map, and the draft social protection policy and implementation plan. Moreover, in discussions with MPESW and MGECW, the contribution of the NSFP to addressing vulnerability and hunger was highlighted. Indeed, respondents pointed out the complementarity that NSFP offered in terms of reducing pressure on old age pension and child grants to address basic food needs. It was also noted that the NSFP through the primary school life skills teachers had played an important role in the identification of OVCs that were not necessarily identified through the MGECW own registration process, thereby facilitating access to OVC grants which would otherwise have not been identified.
69. That said, there are no formal linkages between the NSFP and other social protection programmes and indeed, school feeding is perceived almost exclusively as an education programme. Such absence of effective linkage means, for example, that the impact of NSFP on nutrition and health, or on other livelihood outcomes are challenging to track as the programme is unable to plug into existing case management mechanisms operating in other sectors. The absence of defined linkages also makes it challenging to quantify the extent to which NSFP reduces the pressure off other cash transfer programmes. The evaluation established that there are:
- Gaps in the social protection system including a weak community social workforce (in quantity and capacity), and tools (e.g case management) all of which are critical for effective linkage of NSFP to other social protection programmes.
 - Limited decentralized capacity of MPESW to address social protection policy interests at the regional level, which creates possible gaps in coordination at the regional level. With further decentralization the Ministry would be able to have a stronger lower level workforce able to coordinate and facilitate linkages within/between SP programmes including NSFP.
 - Gaps in institutional capacity at the national level to coordinate multi-stakeholder, multi-sector efforts for social protection. The ministry could use additional expert staff and resources to facilitate research in service linkages, and to organize inter-sector consultative forums and coordination meetings at the central and regional level.

³⁷ As noted in NSFP TA report: "As one of the recommendations from the 5-year road map, this task force has not yet been established. The absence of such a forum makes it difficult for in- depth and strategic engagement on the NSFP with other relevant stakeholders. MoEAC needs to prioritize the establishment of this forum in order to facilitate regular engagement on the progress of implementation of the NSFP.

- Poor service interoperability between critical government databases such as civil registration, NASIS and various beneficiary databases. Sharing/harmonization of beneficiary data would ease the identification/referral of beneficiaries across programmes. For example, in instances where learners are registered for school feeding, those who have been identified to benefit from the Child Grant should automatically qualify and be registered to benefit. It is noted that the draft social protection policy has proposed to establish a single registry, which will be useful in harmonizing reporting, and will be useful in tracking implementation of all social protection programmes.
70. There are clear opportunities for synergy, and for NSFP to interact more purposefully with other social protection interventions. However, the current fragmentation across the social protection sector requires that sector coordination structures are strengthened in order to facilitate stronger interaction across programmes.
 71. **Alignment and Complementarity with Health** - The ET sought information and views from the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS) at national and regional levels not only on their understanding of the NSFP but their views on the need for and benefits of actual and potential collaborative efforts. The ET was able to identify various areas of existing collaboration.
 72. The ET learned that at the national level, there is a strong working relationship between MOHSS and MoEAC. Both are members, for example, of the Food Security Council and Namibia Alliance for Nutrition, which serve as policy level coordination mechanisms for food security and nutrition. MoEAC and MOHSS have also been partners in relation to the implementation of the Integrated School Health programme.
 73. In the area of sanitation promotion, inter-sector forums provide for inter-ministerial information sharing, enabling some level of coordination in the area of sanitation. These forums include the Water and Sanitation Forum currently supported by UNICEF, and the National Water and Sanitation forum and the Sanitation Action Group, both at the national level.
 74. At the regional and sub-regional levels, coordination has faced various challenges, being less structured and more ad hoc. Nevertheless, there are several examples of collaborative efforts. These include i) the Integrated School Health Programme, which provides a good example of collaborative efforts that promote school health and nutrition³⁸, and ii) Sanitation and Hygiene where productive collaboration has been forged in the area of sanitation promotion. The ET found some positive examples of school and community level sanitation and hygiene initiatives that indicate the benefits of multi-sector coordination. In particular, the complementarity between the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and School Led Total Sanitation (SLTS) programmes seems clear as improving hygiene and sanitation at the school is seen to be moulding learners to promote good hygiene and sanitation at home. An encouraging and positive observation in the CLTS programme is that monitoring and evaluation exercises at the community level, already comprises of a multi-sector team of partners from the ministries of Agriculture, Education, Rural and Urban Development and Health. This provides an opportunity for collaboration on complimentary programmes across Ministries.
 75. Also noteworthy is that regional education staff responsible for NSFP coordination are often also tasked to coordinate the SLTS initiative whilst at the *school level*, the assignment of NSFP and SLTS coordination to the same teacher, which was a common practice, also creates potential opportunity for synergy between sanitation, water hygiene and school feeding.
 76. Meanwhile, a practical example of a real need for deliberate coordination efforts, relates to the recent outbreak of Hepatitis E in Erongo region³⁹. The need to direct the campaign on promotion of hand washing and use of running water towards schools had been recognised. Moreover, schools were regarded as an effective avenue for communicating health messages to the wider community.
 77. Without deliberate efforts to nurture, opportunities for collaboration can be missed. In fact, respondents highlighted limited awareness of the NSFP, amongst relevant stakeholders such as various social workers who support the schools. Some indicated that they have not been involved with the NSFP since their intervention does not occur at the school level. Again participants noted that channels and means of communication, information sharing and feedback could be improved.
 78. **Alignment and Complementarity with Gender** – The ET reviewed the extent to which provisions for Gender Equality (GE) objectives, performance and results are addressed vis-à-vis the guiding framework of the NSFP, namely the 5-Year Road Map, the MEP and TA agreements⁴⁰.
 79. Overall, this guiding framework does not offer a clear analysis of, or provide a response strategy to address the gender-related context, constraints, opportunities and challenges underlying the NSFP. Such an analysis

³⁸ Working with social workers linked to and involved in the school health programme and social workers in every hospital, it has been possible to establish links and coordination with schools. The model capitalises on the unique setting of the school as a centre not just for academic learning, but also for outcomes in children's development, health and wellbeing.

³⁹ Raised during the Team's meeting in Swakopmund

⁴⁰ See gender analysis checklist

would be expected to reflect: i) the social and policy context including gender roles, gender relations and community norms and beliefs which influence women's or men's participation, ii) the possible impacts of the NSFP on different groups iii) the different needs of boy and girl learners at risk of dropping-out; iv) ways to incorporate gender oversight in multi-sector NSFP coordination and v) ways to track gender issues over time.

80. The 2012 review of the NSFP⁴¹ had provided an opportunity to reflect on potential gender outcomes. However, it did not mention any intended or unintended gaps in the design, implementation and management of the programme, focusing rather on the disaggregated number of girls and boys benefitting. It referenced only once that the data gathered earlier might have been used to "reveal if there (was) a gender dimension to who (was) eating and who (was) not, particularly in urban settings (WFP, 2012)⁴²" in reference to fluctuations in demand for food at the school level.
81. Additionally a reference made to a "lower school feeding participation by girls in four regions, Erongo, Hardap, Karas and Khomas", which at the time, seemed to confirm that stigma issues (were) experienced in (those) regions⁴³.
82. The 2012 review was consequently consolidated into the 5-year road-map. The team has prepared a rapid gender assessment of the 5-year roadmap (see annex 14), highlighting opportunities for incorporating gender-mainstreaming goals, which could have been included during the 2014 and 2016 reviews, but which were not. Integrating these could have enabled the NSFP to observe gender sensitive results, and gender responsive reporting in the NSFP.
83. As noted in following chapters on NSFP effectiveness (see especially EQ 2.1.), the primary focus of NSFP results has been on educational performance. While achievements in these outcomes highlight the value of the NSFP to the education sector and to other national development objectives for child development and poverty reduction, a focus on these outcomes alone obscures the gendered impacts observed during the evaluation exercise. These relate in particular to vulnerability and learner pregnancy, the availability of proper sanitation and hygiene facilities to girls, and the impact of stigma on the boy learner. These are examined in the chapter on EQ 6.1.
84. There are several national policy and planning frameworks, which are intended to guide how sector and thematic interventions mainstream gender. Evidence suggests, however, that this does not happen systematically. This is indeed the case with respect to the NSFP where firstly, little if any reference is made to these wider provisions for gender mainstreaming and secondly, no guidance is offered as to how they are interpreted and integrated within the programme. The national policy instruments and context for gender mainstreaming referenced in the guiding framework and narratives required clearer interpretation and integration into the NSFP's MEP. The wider policy context for gender in Namibia includes NDP5, Harambee Posterity Plan, Vision 2030, and the National Gender Policy amongst others⁴⁴.

2.1.3. Was the technical assistance provided by WFP relevant/ appropriate to the needs of the MoEAC at different levels [EQ 1.3.]?

85. Based on the team's assessment of technical assistance support, the team concludes that WFP TA support has been mostly relevant and appropriate to the needs of the MoEAC at different levels. The analysis of the TA effectiveness (discussed in the chapter on EQ 2.2. and 2.3.) however reveals some shortcomings in delivery approach and focus of TA support, which raise questions with respect to relevance.
86. Key factors contributing to the overall relevance and appropriateness of TA include:
 - TA support was guided by good quality diagnostic work carried out at the outset of the cooperation agreement between WFP and the Government of Namibia, and which subsequently led to the elaboration of the NSFP Road Map. The Road Map may be regarded as a living document which has been updated on two occasions in 2014 and 2016 and which has served as the main reference for guiding TA support.
 - TA support can be said to be client owned and demand driven. This is due to the fact that the bulk of TA costs have been paid for by the Government of Namibia. This changes the relationship between supplier and consumer of technical assistance and avoids the possibility of imposed technical assistance which can be a source of frustration in development cooperation agreements. It also means that the value and opportunity cost of technical assistance is fully recognised since from the perspective of the consumer of the support, it is not a "free good".

⁴¹ by the MoEAC with technical and financial support from WFP, the Partnership for Child Development (PCD) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

⁴² Namibian School Feeding Programme Case Study (2012) World Food Programme

⁴³ Data on OVC and NSFP Beneficiaries (2012) – Annex 1

⁴⁴ See annex 16 for summary of policy frameworks on Gender

- TA support has on the whole built on WFP's areas of established technical competence with respect to analytical work for example in areas of HGFS, M&E systems, supply chain management and advocacy and facilitation where its neutral convening powers have also been appreciated. These are areas of expertise that the MoEAC lacks and it therefore saw in WFP complementary expertise that could reinforce its own capabilities. The MoEAC was outspoken in recognising the value-added of such WFP support but also noted the comparative advantage of WFP in terms of identifying and sourcing global expertise as well as linking national stakeholders to regional networks and events, including opportunities for learning such as through south-south learning, an example of which was the study tour to Kenya in 2016, which gave impetus to exploring home grown school feeding opportunities in Namibia. However, as elaborated in the discussion of EQ 2.2. on TA effectiveness, the team is surprised that WFP was not mobilised to lend greater support to resolving supply chain management challenges notably delayed deliveries of maize blend to schools.
 - TA support has been grounded in a mature working relationship between WFP and MoEAC that has enabled the building of trust, confidence and joint action. This has been facilitated by the practice of co-location whereby the principal TA advisor has spent part of their time working from the Ministry. This is especially useful for forging close working relationships and developing insight on context including opportunities, constraints and timing/ sequencing of interventions.
87. As noted by both MoEAC and WFP the focus of WFP's TA support has primarily been "upstream" aimed at strengthening policy frameworks, building partnerships, strengthening systems such as M&E, human resources development and awareness raising. These are all important and necessary having been identified as key intervention areas in the Road Map. However, the evaluation has identified bottlenecks in core areas of programme delivery that impact on the credibility of the programme and its ability to meet its objectives, as discussed in the chapter on EQ 2.2. Given WFP's substantial operational experience, one might have expected greater attention to have been paid to some of these "downstream" operational challenges.
88. Going forward, a mapping and assessment of capacity needs at all levels could help to tease out the key areas of need that could help to focus future capacity development support. This could be done as part of a review of the Roadmap and could lead to the formulation of a comprehensive capacity strengthening plan covering individual, organisational and enabling environment levels. This would be especially pertinent given the current push to decentralise functions to the regional level, and which might likely be the future locus of capacity development support. This becomes all the more important given the prospects of introducing the HGFS approach.

2.1.4. To what extent is the TA provided by WFP to the MoEAC aligned with and complementary to WFP support to other relevant national institutions [EQ 1.4.]?

89. Technical assistance to the MoEAC in support of the NSFP constitutes WFP's main focus of assistance. Besides this assistance, WFP has also provided selected technical assistance to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in the area of Food Security, and to MPESW with respect to Social Protection.
90. **Alignment and Complementarity to Food Security Interventions** - It was not possible to meet with stakeholders who had participated in these non-NSFP components of TA and to make a judgement therefore on the degree of alignment and complementarity from different perspectives. Therefore, this review has drawn on limited secondary data, including the 2017 External Review of WFP's TA support to Namibia on food security⁴⁵. The report identifies three areas of support that targeted the OPM, over the 2013-2015 period, namely;
- Strengthening Logistics management capacity including i) carrying out a logistics capacity assessment; ii) developing Standard Operating procedures for warehouse management and iii) introducing a commodities management information system (COMIS). In the assessment of support provided, this cluster of interventions was rated highly relevant while effectiveness was given a medium rating.
 - Strengthening food and nutrition analysis. This included i) deployment of a Vulnerability Assessment and Monitoring (VAM) expert to provide hands-on support, advice and on-the job training to relevant OPM staff; ii) conducting a follow-up emergency food security assessment and iii) mobilising expertise to set up a food and nutrition security monitoring system. iv) learning, exchange visits and workshops. In the assessment of support provided, both relevance and effectiveness were judged as high.
 - Programme support and coordination. This included i) helping to set up the Food and Nutrition Security Task Force; ii) providing support to monitor Government's relief operations.

⁴⁵ External Review of WFP's TA support to Namibia on food security, 2017, WFP/ USAID
Namibia National School Feeding Evaluation Report - February 2020

91. All these areas of support are certainly relevant to the wider food security objectives and concerns of the NSFP. Indeed, as it is discussed later on in the next chapter on Effectiveness (EQ 2.1.), there is need to strengthen the monitoring of the nutritional outcome indicator contained in the NSFP MEP and to find ways to measure the contribution of the NSFP to addressing wider food security and resilience building interventions. The other area deserving greater attention within the NSFP is supply chain management, an area that was the focus of support provided to OPM. One might therefore conclude that the TA provided to the wider food security sector through OPM is indeed complementary to the TA provided to MoEAC with respect to the NSFP and vice versa. However, opportunities for sharing such knowledge and know-how with related sectors do not seem to have been exploited. The benefits that have accrued as a result of support to OPM could conceivably benefit role players involved in the delivery of the NSFP at national and regional levels. Of course, to do so would require agreement and support of concerned Ministries to facilitate such joint learning. It is also interesting to note that the above-mentioned assessment report makes no mention of the NSFP even under the section on cross-cutting issues. Similarly one does not find mention of opportunities for linking up with the TA programme directed at OPM within the NSFP TA reports. This would suggest that interventions have tended to operate in parallel guided by the institutional mandates of the government departments to which the TA has been directed.
92. **Alignment and Complementarity With Social Protection Interventions** - WFP has supported MPESW in numerous ways to strengthen the sector. In particular, WFP has provided technical support towards the development of key development frameworks sponsored by the Ministry including the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication, and the draft SP policy and action plan⁴⁶. In addition, WFP continues to support efforts to improve harmonization and subsequently strengthen the country's ability to effectively deliver core SP programmes through improved efficiencies, better resource management, and enhanced service integration. Whilst the draft SP Policy has provisions to strengthen the structures of coordination, challenges of implementation are foreseen and WFP therefore has an opportunity to support the implementation of the social protection action plan, going forward.
93. As is discussed throughout this report, the linkages between NSFP and the SP sector are evident. Indeed, from the perspective of many stakeholders, the NSFP is a socially protective intervention that belongs to the wider portfolio of SP interventions. For sure, efforts by WFP to support the sector, complement the support provided to NSFP at the policy and operational levels and clearly afford opportunities to build synergies wherever possible, and as already discussed above in section 2.1.2. It is further noted that this evaluation is being managed from the social protection desk of WFP reconfirming the recognized links between social protection and school feeding.
94. The NSFP is very much at the nexus between food security and social protection. WFP is strategically placed to facilitate linkages between these policy arenas and to ensure that they are mutually reinforcing. Whilst this has been happening implicitly to some extent through the TA support provided to MoEAC, as well as to OPM and to MPESW, giving further visibility to these opportunities should be discussed with the Government of Namibia so that efforts are not focused only within each policy arena but between them as well.

2.1.5. Within the context of the national school feeding policy and other relevant policy frameworks, what adjustments are required to the design and implementation of the NSFP to make it effective in contributing to national developmental objectives [EQ 1.5.]?

95. The evaluation of the NSFP across the different evaluation criteria has allowed for the identification of a number of adjustments with respect to the design and implementation of the NSFP that could enable the programme to contribute more effectively to national development objectives. The majority of these adjustments are reflected in the proposed recommendations section of this report. However, in order to respond directly to this evaluation question, those most pertinent are elaborated upon below:
96. **Adjustment 1 Coordination:** There is a need for the programme to build stronger coordination structures at national and regional level that can promote joint action both cross-sectorally and at thematic level. This would be especially important with respect to strengthening links with agencies responsible for social protection, health, water and sanitation. Coordination arrangements would also be important to support the envisaged roll-out of the HGSF in view of the many different actors that are required to be involved. Establishing a task force to identify immediate opportunities for closer inter-sectoral collaboration would be a starting point.
97. **Adjustment 2 HGSF:** There is an imperative to proceed with the implementation of the envisaged pilot HGSF to demonstrate the commitment and potential of the NSFP to support wider national development objectives associated with poverty reduction, achieving zero hunger, and facilitating local economic development. The way to do this is further discussed under EQ 7.1. where a number of a design and implementation

⁴⁶ It has also participated in the development of the the National Development Plan (NDP5), the Harambee Prosperity Plan, and the Zero Hunger Road Map.

considerations associated with the adoption of the HGSF approach are discussed. What is clear is that HGSF will place considerable challenges on the current NSFP delivery system requiring significant investment in system capacity strengthening.

98. **Adjustment 3 Gender:** Deliberate efforts need to be made to allow the programme to address national gender objectives and to mitigate potential negative impacts on gender arising from current delivery modalities. The team's assessment reveals that to date gender has not been adequately built in to programme design, implementation and M&E arrangements. As proposed under the chapter on Recommendations, key actions would include developing a gender action plan, the results of which could be incorporated into NSF policy implementation arrangements. It would also be important to incorporate appropriate indicators that can track impacts on different aspects of gender and vulnerability.
99. **Adjustment 4 Measurement:** In order to track the actual and potential role of the programme towards enhancing the nutritional status of learners as well as its contribution towards supporting the national drought response and poverty alleviation interventions (complementarity) among others, a set of indicators and associated tools should be developed that routinely monitor the nutritional status of NSFP participants. Such indicators would be complementary to those that focus on the programme's primary objective of enhancing educational outcomes.
100. The general message is that the NSFP has the potential to become more than a discrete school feeding programme focused on achieving educational outcomes. It has potential to serve as a platform for wider social (and economic) change and resilience building - interacting and supporting social protection, health, water and sanitation, agriculture and local economic development agendas and interventions. Yet care must be taken not to overload the agenda. The NSFP is currently facing implementation challenges based on its more circumscribed mandate. Adding further responsibilities and tasks will only be possible if attention is paid to strengthening programme delivery capacity at all levels. This includes getting the basics right such as supply chain management so as to ensure that food arrives in sufficient quantities and of the correct quality and on time. The key to success is however not to burden the programme with too many responsibilities but to seek out potential areas of synergy with other programmes and interventions where opportunities for generating coherence, complementarity and value-added can be realised.

2.2. Evaluation Criteria 2: Effectiveness

101. Three EQs address the Effectiveness criteria. The first concerns the performance of the NSFP whilst the subsequent two questions concern the technical assistance support provided by WFP.

- To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved (those overall to the NSFP as outlined in the NSFP Road Map and M&E plan) and equitably distributed across target groups?
- To what extent have the Objectives of WFP Technical Assistance been achieved ?
- To what extent has the project been successful in improving learning and ownership by Government at all levels: National, regional, Circuit and Schools?

2.2.1. To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved (those overall to the NSFP as outlined in the NSFP Road Map and M&E plan) and equitably distributed across target groups [EQ 2.1.]?

102. From the perspective of the ET, this is the most important question of the evaluation as it addresses NSFP performance. The analysis provided is therefore relatively long compared to other parts of the report. This question has been addressed through an in-depth analysis of NSFP outputs and outcomes as defined in the programme MEP. Evidence has been drawn from i) data obtained from NASIS; ii) the NSFP baseline study conducted in 2014; and iii) the quantitative survey carried out as part of this evaluation. Numerical data is complemented by qualitative findings obtained from the ET's KII and FGDs conducted at national, regional and school level. The below analysis provides a summary of evidence generated. Readers interested in further insight are referred to annex 10 for presentation of additional figures and tables.

2.2.1.1. NSFP Outputs

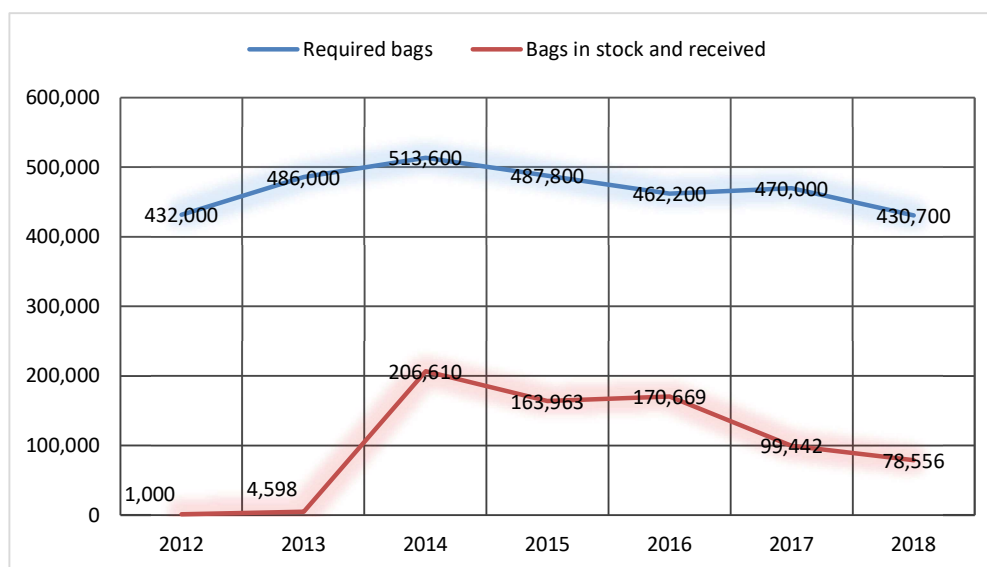
103. The output level relates to programme deliverables as presented in the NSFP logical framework and MEP. There are just two programme outputs. The first addresses timely delivery of adequate food of the required standard to schools, while the second ensures that learners actually receive and consume the school meal.
104. Each output is supported by a set of indicators. These have been set extremely high, anticipating between 90-100% achievement and therefore it is not surprising to find that these have not been fully met. Due to data

limitations, the ET has not been able to track performance against each indicator as robustly as would have been hoped, nevertheless, indications of progress in some areas, but equally of bottlenecks in others are highlighted.

105. With respect to **output 1**, there is strong evidence that food is not routinely reaching schools in time, in the right quantities, nor always of the correct quality. This is having knock-on effects on the availability of food, the regularity of feeding and potentially of the nutritional value/ contribution of food served. At the same time, it is acknowledged that during the period of the evaluation, the NSFP has expanded to cover additional schools and additional learners – more especially additional learners from neighbouring Early Childhood Development centres (ECDs) and from Grade 8-10 learners in Combined Schools.

106. With respect to **Indicator 1**, which tracks the quantity of food delivered to schools as a share of food ordered with a target of achieving more than **90%**, it is not possible to draw a strong conclusion due to the weak evidence base. However, as illustrated in the figure below, there appears to be a big difference between food required and food actually received⁴⁷. Although the number of schools and learners participating in the NSFP has expanded over the evaluation period, the quantity of food delivered to schools has not increased correspondingly. According to NASIS data, there has not been a steady increase in quantities delivered. It actually seems that patterns of delivery have been inconsistent over the years. This suggests that the quantities delivered does not tally with the required food per school population. The quantities delivered in 2017 and 2018 are a particular cause for concern.

Figure 1: Quantities of Food Required and Food Received

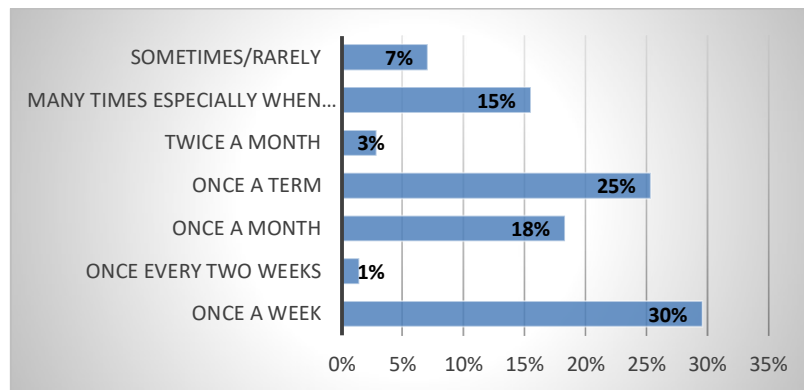


Source: Data from NASIS, Baseline Survey Report and the NSFP Case Study 2012

107. With respect to **Indicator 2**, which tracks the quantity of food delivered before the first day of the term as percentage of total quantity delivered with a target of over **90%** set, there is evidence that the maize blend is routinely failing to reach schools by the first day of term, impacting therefore on the ability of schools to serve meals on a daily basis. The team drew on proxy data from the school survey (how often school meals were not served given the close link to non-availability of food) as neither the baseline survey nor NASIS offer data to assess this indicator over the evaluation period. Accordingly, 30 percent of the sample schools reported not serving food at least once a week, while 18.3 percent missed food once a month and 25.4 percent missed food once a term. Another 15.5 percent reported not having food on many occasions (un-specified) because food was not delivered on time (see figure 2 below).

⁴⁷ Note that data on this relationship is not available from the baseline study and was not captured during the evaluation survey exercise.

Figure 2: How Often School Meals Are Not Served (N = 71)



Source: NSFP Evaluation (2019) school survey data

108. The school survey data further indicated that only 49 percent of schools sampled reported serving meals every day of term. This was confirmed in the regional and school level KIIs and FGDs. The main reason given was late delivery or even non-delivery of the maize blend. One region reported that, 'schools can stay as long as a whole term with no food' (Kavango West)⁴⁸. In the same region, it was said that sometimes the food arrives close to the end of the term; for example close to December when schools are closing for the long holiday and if the food stays in the school there is the risk of spoilage, so that it cannot be consumed the next term⁴⁹. Discussions held at the regional level confirmed these trends. In Ohangwena, it was noted that there was no food for most of the 2nd term 2019 and 'when it did arrive, it arrived on a Monday, when the school was closing on Friday' (Ohangwena region). In Otjozondjupa the ET was informed that food had not yet been delivered to the region this term (September 2019), while in Erongo region, it was said that there was a week during the 2nd term 2019 when there was no food because supply had been delayed at the beginning of the term.
109. With respect to **Indicator 3**, which measures the quantity of food delivered that corresponds to quality specifications with a target of **100%** compliance set⁵⁰, it was not possible to make any quantitative assessment on the performance of this indicator, as neither the baseline survey nor NASIS provide data on this particular indicator. Qualitative evidence⁵¹ indicates that overall learners liked the food because it is tasty, especially because the maize blend contains sugar. Learners seemed to be aware of what the school meal consists of as they mentioned sugar, salt and soya bean. However, learners also mentioned that there were times when there was not enough sugar in the maize blend and those who could afford to, brought sugar and other sweeteners to make the meal more palatable.
110. With respect to **output 2**, there is evidence that progress has been made to improve arrangements and conditions for food preparation and serving. For example there is an increasing proportion of improved (modern structure) storage and kitchen facilities. At the same time, few cooks have received training (out of the 138 cooks who participated in the survey, only 13.8% reported to have been trained), and cooking and serving implements are typically in short supply. Of greater concern is the high number of non-feeding days that continue to occur, in part due to the non-availability of maize blend due to delayed deliveries or spoilage, in part due to absence of cooks or shortage of cooking fuel. As a result registered learners are not being guaranteed a daily meal, and by implication are not necessarily receiving the prescribed calorific value of the food.
111. With respect to **indicator 1**, which measures the number of learners by gender who received school meals on at least **95%** of school days, the evidence suggests that this target is not being achieved. From NASIS, the absolute numbers of learners by gender who were registered to receive meals, for the period 2014 to 2018 was obtained.⁵² For 2018, the number of learners were 215,343, with 106,283 or 49.3 percent being females (see table 1 below). This data does not, however, tally with the data (not disaggregated by gender)

⁴⁸ One of the officials in Kavango West shared the information with ET (September 2019) that, 'I have received calls from some schools, saying they have not received food.'

⁴⁹ This was confirmed at school level, as a Focal Person/teacher in charge of the NSFP in one school in the same region, informed the ET that in 2018, food was delivered late throughout the three (3) terms. According to the respondent, it was only the 3rd term, 2019, that food had reached the school in time. At the beginning of the year, the food had been delivered in March, although schools had opened in January (2019), and were closing in April.

⁵⁰ The food delivered should be maize blend, consisting of 63 percent maize meal, blended with 25 percent protein (soya) blend, 10.8 percent of sugar and 1.2 percent of salt.

⁵¹ Focus group discussions with learners.

⁵² It was possible to get Term Reports for 2014 to 2018, but the available reports were from different terms: term 1- 2017, term 2 -2015, 2016, 2018, term 3 - 2014

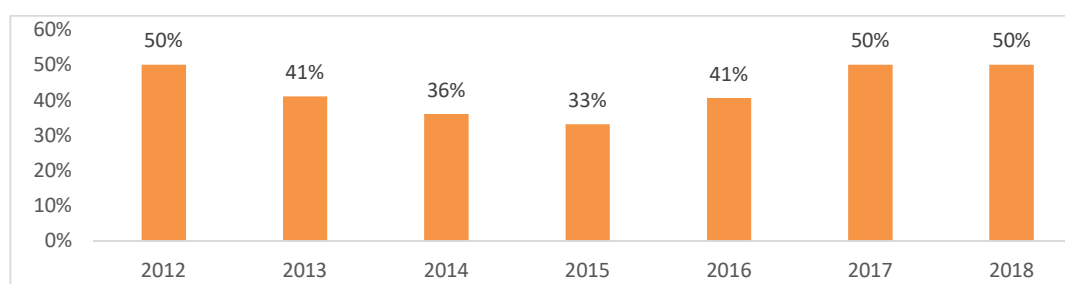
in the NSFP evaluation inception report which gives the total number of learners as being 377,525. As already reported above (output 1, indicator 2), schools routinely receive deliveries of maize blend late in the term. 51 percent of schools participating in the survey, moreover reported that there were days when the school meals were not served. By implication, only 49 percent of the schools served food every day of the term. Data derived from NASIS seem to present the same result, in that the highest percentage of schools feeding their learners all the school days in a term, was 50 percent. In 2015, it went as low as 33.1 percent (see table 1 and figure 3).

Table 1: Number of Learners Registered to Receive Meals

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	104,708	117,333	123,221	118,070	110,837	161,280	106,283
Male	111,322	125,874	133,562	125,811	120,289	174,726	109,060
Total	216,030	243,007	256,783	243,881	231,126	336,006	215,343

Source: Various. Baseline Survey Report, NASIS data base, and NSFP reports for 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018

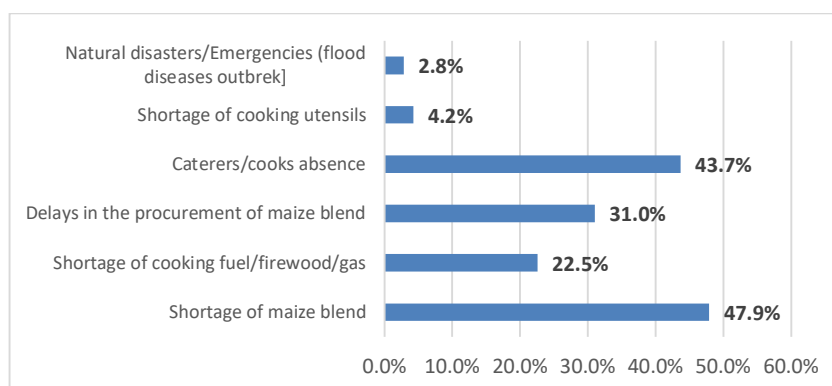
Figure 3: Proportion of Schools Serving Food Every Day



Source: NASIS data base and Term Reports from 2014 to 2018

112. Whilst late deliveries is the main factor responsible for non-feeding days, other contributing factors identified from the survey include absence of cooks to prepare meals, and/ or shortage of cooking fuel (see figure 5 below). Besides food availability, school principals noted that almost a fifth of all registered NSFP learners opt out from taking the school meal. According to the survey, only 83 percent of those registered to eat, actually receive their meals, with evidence of significant variation between urban and rural localities. Thus whilst only 58.8% of learners in urban localities actually receive their meals, the figure for rural schools indicates that as many as 91.3% take their meals when available. De facto levels of participation are therefore much lower in urban schools. School principals gave the following reasons for children not taking the school meal include; i) stigma - 42 percent, ii) poor quality/taste of the meal – 33.3 percent, iii) children prefer to bring food from home – 23.2 percent, and iv) children have better food at home – 32.6 percent.

Figure 4: Reasons for School Meals Not Being Prepared (N = 71)



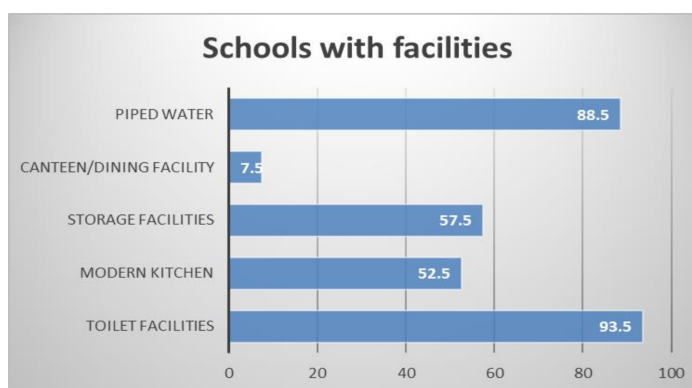
Source: NSFP Evaluation Survey

113. From the NASIS data, there seem to be more boys than girls registered in the NSFP. Anecdotal evidence brought out during the discussions at regional and school level, that more boys (especially in the upper classes)

do not take the school meal due to reasons of stigma/ embarrassment, does not seem to tally with the NASIS data that shows more boys than girls in the NSFP programme. This discrepancy may well be attributed to the fact that schools do not systematically keep records of who actually eats on a daily basis. NASIS figures reflect those who are registered rather than those who actually eat.

114. With respect to **Indicator 2**, which tracks the number of learners by gender who have received a school meal ration that covers at least 30-45% of their daily caloric requirements on at least 95% of school days, the ET was unable to obtain data from NASIS to track this indicator and it appears that schools do not record and document this information either. The KII and FGDs at school level, however, revealed that cooks use a serving utensil that is supposed to measure for each learner the portion for the day. However, the consistency of this measure was challenged by the fact that many schools serve food to more learners than those officially registered. For some schools, there were the learners in the ECD centres within or next to the school compound to cater for. For others it was both ECD learners and the grades 8-10 learners in the combined school. With fluctuating numbers, it was not possible to say with certainty that food is served following the set ration. The variability of food servings was also influenced by other factors; i) shortage of supply at certain times, either due to delayed delivery, shortfall in quantities delivered or spoiling, meaning that portions had to be rationed in order to last out until the next delivery; ii) insufficient plates/ dishes meaning that the porridge would be served into containers that might in practice be used by two or more learners; iii) lack of supervision of learners resulting in some learners queuing up more than once.
115. With respect to **Indicator 3**, which monitors the share of schools that provide school feeding with adequate storage facilities and practices, a target of 20% increase per annum was set which should result in **100%** compliance by the end of the evaluation period. This target has not been achieved although considerable progress has been made. Thus, whilst at the start of the evaluation period, the percent of schools with adequate facilities and practices was reported to be 25.8%, the 2019 survey data shows that today 57 percent of the schools have at least a storeroom dedicated to school feeding.
116. This was confirmed during the ET's school visits, where dedicated storage facilities were found in a number of the urban schools. Other schools, especially in rural areas, were using classrooms, libraries and staff rooms for storage. It was also evident that urban schools were more likely to have modern kitchens and a separate storeroom, compared to rural schools.
117. The survey also looked at the condition of the storage facilities available in the sampled schools. While the majority comply with basic requirements such as sealed concrete floors, walls with no holes, ceiling/roofing which are not leaking, and lockable doors, there are relatively few storerooms with pallets and storage shelves, (38.1 percent and 43 percent, respectively). This raises the issue of the preservation of the food and the risks of food spoilage.
118. The survey also looked at a range of facilities that are important for creating an environment conducive for the preparation and serving of the school meal. These included, piped water, canteen/dining facility, type of kitchens and toilet facilities. Schools have generally done well with provision of piped water and toilet facilities and are making progress in providing kitchen and storage facilities. However, there are only 7.5 percent of the schools with canteen/dining facilities. (see figure 5 below) This means that the vast majority of learners continue to eat their meal in the open, where at times they must brave the wind, dust and at times rain.

Figure 5: Other School Facilities (N = 139)

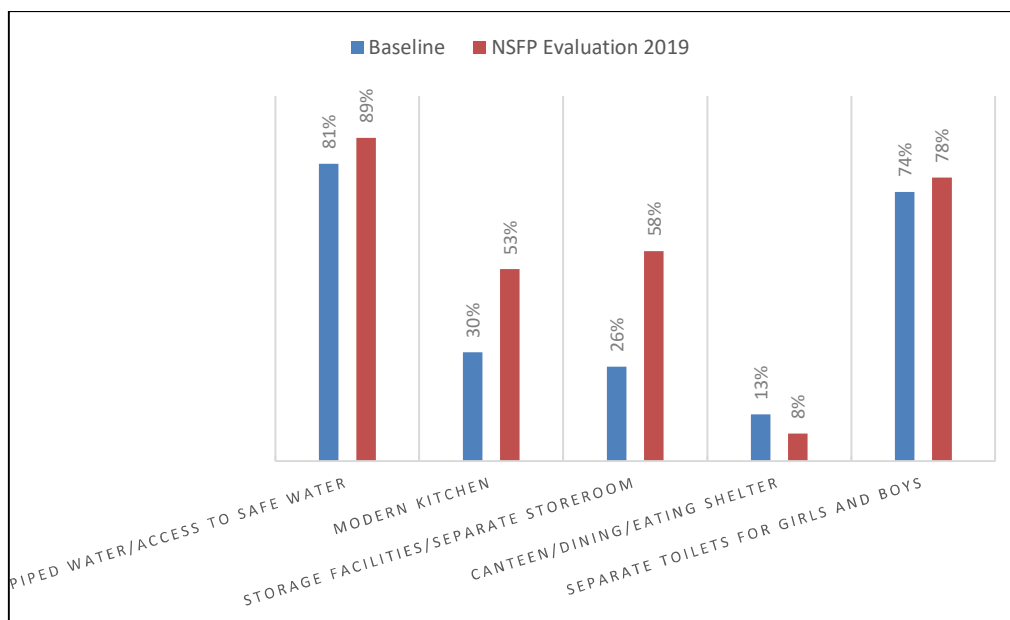


Source: NSFP Evaluation (2019) school survey data

119. With respect to hand washing, in all eleven schools visited by the ET, piped water was available, however soap was not available. Moreover, supervised handwashing was only reported to take place in one of the

schools. Notwithstanding these ongoing challenges, there is clear evidence of improvement over the evaluation period as highlighted in the figure below:

Figure 6: Quality of Facilities: 2014 versus 2019 (N = 139)



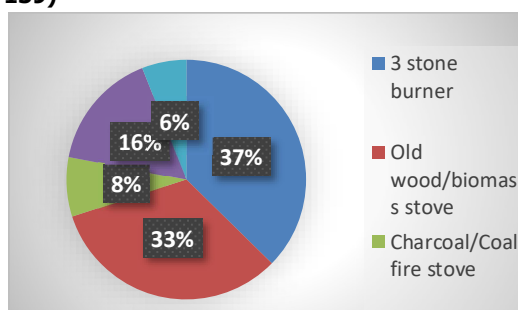
Source: Baseline Survey Report (2014), and NSFP Evaluation (2019) school survey data

120. With respect to **Indicator 4**, which measures the share of school meals that were prepared by cooks that have access to adequate cooking facilities and have received adequate cooking instructions, a target of **100%** was set. Despite measurable progress, this target has clearly not been achieved. Thus from the school survey, while 52.5 percent of cooks reported working in modern kitchens, 25.9 percent reported cooking under trees or under a shed. Of the 52.5 percent having access to modern kitchens, the majority were to be found in the regions of Erongo, Hardap, Karas, Khomas, Oshikoto and Omusati.

121. The school survey also collected data on the type of cooking stove used. Survey results (see figure 8 below) show that 37 percent of schools use the 3 stone burner, more especially in rural areas, while over 33 percent used wood stoves. The majority of schools using modern stoves were found in urban areas.

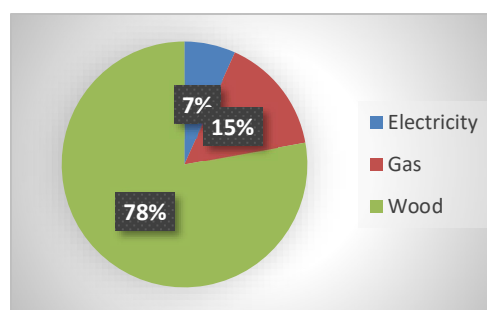
The survey also collected data on the type of fuels used by schools for the preparation of the school meal. The results indicate that the majority of schools – 78 percent - use wood for fuel while 15 percent use gas and 7 percent use electricity. There represents a change from the baseline data, where 90 percent of the schools used wood, representing an improvement of 12 percent over the period of the evaluation. Whilst an improvement, reliance on wood for fuel remains high, and scarcity has been reported as an issue in some rural areas, more especially during periods of drought. In its visits to schools, the ET only noticed fuel efficient stoves being used in two schools suggesting a need to further promote the use of fuel saving or alternative energy (eg solar) technologies.

Figure 7: Type of Cooking Equipment Used (N = 139)



Source: NSFP Evaluation (2019) school Survey

Figure 8: Type of Fuel Used (N = 139)



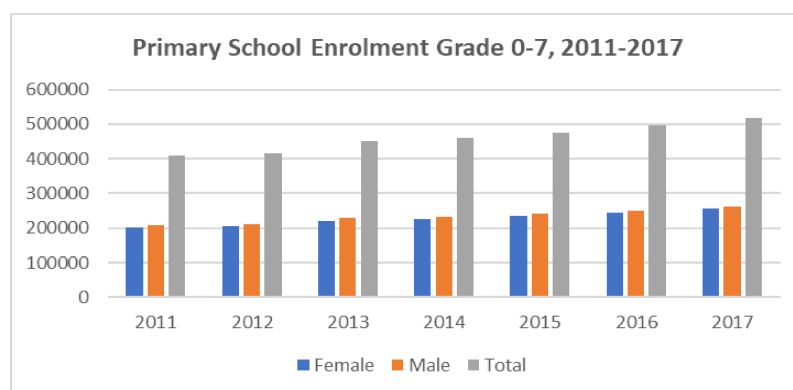
Source: NSFP Evaluation (2019) school survey

122. The survey also collected data on availability of cutlery (plates/bowls and spoons) for use by learners. Results show that 75 percent of schools do not have sufficient cutlery. By implication, learners either have to bring utensils from home or eat with their hands. It was evident that in some schools, learners came with their own plates and spoons. In two schools, learners were required to use their hands. Some waited for others to eat their food, because they did not have plates. In those schools, one could also see two or more learners eating from the same plate.
123. With regard to schools having cooks who have received adequate cooking instructions, the survey data shows that a very small number (13.8%) have undergone any training. Looking at the data across regions, it was only in Kunene and Komas where about 50 percent had received training. It is difficult to measure progress in terms of training of cooks and making comparisons as there was no data in the Baseline Report (2014) on this variable⁵³. What is interesting is that 51.4 percent of the cooks, in the schools surveyed, reported having worked for over 5 years, whereas 36.9 percent had worked for at least 3 years. This suggests a high degree of loyalty to the job, despite the working arrangement being largely informal, with only 61.3 percent of the 138 cooks in the survey reporting to get some form of payment; 18.8 percent paid cash and 43.5 percent paid in kind.

2.1.1.2. NSFP Outcomes

124. The outcome level relates to programme effects on beneficiaries as presented in the NSFP logical framework and MEP. This section also notes and comments on a selection of unintended/ unforeseen outcomes associated with NSFP implementation. Five outcomes are listed. Each is supported by a set of indicators. It is important to note that the outcomes cannot be wholly attributed to the NSFP, as these are general measures of improvements in educational performance. Nevertheless, the programme is assumed to be one of the contributors to the achievement of the outcomes.
125. **Outcome 1** has to do with 'Access' to education; with the expectation that all eligible learners are enrolled in school. The associated indicators are; i) percentage of eligible children enrolled in school; ii) percentage of 6 year old learners enrolled in Grades 0 (pre-primary); iii) percentage of 7 year olds enrolled in Grade 1, and iv) state of gender parity in enrolment at primary school level. Overall this outcome has witnessed significant achievements as reflected in the indicators below.
126. With respect to **Indicator 1**, there has been a marked increase in the number of learners enrolled in primary school, between 2011 and 2017. As illustrated in Figure 9 below, the number of learners enrolled has increased from 408,804 in 2011 to 518,103 in 2017,⁵⁴ representing an increase of 109,299, and reflecting a growth rate of 4.0 percent per year. Meanwhile, the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) for children aged 7-13 years has remained at 99.7 percent, while the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) has decreased from 124 percent in 2012 to 119.1 percent in 2017, an indicator that more children are enrolled in primary school at the right age. The NER informs that there are very few children (0.3 percent) aged 7-13 years that are not in the school system.

Figure 9: Primary School Enrolment Grade 0-7, 2011-2017



Source: EMIS data from Statistics Booklet 2017

127. With respect to **indicator 2**, the number of learners in pre-primary in 2017 is 41,743, of which 30,624 children were aged 6 years. This compares favourably with the situation in 2012 when there were just 17,572 enrolled of which 12,345 were 6 year olds. The enrolment of 6 year olds, has therefore increased significantly by 18,279

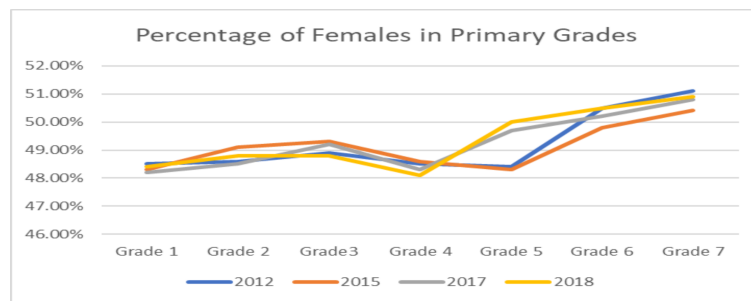
⁵³ The training mentioned in the report is that of Focal Point teachers who received training on NSFP.

⁵⁴ Data taken from EMIS 2017 booklet

learners within a period of 5 years representing an increase of 255%, or an average annual growth rate of 19.4%.

128. With respect to **Indicator 3**, there has been consistent growth in the annual intake of learners at grade 1 level over the evaluation period; the numbers growing from 53,588 in 2011, 57,428 in 2012, to 67,104 in 2018. The GER has fluctuated from 107.0 percent in 2011, increasing to 111.4 percent in 2012 then going down to 106.7 in 2013 and increasing to 110.5 percent in 2017. The Net Intake Rate (NIR), has grown steadily from 75.2 percent in 2012 to 81.1 percent in 2017; an indicator that more children are entering Grade 1 at the specified age of 7 years. This is evidence that there has been positive change, with increase in the intake and enrolment at primary level.
129. With respect to **Indicator 4**, figure 10 below shows that the ambition of achieving gender parity across all primary school grades has been largely realised, however girls' enrolment has been slightly lower than that of boys in the lower grades of primary school.⁵⁵ The percentage of females in the lower grades has remained below 49 percent during the period 2012 to 2018, but this seems to change in the upper grades; particularly grades 6 and 7, where the girls constitute 50 to 51 percent of the enrolment, indicating that there are more girls than boys enrolled at this level.

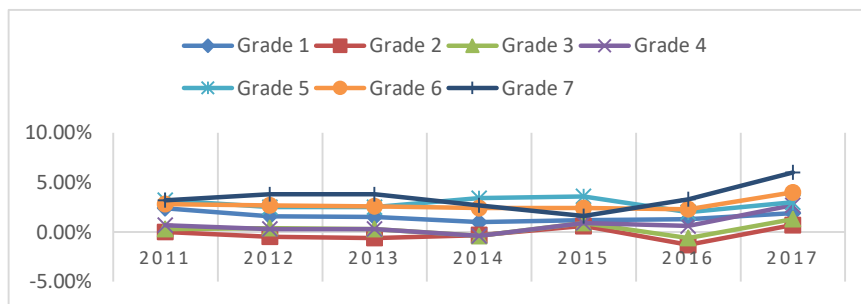
Figure 10: Percentage of Females in Primary Grade Enrolment



Source: Data from selected years from the Statistical Booklets 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2018

130. **Outcome 2** has the expectation that children enrolled in primary school, remain in school and complete the primary cycle. The associated indicators are; i) reduced number of drop-outs and ii) increased numbers and rates of learners completing the primary cycle. Drop out data gives a perspective of the retention of learners in school and the state of completion of their 7 years of primary education. Results with respect to this outcome have been mixed.
131. With respect to **Indicator 1**, drop-out rates have tended to decline for all grades over the evaluation period, with just a slight rise in 2015. The downward trend however seems to have changed in 2017 with a sudden increase in drop out rates for all grades. Drop-out rates are generally higher in the senior primary grades (Grades 5 to 7), with grade 7 consistently having the highest drop-out rates (See figure 11 below).

Figure 11: School Leaving Rates at Primary School Level



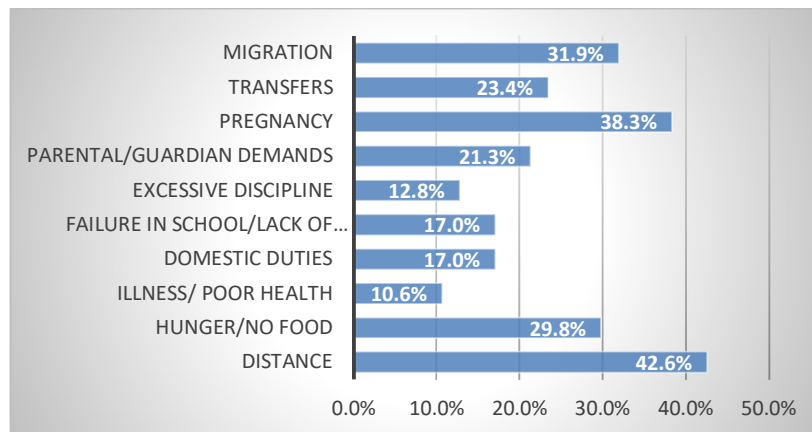
Source: EMIS data from 2018 data provided by MoEAC

132. School principals who participated in the survey, confirmed that the issue of drop outs remains a challenge, with 34 percent of them responding that drop-out rates in the last three years have been a concern. A range of reasons for learners dropping out of the school system was cited as reflected in figure 12 below. The four reasons most cited (in order of importance) were: i) distance, ii) pregnancy, iii) migration, and iv) hunger. The issue of pregnancy is further discussed in the chapter on EQ 6.1. It is noteworthy that whilst hunger was not cited as the main reason, it was nevertheless identified as a contributory factor by almost a third of all

⁵⁵ This data includes selected years, 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2018, taken from EMIS as data from 2013 and 2014 was missing.

principals. The distances learners have to travel to schools are confirmed by school principals whose responses show that the majority (74%) travel more than 4 kilometres to school, with as many as 37% traveling more than 7 kilometres.

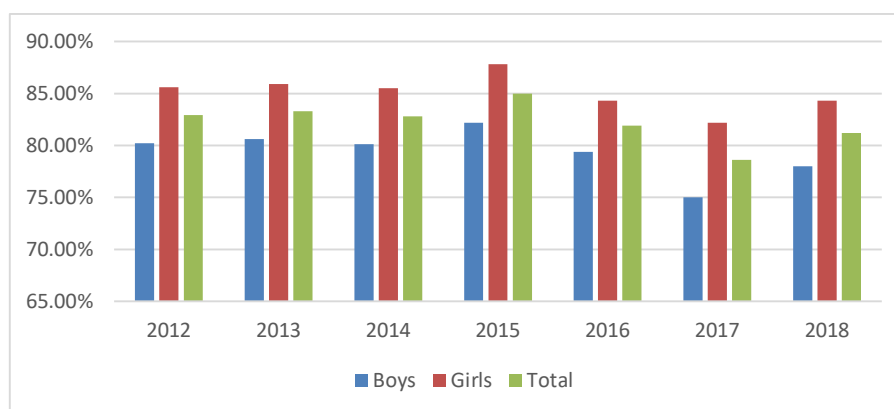
Figure 12: Reasons for Learners Dropping Out (N = 47)



Source: NSFP Evaluation Survey Data

133. With respect to **Indicator 2**, while the issue of drop outs remains a challenge, positive change has been seen with more children remaining in school, with the survival rate up to Grade 7 having improved from 88.5 percent in 2011 to 91.2 percent in 2018 (EMIS 2018). The survival rate for girls has been higher than that of boys. This relates to the fact that there are more girls than boys in Grades 6 and 7.
134. **Outcome 3** has the expectation that more children attend school regularly. This is expected to be evidenced by an increase in attendance rates at the primary school level, or by declining rates of absenteeism over the evaluation period. The corresponding indicator is that attendance rate per term is 80% or higher for all learners by 2017. Results suggest that absenteeism remains a problem and may in part be attributable to availability of school meals.
135. From data collected at household level, 16.5 percent of households reported their children as being routinely absent from school. The issue of absenteeism was also raised with school principals from the sampled schools and 56.5 percent reported that they experienced problems of absenteeism.
136. It was difficult to establish trends in absenteeism between the baseline year and 2018, as this is not captured by EMIS. Attendance rates or the reverse measure of absenteeism rates are good indicators of learner participation and factors that could be contributing to learning outcomes. Attendance rates as reported from the school registers may, however, require some attention. An issue identified by the ET was that whilst learners may be registered in the morning at the start of the school day, they may abscond mid-morning when they find that no food is available. This was a practice noted by several principals. The result is a possible over-reporting of actual attendance rates.
137. **Outcome 4** has the expectation that all enrolled learners graduate and complete the different grades of primary education. The corresponding indicator is promotion rates are at least 85% for all grades in all primary schools of Namibia by 2017. An increase in the promotion rates at this level of education is therefore anticipated.
138. EMIS data, as indicated in Figure 13 below, shows there has been consistent increase in promotion rates from 82.5 percent in 2012 to 85 percent in 2015. However, the rates decreased to 78 percent in 2017, and then rose to 81 percent in 2018. Of note is the fact that girls have a higher promotion rates than boys throughout the period under evaluation. Of concern is the increase of learners who are not moving to the next grade or level, meaning that there is an increase in repetition and learners leaving the school system.

Figure 13: Promotion Rates by Gender - Grades 1-7



Source: EMIS data

139. **Outcome 5:** This fifth outcome defined as 'Caloric intake (quantity and % of RDI) by child by gender per school day,' is measured by the indicator of 'Number of learners by gender who have received a school meal ration that covers at least 30 percent of their daily caloric requirements on at least 95 percent of school days.' This indicator repeats an indicator used at the output level. While it was possible to obtain data on the percentage of learners in the NSFP, confirming the calorific intake was a challenge as there was no scientific measure for schools to use to ensure the daily ration is strictly adhered to the set quality of food. It was also not possible to ascertain the ratio against the number of days.
140. From the school survey sample, 83 percent of the principals reported that over 80 percent of the learners registered for meals, receive their meals. However, when asked if learners had received their school meal on a daily basis, only half the surveyed schools said yes. The survey, moreover, established that 51 percent of schools reported that there were days when food was not served. This would strongly suggest that not all learners had received their meal every day of the three terms. The two main reasons given for this were i) lack/shortage of the maize blend and ii) absence of cooks to prepare the food. From discussions at school level, the evaluation also learned that most times the allocated food was shared with more learners than those listed in the register, including at times, learners at ECD level or learners in grades 8 and above in combined schools. This meant that the standard ration was not always being adhered to. This issue was already noted in the discussion of outputs.
141. **Unintended and Unforeseen Outcomes** - The benefits of the NSFP are recognised to go beyond the attainment of educational results alone. This was made clear during the team's regional KIIs and school level FGDs. As one senior official noted, the programme was making an impact more broadly within the community, impacting for example on behaviour change; by reducing crime and violence (as children and youth spent more time in school) hence benefiting the wider community.
142. Respondents also noted benefits in terms of food security in the sense that the school meal addresses the issue of short-term hunger for learners whilst at school. The majority of learners who participated in the FGDs said that most times they had only one meal at home, and that would mainly be in the evening. This was confirmed by the survey data which showed that only 42.2% of the sampled households indicated their children had a meal before going to school. This would suggest that for a great number of children the school meal is the first proper meal of the day. The aspect of food security is then particularly pertinent within the context of persistent drought and for vulnerable children and families, in rural areas and informal settlements in urban areas. The experience recounted by one school inspector captured in box 1 below aptly captures the significance of having access to a meal at school, for those who are especially vulnerable.

Box 1: Case Insight on NSFP and Food Security

"I drove to a school for inspection, a school deep in the rural area at about past 8.00 am. On the way, a child in school uniform was lying under a tree. I stopped and asked the child if she was sick and lifted her. She said she was not sick and I asked her what she had eaten. She told me that 'my grandmother was away and last night there was no food and there was none in the morning.' The grandfather had gone to the kuka shop. I gave her a sweet, then I bought her some juice and bread. After eating, she chose to go to school and so I drove her to school and once there she ran off to join the others. She told me that it was better in school."

143. The NSFP was indeed referred to as a "safety-net" especially for vulnerable children, and particularly for those children heading families, or for children infected with HIV and on medication; ensuring they at least had a meal each day. Discussions at regional and school levels, also raised the fact that the NSFP was of great value to learners under the care of young grandparents who are not yet pensioners and therefore may not be

receiving any form of food relief. This was strengthened further by some schools giving take-home rations to very vulnerable children who may have to struggle to find food for themselves and siblings, during the holidays⁵⁶.

144. However, while each and every person who participated in the KIIs and FGDs emphasised the importance of the NSFP, some issues which could have a negative effect were also raised. The two key issues were the risk of dependency especially at community level, and the association of the NSFP with poverty and hence stigmatisation of those that participate in the programme. The other issue was 'genderisation' of community participation and engagement with the school programme, with females only having roles to play in the preparation of the school meal, while the male contribution was said to be 'invisible' and hence perceived to be non-existent. Both issues are further discussed under EQ. 6.1. As the programme grows and covers a wider population, these may be issues that require attention to ensure the programme does not have negative effects on learners, households and communities.

2.1.1.3. Summing Up

145. At output level, programme performance has been mixed. The biggest reported concern is the late delivery of maize blend to schools. This is a problem that has challenged the programme over the entire evaluation period though it seems to have been exacerbated in the last 1-2 years. Late delivery has a knock-on effect on the ability of schools to serve meals on a daily basis according to specified standards. And if schools cannot routinely serve meals on a daily basis, then the expected benefits of the programme at outcome level are put at risk. With respect to arrangements for storage, preparation and serving of meals, there is clear evidence of improvement over the evaluation period but the very high targets set remain to be achieved. Thus many schools continue to serve food with substandard storage and cooking facilities and only 7.5% of schools have sheltered eating areas. Implements for cooking and eating are typically in short supply. Schools, especially in rural areas, continue to face challenges with securing sufficient fuel for cooking, which can lead to non-eating days. The issue of cooks remuneration remains a challenge. Whilst most schools succeed in retaining volunteer cooks, absenteeism on the part of cooks is frequently reported, which can also result in non-eating days. There is also a high level of dissatisfaction with the compensation provided for cooks' efforts. The vast majority of cooks have moreover not received training, are not provided with protective clothing and have not received health checks.
146. Programme performance at outcome level is based primarily on overall educational performance outcomes captured by EMIS. Therefore it is not possible to establish direct attribution between programme outputs and wider educational outcomes. What is clear is that educational outcomes have improved over the evaluation period and it may be concluded that the programme has for sure contributed to increasing levels of enrolment, attendance, retention and completion. In this regard, qualitative and anecdotal evidence has proven especially important to corroborate this general finding. Stakeholders at school and regional level are quick to point out to the critical role the programme has played in ensuring the participation of especially vulnerable boys and girls in school. This has been all the more pronounced during the current period of drought and slowing of the economy. And counter-factual information is available to confirm this. Thus when food is not available, certain cohorts of learners will abscond from school. Clearly the availability of food is a key incentive for attendance, underlining the urgency of resolving supply chain bottlenecks that result in non-feeding days. Informants at school level also observed that vulnerable learners, who depend most on the school meal are more active and attentive, hence tending to perform better in school and completing the primary cycle. At the same time it is clear that school feeding cannot resolve all challenges facing learners participation and retention in schools. For example issues related to learner pregnancy and availability of facilities for menstrual management impact on attendance of girl learners whilst distance from schools and issues related to disability can also act as a deterrent to attendance for both boys and girls. The evaluation also identified a number of unforeseen and unintended outcomes such as perceived household dependency on the school meal, stigmatisation related to the programme being seen as a programme for the poor and, genderisation of community level roles and responsibilities.

2.2.2. To what extent have the objectives of the WFP technical assistance been achieved [EQ 2.2.]?

2.2.2.1. Introduction

147. This section assesses the effectiveness of WFP Technical Assistance (TA) towards strengthening the capacity of the NSFP "delivery system" to perform over the period 2012-2018⁵⁷. Progress on the implementation of

⁵⁶ This was confirmed by survey results which indicated that just under 10% of schools had given take home rations to groups of learners during the previous week.

⁵⁷ The TORS refer to government capacities to assess, plan and respond to the school feeding needs of vulnerable children.

WFP TA support is well documented in a set of annual reports prepared over the cooperation period⁵⁸. Based on a review of these documents as well as discussions with key informants, the following assessment of contributions made is provided.

2.2.2.2. Origins

148. In 2012, WFP was invited by the Government of Namibia to assist MoEAC to improve delivery of the NSFP, some 16 years after WFP had handed over the original NSFP pilot project to the Government. The evaluation was not able (nor was it asked) to examine the performance of the NSFP in the intervening period, however, noteworthy was the considerable expansion that had taken place in the programme, as reported in the introduction to this report.

149. Despite these developments, the Government of Namibia was not fully satisfied with programme performance. This was attributed to a number of factors including lack of a dedicated budget for school feeding, inadequate capacity at all levels to manage and implement the programme efficiently and effectively and lack of proper monitoring systems to inform on the programme's achievements amongst others.

150. Against this background, the WFP was requested to support the Government with TA to revamp the programme and in particular to address identified gaps in the design and implementation of the programme⁵⁹. The eventual programme of support, which has to date, spanned three phases, was formalised in a set of Cooperation Agreements⁶⁰, and informed by several diagnostic reviews carried out between 2009 and 2012.

2.2.2.3. TA Support – What Was Delivered?

151. Initially, WFP assistance focused on supporting diagnostic work aimed at identifying critical bottlenecks in programme delivery and determining a course of remedial action. A key launch activity was a Review and Transition study⁶¹, which provided evidence for formulating the NSFP Road Map. As the TA reports note, the study afforded a first opportunity for MoEAC to conduct an in-depth stock-take of the programme's achievements and challenges, and to revisit the basics of design and implementation. It also offered MoEAC an opportunity to undertake its first multi-sectoral consultation on school feeding. These consultations helped elevate the status of the NSFP such that it subsequently became one of the main items discussed at the Namibian Alliance for Improved Nutrition (NAFIN) forums.

152. The Road Map, which includes 34 actions divided over 5 "standards", has served as a key progress monitoring tool over the years. Initially drafted in 2012, it was updated in 2014 and again in 2016⁶². It has also served to guide subsequent TA support and most actions listed below derive from the roadmap (see annex 14 for list of Road Map provisions).

153. Other important pieces of analytical work carried out in the initial phase included i) a cost analysis to understand the key cost drivers and cost components of the NSFP, and ii) a baseline study on programme delivery outputs and outcomes. Both documents provide baselines for the ET's analysis of programme efficiency and evaluation of programme effectiveness.

154. The table below summarises the main outputs of TA support over the evaluation period (further details can be obtained from annex 9):

⁵⁸ TA reports for 2012

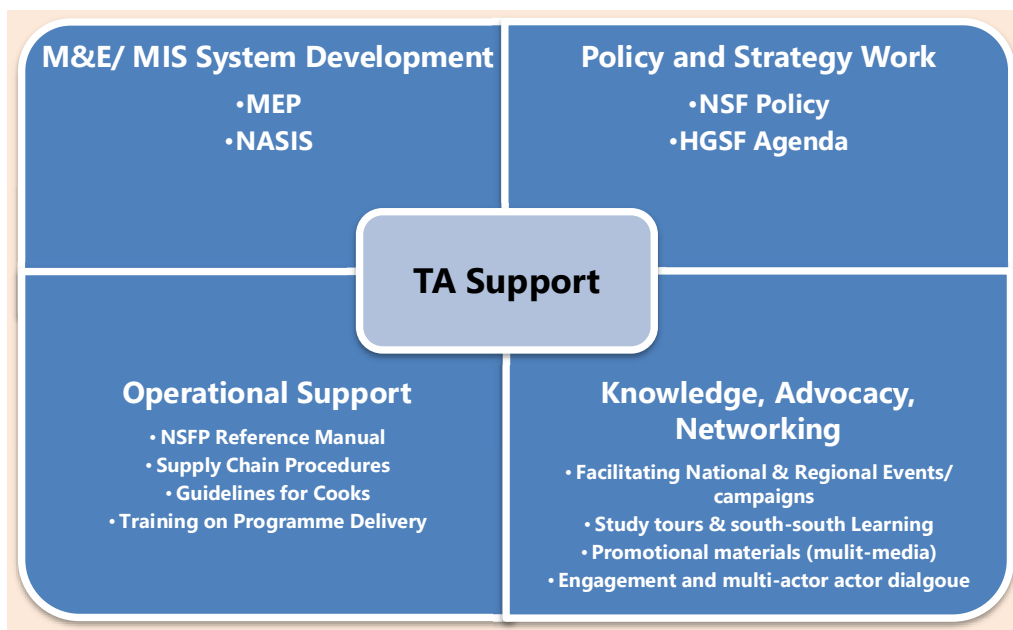
⁵⁹ As explained in TA reports for 2012-13.

⁶⁰ 2012-2014, later extended to 2015: 2015-2018; and 2018-2022

⁶¹ jointly commissioned with NEPAD and Partnership for Child Development

⁶² The 2016 review applied SABER standards, which helped highlight design, implementation and institutional strengths as well as areas that needed development and further strengthening. The 5 standards are: i) policy frameworks; ii) financial capacity; iii) institutional capacity and coordination; iv) design and implementation; v) community roles – reaching beyond schools. In the opinion of the TA report, the adoption of the SABER standard demonstrates MOE's commitment to align NSFP to internationally recognized standards on best practices for school feeding programmes.

Figure 14: Key Areas of TA Support



2.2.2.4. Was WFP TA Support Effective?

155. Despite good diagnostic work, the high level of ownership for the TA support provided to MoEAC, and a very positive working relationship between MoEAC and WFP, there is a question mark as to the effectiveness of the TA support provided in terms of building sustainable NSFP delivery capacity.
156. As discussed under EQ 5.1. and 5.2. on Sustainability, core delivery systems continue to face challenges, undermining overall programme performance. Whilst TA support was guided by the NSFP Road Map and clearly contributed to addressing some of the identified challenges facing the programme, the question arises as to why WFP support did not focus more intensively on troubleshooting the capacity constraints associated with core delivery processes?
157. Both WFP and MoEAC note that support was deliberately focused on upstream activities associated with policy development, planning and budgeting and system development, although, as noted, considerable effort was also invested in staff development and tackling operational issues. In hindsight, it might have been appropriate to target additional support on delivery, particularly in areas such as supply chain management where WFP has considerable expertise.
158. The 2012 Transition and Case study report and successive TA reports, however, also highlight another factor that has undermined the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity strengthening efforts. This concerns the challenge MoEAC has faced to ensure adequate staffing for the programme. This challenge has manifested itself especially at the national level in terms of ensuring a stable workforce within the Management, Planning, Appraisal & Training Division (MPAT), but it has been reportedly a problem at regional and circuit levels too, where absolute levels of staffing are considered low and where there are high levels of staff turn-over. The implications for building sustainable capacity are clear:
- Absorptive capacity has been an issue facing MoEAC in terms of its ability to support and take full advantage of WFP technical assistance interventions. As noted in several TA reports, this resulted on occasions in delayed implementation of agreed TA activities or uptake of guidance and recommendations emanating from advisory inputs.
 - Shortages of staff and/ or difficulties in the recruitment and retention of staff to fully support programme implementation has in some instances undermined MoEAC's practical ownership of the programme and exercise of necessary leadership. This has, for instance, delayed the full transfer of NASIS oversight and technical management to MoEAC, and has also made it difficult for MoEAC to keep up with programme backstopping responsibilities, including enforcement of programme rules and procedures. This has also meant that at times, WFP's co-located advisors have had to become involved in supporting more routine day to day activities, to help "get things done" rather than providing support at a more strategic level.

- Efforts to create a cadre of fully trained and competent programme staff at all levels has been undermined by high staff turnover with the result that despite considerable training provided, there are many officers responsible for programme activities who have not received training and who may not necessarily benefit from supervision from seniors who are sufficiently well versed with the programme. Indeed, it has been a challenge to build up and maintain “institutional memory” with respect to the programme. Unavailability of the programme manual exacerbates this situation.
- The workload falling on staff, especially at the regional level, results in different programmes having to compete for the attention of staff. Typically regional staff must manage hostel facilities and the NSFP at the same time, and many complain that the volume of work is excessive. This is now exacerbated by reduced operational budgets with the result that staff at regional and circuit level are unable to fully carry out their supervisory responsibilities⁶³. It was also suggested in discussions and noted in TA reports that the NSFP is not always considered core business and is therefore not accorded priority attention. To the extent that this is true, a possible way forward would be to ensure that tasks and deliverables associated with staff assigned to the NSFP are fully reflected in staff performance contracts.

159. It may therefore be concluded that at the TA output level, objectives have been largely achieved and therefore TA support may be deemed effective. It is clear that MoEAC is very satisfied with the support provided and it is clear that many of the priority actions listed in the roadmap have been tackled, leaving the programme in a stronger position than it was before. Thus:

- There is now a policy where none existed before – the test now is to see how well the policy serves as a strategic tool to further advance the programme;
- Core systems and processes (MEP and NASIS) are in place to support programme management and M&E, notwithstanding some on-going operational bottlenecks;
- Programme procedures and delivery system routines have been codified in a manual and staff trained to operationalise these. However, limited availability of the manual and high staff turnover and transfers means that many NSFP operators are working without clear guidance and formal training, impacting negatively on programme efficiency and effectiveness;
- Key analytical work has been carried out to better understand costs, and to open new horizons in the area of HGSF approaches. This has been well received by the Government and has prepared the ground for launching a set of pilot initiatives;
- WFP has also played key complementary roles that have more of a process character. These include supporting advocacy and knowledge sharing events aimed at broadening awareness of the NSFP among different stakeholders in Namibia as well as building a critical community of multi-actor supporters.

160. All in all these interventions have surely contributed to a more robust and well anchored programme that also enjoys higher visibility and legitimacy. It is improbable that this could have been achieved without the dedicated technical support and expertise provided by WFP.

161. At the TA outcome level, however, the picture is more mixed. As reported, there is some concern that the problems facing NASIS have taken long to remedy and continue to undermine sound reporting and decision making. There are also some areas of support which have failed to obtain as much traction as would have been hoped. Reports of absorptive capacity and delayed decision making that also impacted on timing and sequencing of TA inputs are also noted. There are also some core areas such as procurement that continue to underperform and it is of some concern that WFP’s considerable expertise in supply chain management was not called upon to help diagnose and troubleshoot problems arising.

162. A major underlying cause relates to staffing constraints faced by the MoEAC. Simply put, the Ministry is constrained to mobilise the right numbers of persons with appropriate skills and competency to run the programme at all levels, and thereby to make full use of TA provided. This raises questions of sustainability and effectiveness of the capacity development model being used.

⁶³ The evaluation team was not able to explore these issues in any detail, and it is surmised that solutions could be found through improvements in supervision, time management and team working.

2.2.3. To what extent has the project been successful in improving learning and ownership by government at all levels: National, Regional, Circuit and School (EQ. 2.3.1)?

163. The team has addressed the question from the perspective of WFP's TA support to the NSFP⁶⁴. The improvement of learning and ownership lies at the core of any capacity development intervention. Sustainable capacity cannot be realised in the absence of ownership, or the desire for change, whilst ownership without learning will not on its own drive performance improvement, without the necessary enhancements in know-how, skills, systems and processes etc..
164. The underlying objective of WFP's TA support was indeed to enhance the NSFP performance by strengthening various elements of the NSFP delivery system as identified in the diagnostic work carried out at the start of WFP assistance. The previous EQ has already assessed the effectiveness of TA support. It is evident from the analysis that specific components of TA support were directed towards enhancing ownership as well as improving learning.
165. With respect to **learning**, a variety of interventions were carried out including training events, study tours, knowledge sharing events, and the development of promotional materials. There was also the placement of short and long term experts. The target groups for these interventions were primarily national and regional level stakeholders and to a lesser extent stakeholders at the school level. The type of learning that took place through these different interventions took various forms. Thus short term advisory inputs typically generated analytical outputs opening perspectives and providing insights on different ways of doing things. Longer term embedded TA could meanwhile play a mentorship and facilitation role helping stakeholders to adapt new technical knowledge into the workplace environment. Tacit learning plays an important part here. By contrast workshops and training courses usually serve a more focused objective imparting specific technical knowledge – such as how to input data into a data base, or providing a general orientation and perspective on a new topic or initiative – such as on HGSF. The development of promotional materials, such as the TV documentary on the NSFP and follow up radio talk shows, may also serve a learning function by generating interest and providing quick reference to essential information. Such materials would normally serve a more general audience who may not require to know technical specificities but who may be encouraged to take interest or act in a different manner.
166. With respect to promoting **ownership** of the NSFP (as opposed to ownership of external assistance), it is also evident that TA support sought ways to broaden awareness, understanding, interest and support for the NSFP. Some of the learning events listed above could play a dual role, combining the delivery of technical knowledge with elements of advocacy and campaigning. Study tours provide a way to mobilise interest and commitment to an intervention by allowing stakeholders to compare with experiences elsewhere in the region. Organising public campaigns or events to highlight the NSFP and its contribution to education and food security, graced by senior government figures is another way of broadening awareness and support, thereby helping to broaden ownership of the programme beyond the immediate circle of concerned stakeholders. Facilitating dialogue with private sector stakeholders is another example of broadening understanding and awareness and through this to secure greater ownership and support. Public education campaigns such as the radio programmes and TV documentary are further vehicles for getting the message out and extending awareness of the NSFP. The organisation of annual NSFP workshops can serve as another way to build ownership among staff responsible for NSFP delivery by creating a sense of belonging and identity with a common cause.
167. Whilst it is possible to identify the potential role that these different interventions can play towards learning and ownership, it is much more challenging to assess the extent to which lasting ownership has been created or how far learning has been translated into routinised performance improvement. As discussed in the previous EQs, there is evidence that much of the TA delivered was relevant and well executed and was demand driven. However challenges with respect to staffing – attraction and retention at the national and regional levels, as well as competing demands placed on limited staff – has meant that the full benefits of TA support have not always be realised. Retaining institutional memory is a particular challenge as is ensuring effective and timely induction of new staff with responsibility for the programme. The TA reports do suggest that the public campaigns, study tours and other awareness raising events have broadened awareness and support for the NSFP, among politicians and other opinion leaders, across government, the private sector and in civil society. The ETs visits to the five regions confirmed high levels of support and understanding for the programme, albeit in relatively confined circles, however, concerns were indeed expressed that with the high turnover of staff at region, circuit and schools levels, there are many staff members who have not directly benefitted from basic training and orientation.

⁶⁴ The intent of this question was not entirely clear to the ET, particularly, whether "the project" referred to the NSFP or to the TA support provided by WFP to MoEAC, or to a combination of the two.

2.3. Evaluation Criteria 3: Efficiency

168. Four evaluation questions address Evaluation Criteria 3 on Efficiency, as listed below:

- How much does it cost (Government and communities) to implement the NSFP to achieve the outcomes that it has achieved?
- What are the key cost categories and the drivers of costs within them?
- To what extent did WFP capacity strengthening activities help improve the cost efficiency of NSFP?
- Given the identified cost drivers, could the same outcomes be attained at lower costs, or higher outcomes achieved with same resources? Where are the opportunities for cost savings to improve efficiency without sacrificing effectiveness.

2.3.1. How much does it cost (Government and communities) to implement the NSFP to achieve the outcomes that it has achieved [EQ 3.1.]?

169. Based on the overall learner population of 377,521, the evaluation established that the average cost of school feeding borne by MoEAC at all levels is estimated at NAD 326.8 (USD 22) per child per year. The total cost of school feeding including community level contributions and those from other partners (WFP) is NAD 359.1 (USD 24.2) per child per year. These costs are a significant rise from the costs as projected in 2012, which estimated the unit cost on the learner would be NAD 282 (USD 19.96) – representing a 27.3% increase over a 5-year period.

170. Below is a summary of total cost to government by region. The cost estimates in this table reflect only direct government investment and do not include all school-level costs. They are therefore lower-bound estimates of full implementation costs. School level costs are included in subsequent sections further below;

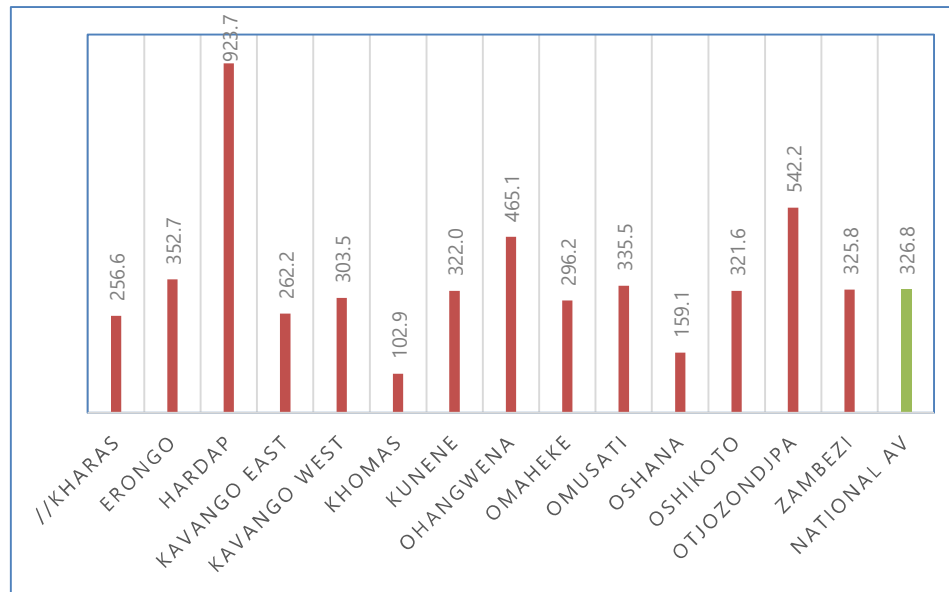
Table 2: Total Costs of School Feeding for School Year 2017⁶⁵

Region	Protein, Salt and Sugar (Per Yr)	BLENDING (Per Yr)	Transportation (Per Yr)	Total Exp (Per Yr)	Cost Per Beneficiary Per Region (Per Year)	Number of beneficiaries
//Kharas	500,071	588,756	103,125	1,191,952	257	4,646
Erongo	723,060	986,711	158,158	1,867,930	353	5,296
Hardap	2,849,445	2,916,317	647,365	6,413,127	924	6,943
Kavango East	5,381,967	6,721,792	678,436	12,782,196	262	48,754
Kavango West	4,499,560	5,619,731	566,561	10,685,852	303	35,213
Khomas	911,918	893,485	170,156	1,975,559	103	19,197
Kunene	2,509,493	2,781,780	332,995	5,624,269	322	17,464
Ohangwena	10,823,887	12,405,685	1,280,349	24,509,921	465	52,699
Omaheke	1,425,071	1,576,265	301,249	3,302,585	296	11,148
Omusati	8,432,771	8,942,569	965,400	18,340,740	336	54,663
Oshana	2,298,357	2,676,963	403,366	5,378,686	159	33,798
Oshikoto	6,658,324	7,544,927	1,032,199	15,235,449	322	47,367
Otjozondjpa	2,316,169	4,533,570	432,099	7,281,838	542	13,429
Zambezi	3,730,497	4,453,774	582,187	8,766,459	326	26,904
National/Overall	53,060,590	62,642,327	7,653,646	123,356,563	327	377,521

171. It should be noted that since financial year 2017/18, the bulk of NSFP expenses on commodities and transport - even though procured at the national level, have actually been expended at the regional level - as the country continues to decentralize. As such, costs incurred at the national level have been reduced substantially. In addition to the table above, the graph below further visualizes expenses across regions.

⁶⁵ Source: Expense data shared by the MoEAC and Regional Governments
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Figure 15: Total Cost per Beneficiary per year per Region



172. In the figure above, it is notable that Hardap records an extremely high overall cost per beneficiary (NAD 924 or USD 62.26) against a national average of NAD 359 (USD 24.2). This is mostly due to very high costs of transport, the region having a low learner population - which therefore pushes the unit learner costs to extremes above the average. In comparison, Kavango East, which equally incurs high transport costs has a much higher learner population so the unit costs even out to the normal range.

173. Overall, the programme seems to have done well in containing the increase in costs of food distribution, considering that programme costs per child increased by 27% over a period of 5 years, despite the changes in commodity prices (based on average annual inflation of 4.3%) and increase in the number of programme beneficiaries rising by 39.8%.

174. Given that school level costs are mainly supported by the community or by the Universal Primary Education Grant (UPEG), there is need for the programme to develop mechanisms to better track/document these costs. From the selected schools visited for qualitative assessment, it was clear that these costs are critical to programme delivery and that the programme should be deliberate on how they are captured. The previous cost study conducted for this programme in 2013⁶⁶ have made assumptions on what these costs look like, and it is well possible that such assumptions could be overly underestimated. The accurate costs of fuel, storage, cooks, infrastructure, utensils and equipment thus remain challenging to accurately establish.

2.3.2. What are the key cost categories and the drivers of costs within them [EQ 3.2.]?

175. Beyond the costs directly incurred by the government in the purchase and transportation of the maize blend, there are other costs necessary for the delivery of the programme and which may be expended by other partners such as WFP or expended indirectly by different levels of government. The table below provides an indication of costs by category. As such, some of these costs, like that of capital expenses and staff have been appropriated based upon previous Cost Assessments and adjusted for inflation/ or depreciation.

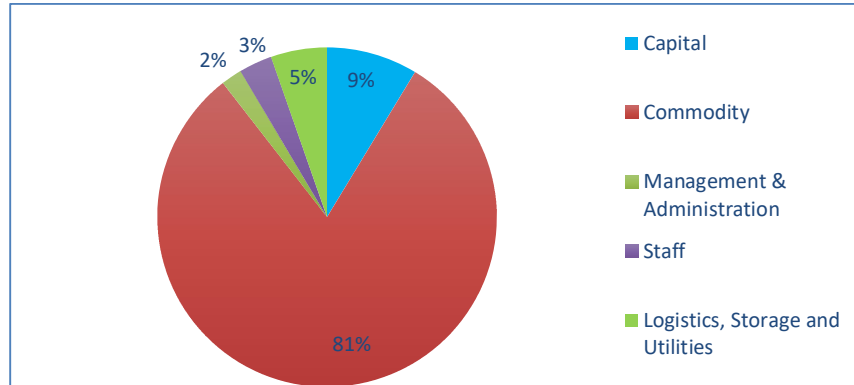
Table 3: Share of Total Cost of Different Cost Categories

Cost Category	Sum of Annual Cost (NAD)	Cost in USD
Capital	12,458,193.00	750,798.80
Commodity	115,702,917.00	6,972,885.90
Management & Administration	2,865,248.27	172,851.85
Staff	4,530,300.00	273,299.43
Logistics, Storage and Utilities	7,653,645.83	462,388.33

⁶⁶ WFP and Partnership for Child Development (2013), Cost Assessment of the School Feeding Programme in Namibia, MoEAC Namibia National School Feeding Evaluation Report - February 2020

Grand Total	135,556,658	8,189,537.17
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Figure 16: Distribution of Costs by Category



176. The table above clearly indicates that commodities (exclusive of transport) account for a significant share (81%) of the overall school feeding budget, followed by the costs of capital expense. The unit costs per learner is shared by the categories as shown in the chart below;

177. As would be expected, there are significant regional differences across the various cost categories, and the table and graph below visualize the variances that exist in the costs of transport and the costs of the maize blend. However, since a small sample was used to calculate the overall costs of staff, capital, and management then extrapolated to represent the whole, this analysis is unable to display, for example, differences in staff composition across regions. The two graphs below further show the cost differences by region and by category.

Figure 17: Cost of Maize Blend per Beneficiary per Region (NAD per year)

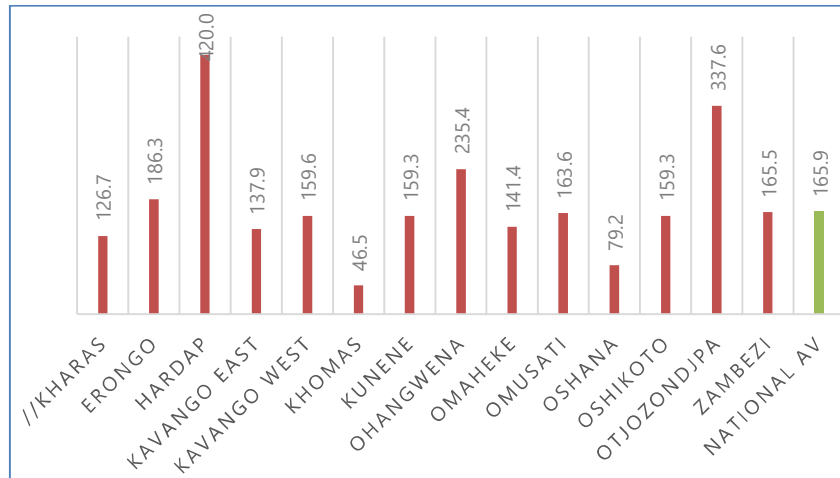
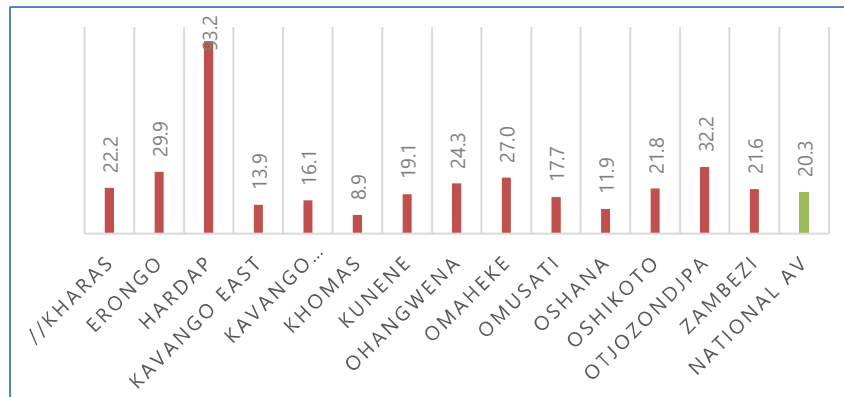


Figure 18: Transport Cost per Beneficiary (NAD per year)



178. Capital, commodities, transport, staff, and administration remain the most relevant categories. Within these categories, commodities take up approximately 81% of the total costs leaving only 19% to be shared amongst the remaining categories. While this might seem desirable, it might also signal an under investment in programme support components such as M&E, or on staffing. It would suggest the need to conduct an extensive/in-depth cost assessment of these other categories before considering any policy pronouncements on budget distribution.

179. The on-going process of decentralization has also resulted in the bulk of school feeding costs being expended at the regional level, even though it is important to note that procurement and allocation remains a national level function. Obtaining the capital costs was extremely challenging as there were no asset inventories at the national nor regional level.

2.3.3. To what extent did WFP capacity strengthening activities help improve the cost efficiency of NSFP [EQ 3.3.]?

180. The team is unable to provide a robust response to this evaluation question as the criteria for judging the effect TA support could have on programme cost management is not well defined.

181. It is noted that WFP facilitated the conduct of a Cost Analysis in 2014, which yielded important information on total costs and cost categories, and from which unit costs for delivering the programme were derived. It is not clear, however, how this information was subsequently used and from our analysis of TA interventions over the evaluation period, there is no indication of any follow-up TA support specifically aimed at addressing cost efficiency.

182. Indirectly, it may be deduced that other areas of TA support, such as assistance in the establishment of the MEP inclusive of programme performance indicators has helped to introduce a framework for performance management. This would have enabled programme management to better track costs and to be more sensitive to cost implications of different components of programme delivery.

183. The setting up of NASIS, including the training provided to staff at national, regional and schools levels (as identified in the MEP operational arrangements), should also have facilitated better monitoring and management of programme costs. However, the observed weaknesses in reporting through NASIS, impacting on the reliability and timeliness of data, will have limited this opportunity. As observed elsewhere in this report, data on actual food delivered compared to food ordered, and on actual consumption patterns at the school level (eg: daily register of learners' eating) is difficult to obtain. Indeed, various output indicators could only be responded to with data collected as part this evaluation's quantitative and qualitative surveys.

184. Further, the reported delays in timely delivery of the maize blend which has resulted in multiple non-feeding days creates cost inefficiencies and will have impacted negatively on unit costs. Given that commodities and transport are the main cost categories associated with programme delivery, would suggest the need to give additional attention to supply chain management in any future technical assistance/ capacity strengthening work.

2.3.4. Given the identified cost drivers, could the same outcomes be attained at lower costs, or higher outcomes achieved with same resources? Where are the opportunities for cost savings to improve efficiency without sacrificing effectiveness [EQ 3.4]?

185. This evaluation question becomes particularly challenging to answer bearing in mind the evidence of under-investment in school level infrastructure. There is still an inadequate number of kitchens, utensils, storage facilities that are up to standard, and many schools continue to face challenges paying cooks. Therefore, the overall investment at school level per unit learner should potentially be higher than it currently is.
186. That said, there are opportunities to better redistribute blenders (geographically) to reduce transport costs. The number of blenders could potentially be higher than is currently the case to ensure more efficient distribution of commodities. There is equally an opportunity for the government customs agency to ease the process for obtaining licenses for the importation of the Protein Blend. Such actions could help reduce the overall cost of doing business and there is a reasonable expectation that these cost savings could be invested in critical areas of programme support including school level infrastructure.
187. Finally, ensuring orders for maize blend are submitted by schools and regional education authorities in time and that there are adequate warehousing facilities within the various regions could help to reduce time lags in transportation/distribution in a way that would make the supply chain more cost efficient.
188. It is the opinion of the evaluation that the overall unit cost per learner is optimal in its current state and a reduction below NAD 359 (USD 22) per learner per year could potentially reduce the quality of the programme. This is because the NCA was unable to establish any excesses in expenditure that might be of significant effect on the overall cost of the programme. Notably, the evaluation suggested avenues for the reduction of transport costs. This can easily be taken as an opportunity to reduce the overall cost per learner, however, given the gaps in the school feeding infrastructure (kitchen, storage, utensils, cooks), the drive to reduce overall cost per learner would be a retrogressive policy conclusion. Any cost cut-backs made within elements of the programme should rather be (re)directed to other components where gaps exist – with the net effect being improvement in the delivery of school feeding through a sustained level of investment.

2.3.5. Summing Up

189. The ET has carried out a rapid assessment of the costs of delivering the NSFP using the WFP Cost Assessment Tool⁶⁷. Whilst by no means comprehensive, and mindful of difficulties encountered in obtaining data to support certain cost categories, the assessment has been able to determine a revised unit cost for the delivery of the NSFP, and a breakdown of costs across the different cost categories. It has also been possible to identify variations in cost from region to region. Comparisons with the results of the baseline cost assessment exercise have also been made.

2.4. Evaluation Criteria 4: Impact

190. The TORS include just one question to address the evaluation criteria on Impact.

- What are the long-term effects (positive or negative, intended or unintended) of school feeding on the lives of boys and girls, schools, households and communities?

2.4.1. What are the long-term effects (positive or negative, intended or unintended) of school feeding on the lives of boys and girls, schools, households and communities [EQ 4.1.]?

191. The NSFP results framework as reflected in the MEP only specifies results at the output and outcome levels. Therefore, there are no impact level measures specified for the programme. Accordingly, the evaluation has not conducted a systematic analysis of results at the level of impacts. What follows therefore are ideas and insights obtained during the course of the evaluation and informed by the various KIIs and FGDs, which provide pointers on possible longer term impacts of the programme. In time, these could be tested through impact evaluations (in Namibia or indeed in other contexts) to complement existing evidence on impact of school feeding programmes.
192. **Impacts on the lives of boys and girls** - There is agreement that the NSFP has helped many girls and boys, especially those from vulnerable communities, to attend, remain in and complete primary school. The expectation is that those learners will then progress to secondary school and to eventually equip themselves with know-how and skills to progress to tertiary education and/or to allow them to compete in the labour

⁶⁷ See annex 7 for further details on the methodology used and computation of costs
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market. In turn, they will pass on this experience of the value of education to future generations. This is of special importance from those hailing from vulnerable homes where incentives to remain in school are often weak. A good example of this is the testimony of one of the research assistants who took part in the administration of the quantitative survey. Today a graduate of NUST, the research assistant identified himself as a "NSFP beneficiary" attesting to the critical role the school meal programme played to enable him to remain in school and to progress. The evaluation has however noted some possible negative trends. Although not related to the NSFP itself – absenteeism or dropping out as a result of learner pregnancy or lack of menstrual management facilities could negate the positive contribution of the NSFP and impact on the likelihood of girl learners progressing on an equal basis as their male counterparts. For the boy learner, risks of stigmatisation in the higher primary grades were identified which could undermine the full benefits of the school meal and impact on performance and progression. Conversely, from a positive vantage point, the protective role that the NSFP can play was identified. For the vulnerable girl child, regular access to school meals can protect against risks of sexual exploitation such as sex for food. And combined with other social protection interventions, NSFP can create conditions for most vulnerable girls to stay in, complete and transition to higher levels of education.

193. Equally important are the longer term health and nutritional impacts of the NSFP on learners, particularly those for whom the school meal is the only meal of the day. The programme is likely to play a critical role in reducing risks of mal/ under-nutrition and related ill-health, thereby allowing affected learners to grow into healthy and productive adults able to exercise their full potentials. However the absence of routine nutritional assessments in sentinel schools means it is not possible to measure the extent to which NSFP has a long term nutritional impact on learners.
194. **Impacts on schools** – Participation in the NSFP can be expected to generate various positive impacts on schools. Most obviously is the prospect of achieving better results across the school population and obtaining a reputation for being a performing and caring institution. Participation is likely to generate insight and experience into the impacts of poverty and hunger on child development, which will be carried as a life experience by teachers, who will become future advocates and champions of school feeding and related social protective interventions. This will extend to insight and knowledge on the importance of good nutrition and on the role that backyard gardens can play in improving the diet of households, particularly those with limited means. The caring reputation of the school is also likely to generate increased levels of legitimacy and respect for the school and staff within the immediate school catchment area, which will help to shore up support when required. There are of course possible negative effects. For example, the extra workload generated by the programme could provoke resentment among teachers and community volunteers alike. Delays in food delivery could equally generate resentment and mistrust, undermining the otherwise positive reputation of the school. And if facilities for storage and cooking, as well as protective clothing for cooks is not addressed, perceptions as to the seriousness with which schools are managing the programme could be questioned. Another possible negative impact is the possibility of widening inequalities between schools and especially rural/urban since the provision and quality of the school feeding facilities is dependent on the socio-economic status of the parents in the school catchment area. On a last positive note, the experiences that some schools have had in mobilising private sector sponsorship for school feeding is likely to raise their profiles as effective and professional institutions. Their acquired resource mobilisation capabilities could then be brought to bear in other areas of school life.
195. **Impacts on households** – Various long term benefits can be expected to accrue to households whose children have participated in the NSFP. Most obviously is the prospect of raising an educated and healthy child who will not be a future burden on the household and who on the contrary will be expected to provide support to other family members. This could offer a pathway out of poverty and vulnerability, due to savings in household income over time⁶⁸, thereby raising the income, health and general well-being of vulnerable households. The benefits of education, which might otherwise have not been apparent, will be tangible and households are likely to become stronger advocates of the importance of education. It is also possible that they will become better equipped to take care of their own nutrition by learning from their children on how to establish backyard gardens and maintain a balanced diet. The same can be expected of households who have provided volunteer cooks and who have received some training. They will bring back insight on good feeding practices into the household. On a more negative note, respondents mentioned the potential for dependency growing among households on social protection interventions including school feeding, as they get used to knowing that the government will provide. On the other hand, such initiatives are known to promote and facilitate household investment in productive assets that can enable them to improve their well-being. Thus

68 According to research, school feeding programmes can reduce poverty by boosting income for households and communities. For families, the value of meals in school is equivalent to about 10% of a household's income. For families with several children, that can mean substantial savings. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000102338.pdf>

the relief placed on households to provide a school meal might allow scarce resources to be saved or set aside for other productive purposes.

196. **Impacts on communities** – Stronger performing schools can be expected to have a positive knock-on effect on the surrounding community eliciting pride and confidence in the functioning of their local institution. It can be expected to attract higher levels of participation in school decision making bodies such as the School Board thereby strengthening links between the community at large and the school. Equally the interactions between community members and the NSFP - whether in terms of fetching firewood, mobilising resources for infrastructure development or providing cooks – will further reinforce the relationship between school and community. Even more importantly, it may encourage parents to become more interested in the welfare of the school at large and the performance of their children in the classroom, thereby becoming more informed and engaged parents in the upbringing of their children. At the same time, as highlighted elsewhere in this report, it is possible that the current *modus operandi vis a vis* community participation will lead to reinforcement of existing gender roles that may impact negatively on opportunities for the girl child to advance educationally and career wise. Lastly, by linking school feeding to other government interventions related to health, water and sanitation and agriculture, amongst others, opportunities for building greater community identity, confidence and cohesiveness can be anticipated.

2.5. Evaluation Criteria 5: Sustainability

197. There are 2 EQs that address Sustainability. These are:

- What are the critical factors for sustainability of the NSFP in the Namibian context?
- How prepared is the MoEAC to take over the full management of NSFP?

2.5.1. What are the critical factors for sustainability of the NSFP in the Namibian context [EQ 5.1.]?

198. The future sustainability of the NSFP will depend on the presence of a number of factors, many of which have been referred to in the discussion of other evaluation questions. A selection of the most significant factors are examined below:

199. **NSFP Relevance** – Ensuring the future relevance of the programme will remain of paramount importance. Relevance is closely associated with ownership and the associated responsibility and commitment to safeguard and promote the programme. So long as stakeholders continue to recognise the contribution the programme is making whether in terms of achieving higher level policy objectives or making a tangible difference to the lives of community members, sustainability is likely to be realised. It will therefore be important for the programme to continue to demonstrate its value added, as well as to continue to adapt to evolving demands and circumstances. This will require actions to reinforce partnerships and promote collaborative efforts with other stakeholders so that the programme is not simply perceived as a mere feeding programme. It will also require investment in promotional and knowledge sharing activities to further spread the message and lessons of what the NSFP has achieved and of its potential to do more. Having a fully functioning MIS is critical for ensuring that the evidence is available to confirm the contributions the programme is making and of its complementarity to other interventions whether in the realms of health, water and sanitation, social protection or food production. Exploration of the HGSF agenda will surely capture the attention of a wider circle of stakeholders as they recognise the strategic role the programme can play in facilitating local economic development and food security. However, there are sustainability risk here, particularly with respect to water and the impact that irrigated agricultural and horticultural production could have on water availability, placing a premium on investing in water-wise and climate-adapted technologies.

200. The ownership that accompanies relevance may manifest itself in different ways and among different stakeholders. Fundamentally, if the programme enjoys broad-based ownership across society and has the attention of key decision-makers, the likelihood is that the programme will enjoy the full backing and support it requires. Crucially, it will enable adequate financial resourcing as well as the defense of budgets critical to the functioning - and where necessary expansion - of the programme. It will also help ensure that the programme enjoys the level of investment and support required to put in place needed human and material resources.

201. **NSFP Performance** – The ultimate test of sustainability is programme performance. If the programme underperforms and fails to meet its objectives and to make the differences in the lives of boys and girls, the credibility and standing of the programme will fall. As is well known, reputations take a long time to be gained but can be quickly lost. Under-performance will erode levels of support and ultimately the ownership of the programme and may raise questions in the minds of stakeholders as to the merit of supporting the programme. Conversely, high levels of performance will convince stakeholders that this is an initiative worth supporting, generating further good will and resource flows. It is therefore imperative that the programme performs to the highest

standards and is able to generate the evidence to confirm that this is so. This means ensuring that NASIS becomes a well functioning and reliable MIS that delivers the data to the programme MEP to enable the story to be told, and which enables task managers responsible for programme delivery to obtain management information in good time. It also means taking action to trouble-shoot delivery bottlenecks that compromise programme effectiveness.

202. **NSFP Leadership and Capacity** – Performance does not happen automatically but is premised on there being adequate levels of leadership and capacity to translate available resources (and good will) into results on the ground. Leadership and capacity are therefore absolutely fundamental to realising NSFP sustainability. These dimensions are further discussed under the EQ 5.2. below on programme management. A few general observations on this topic are however made here. The development of effective institutions that can deliver on development objectives has been underscored in the development discourse for many decades and has been further highlighted in the context of the aid and development effectiveness agendas and most recently in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The notion of effective institutions is relevant to this discussion of NSFP sustainability. Fundamentally, without adequate capacity to perform today and to adapt to the needs of the future, and thereby confirm programme relevance, sustainability is compromised. Capacity is understood as a multi-faceted concept the essence of which is that performance depends on the availability of capacity at three inter-connected levels; individual, organisational and institutional. Capacity is therefore more than skills and know-how but embraces organisational systems and processes and a supportive policy and regulatory framework. Leadership is a particularly important capacity attribute that can manifest itself at different levels and in different ways but invariably can be the key to enjoying high levels of performance. As is further discussed below, the current capacity of the NSFP delivery system is challenged. Whilst the system is indeed functioning, there are a number of system bottlenecks that impact on delivery. Particularly concerning is the instability of the workforce, which can undermine efforts to build sustainable systems and robust institutions.
203. There are without doubt other perspectives that could be introduced that might impact on programme sustainability but it is the view of the ET that the above mentioned facets are most critical. There are of course broader macro-level considerations such as changes in political priorities, uncertain economic future impacting on the public purse and climate change that could impact on sustainability of the NSFP as well as many other government programmes. The argument being made here is that if programme relevance can be demonstrated, if high levels of performance can be achieved and if capacity and leadership can be nurtured, then the sustainability of the programme in an evolving political, economic and environmental context is all the more likely.

2.5.2. What steps should MoEAC take to ensure full and effective management of the NSFP in future? [EQ 5.2.]?

204. The ET understands that the MoEAC took over the full management of the NSFP as far back as 1996 when the pilot programme was handed over to the Government. The team has, therefore, approached the question from the point of view of assessing the current capacity of the NSFP delivery system and the effect this has had on programme performance. It also notes the TA support from WFP directed at strengthening system capacity, which has been discussed under EQ 2.2.
205. A delivery system has been in operation with responsibilities distributed between the national, regional (including circuits) and school levels. At national level, MoEAC has had overall responsibility with day-to-day management assigned to MPAT. Core responsibilities have included policy development, planning, budgeting and reporting, procurement, staff development and supervision. Regions have played a lead role in programme supervision, coordination of data collection and inspection, including quality assurance, and technical backstopping of schools. Schools together with the surrounding communities have constituted the front line with responsibility for the storage, preparation and serving of meals according to set standards.
206. Below, a more in-depth analysis of three core delivery processes is provided. These pertain to supply chain management, the management of data, and the storage, preparation and serving of meals at the school level. Each requires that a core capability is in place. Whilst these three core delivery processes are functional, they are not functioning optimally. This is impacting on the quality, quantity and impact of programme outputs and in turn on outcomes. First, a number of observations are made with respect to our assessment of the NSFP's overall capacity to deliver.
207. **Decentralisation** – Up until recently, the programme operated in a more top-down fashion with the line of command emanating directly from headquarters. However in the last 2-3 years, a progressive transitioning to a decentralised model has been taking place as part of a wider decentralisation effort orchestrated by the government. The effect of this is to place increasing responsibility on the regional level eg in terms of managing the procurement function, and of placing the programme, as well as the education function more generally, under the oversight of the Chief Regional Officer (CRO). As with any institutional change process, the period of transition can generate some teething problems as systems and individuals adjust to a new dispensation.

The reported delays in food distribution for example are attributed in part to such teething problems. Going forward, any future capacity development work will need to take account of this shift of focus and align support towards the new decentralised model of delivery.

208. **Staffing** – As alluded to already, assuring adequate staffing for the programme has remained a challenge for the MoEAC. Various TA reports as well as the road map and associated diagnostic work identified the securing of a stable workforce as critical to programme success. Whilst a unit has been assigned responsibility for programme management (MPAT), it has been difficult to sustain a full complement of staff, moreover with the requisite profiles. During the period of the ETs field visit, all positions assigned to the programme were vacant. However, a deputy director with overall responsibility for the programme is now appointed. The status of the other positions is not known. Although regions will assume increased responsibility for implementation, the role of the centre remains crucial in a decentralised context for ensuring continued programme relevance, safeguarding budgets, mobilising resources and partnerships, capacity development, knowledge sharing, quality assurance and reporting. A weak centre can therefore have a negative impact on the ability of the programme to function smoothly with adequate oversight and troubleshooting capabilities. Moreover, prospects of introducing a HGSP approach, as discussed elsewhere, will place additional demand on and require more sophisticated capabilities at all levels raising concerns about capacity to support the HGSP roll-out. The centre will have a specially important role to play during the piloting phase.
209. At regional level, staffing challenges were also raised during the teams visits. Budgetary constraints mean that regional directorates are working with lean staffing levels, with inevitable pressure placed on available staff to multi-task. As a result there are no staff either at regional or circuit level that work full time and exclusively on the NSFP. There were also reportedly high levels of staff turnover with the consequence of instability of the workforce supporting programme delivery. Collectively, this places a premium on ensuring sound and timely backstopping from the centre, strong leadership at the regional level, and encouragement of team work and collective action. It also means ensuring availability of training and induction materials to ensure that newcomers can be quickly brought up to speed. Events such as the annual workshops, and regional visits or on-line communities of practice are ways to share experiences, promote learning and encourage continuous improvement in programme delivery. Other motivational tools such as rewards for excellence might also be considered.
210. Ultimately, programme delivery depends on front line staff and community participation at the school level as further discussed below. As at the regional level, there can be significant levels of staff mobility. Ensuring that principals, NSFP focal points and the wider teaching community remain updated and familiar with the NSFP is therefore critical. This means having access to training materials and standard operating procedures and access to technical backstopping services. The leadership role of the principal is underscored as s/he can either facilitate or constrain good practice but the backstopping support of the circuits is equally important. The role of school institutions such as the Board or school feeding committees also plays a crucial role in steering programme delivery at the local level and in enabling solutions to be found to school-specific challenges. The effectiveness of deliberations and contributions depends in turn on the level of commitment, interest and understanding that Board members have of the programme, reinforcing the need for access to consistent information, training and guidance. School cooks meanwhile may be considered the backbone of the programme. In their absence the programme cannot function, however, challenges remain in finding sustainable solutions for their compensation which impacts on levels of job satisfaction, retention and reliability. For the time being various solutions have been found which vary from school to school but further attention to standardise conditions of service are required. These include i) drawing on UPE funds; ii) mobilising financial resources from parents and community; iii) obtaining sponsorship for school feeding including remuneration of cooks and iv) using proceeds from sale of school garden produce. Moreover, MoEAC and WFP are considering the option of providing formal training to cooks that will result in them obtaining a recognised and transferable qualification that will offer opportunities for progression in the hospitality sector.

2.5.2.1. Core Process No.1 – Supply Chain Management

211. The core task of the NSFP is to ensure timely, accurate and quality-assured delivery of maize blend to each participating school at the start of each term. This is a major undertaking, considering the number of schools involved nationwide, demanding a well developed supply chain and logistics capability that is aligned with public financial management rules and procedures. Both the Roadmap and the NSF policy (pillars 1 and 4) address the need to put in place effective supply chain management arrangements.
212. Based on interviews with key informants, as well as taking account of the findings reported on effectiveness (EQ 2.1.), it is evident that this core process is not currently performing optimally⁶⁹. One region described late

⁶⁹ For instance, the Survey data indicates that there are school days when the meal is not served in over half of the schools (51.4%). Almost half (47.9%) attributed this to non-availability of the maize blend.

deliveries as a “serious problem”. Food commodities are routinely arriving late each term⁷⁰ causing stockouts and an unacceptably high level of non-feeding days. It is also causing un-necessary wastage of the maize blend due in part to poor handling and storage by contractors and in part to bags being received at the school level already very close to their expiry dates.

213. The ET wanted to know if this was a temporary problem that may be attributed to a specific current bottleneck or one that has persisted over time. Responses suggest a mixed picture. On the one hand, late deliveries were already identified as an area of concern in the 2012 Case Study and Transition report and was highlighted as an issue to be addressed in the road map. It was also noted in various TA reports. This would certainly suggest that this has been an on-going problem. On the other hand, the Team was advised that the problem had become more acute in recent years with 2018 being especially bad, due to complications associated with the on-going decentralisation process.
214. Contributing factors highlighted by respondents include: i) late placement of orders by regions; ii) late disbursement of NSFP budget to regions and cuts in budget allocation; iii) Inadequate storage and transport capacity of transport contractor⁷¹; iv) Poor quality of supplied maize and hygiene standards of the blending and packaging process⁷². The underlying cause and consequence of these contributing factors are examined in greater detail in annex 11.
215. None of these listed delay factors should be insurmountable, yet they persist. Given the time sensitivity of the supply chain process and the consequence of delays on the core objective of the NSFP, one might have expected these problems to have received priority attention. Reviews of WFP TA progress reports over the evaluation period moreover suggest that resolution of supply chain management issues was not targeted as an area for significant support although training in supply chain was provided to suppliers and most recently (though falling outside the evaluation period), a mission was fielded to examine in particular food handling, safety and hygiene related matters⁷³.
216. The consequences of late deliveries are felt most acutely at the school level. The ET’s regional visits to 11 schools revealed that actors at this level have devised a variety of “coping strategies” to accommodate late deliveries, as summarised in table 4 below:

Table 4: Coping Strategies for Late Deliveries

Problem	Coping Strategy
Stockouts	• Place order to cover 2 terms rather than 1 term to anticipate late deliveries and stockouts, however this can create additional challenges of storage where facilities are inadequate
	• Redistribute bags between those schools with excess bags and those experiencing stockouts – facilitated by circuit inspectors
	• Hold back stock to carry over to the next term, by reducing consumption (portion sizes)
	• Ration food for the most needy only
	• Use produce from school garden to substitute for missing maize blend
	• Reach out to benefactors to supply alternative food stuff
	• Teachers pool own money to buy maize bags from local shops as stop-gap measure
	• Draw on UPE to purchase emergency supplies from local retailer ⁷⁴
Spoilt or Expired Bags	• Sift infested bags and then use/ consume sifted maize
	• Distribute surplus to learners at end of term to avoid spoilage
	• Provide take-home rations to learners to utilise just-expired bags
	• Report to Regional Directorate and return spoilt or expired bags for destroying by appropriate authorities.
Non-performance of transporter	• In two regions, it was reported that school Principals were requested to use their personal vehicles to collect bags from the regional depot when transporters failed to honour their contracts. They were compensated for associated costs.

⁷⁰ One region reported consignment reaching the regional warehouse as late as 2 weeks before the end of term. In another region, 2019 term 1 deliveries reached schools 2 months late, whilst 2nd term deliveries arrived in the last week of term.

⁷¹ In one region, there is only one transporter handling distribution to 340 schools, a large number of which are located in remote areas accessible only with vehicles capable of handling heavy sandy roads

⁷² Based on Mission Report: The Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) Food safety and Quality Assurance Baseline Assessment, July 2019.

⁷³ Mission Report: The Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) Food safety and Quality Assurance Baseline Assessment, July 2019.

⁷⁴ One school assigned NAD 2000 from its UPE for this purpose

217. At the regional level, the ET learned of other coping strategies aimed at overcoming delays in the ordering process. This entailed the regional government providing the supplier with a scanned copy of the requisition order as proof that a purchase order would be forthcoming. In this case, the supplier was willing to proceed to order supplies in the knowledge that a formal order would be placed within the following week. On the other hand, regions expressed some frustration that whilst they are responsible for placing orders and settling payment, it is difficult for them to performance manage the suppliers because their contract is with the national Ministry and not the regions⁷⁵. However, one region mentioned that it instructs the transporter to begin distribution in the remotest parts of the region where vulnerability is greatest and where risks of drop-outs is more likely should food deliveries be delayed.
218. Supply chain management has to be the NSFP number one capability that is required to perform to the highest standards in order to ensure predictable delivery of maize to all schools. This capability is currently not functioning optimally. It is imperative that further diagnostic work is carried out to troubleshoot and resolve associated bottlenecks, most of which are already well known. The coping strategies of schools to deal with unpredictable and late deliveries in particular are to be commended but these strategies should not become the default modus operandi for the programme.

2.5.2.2. Core Process no. 2 – Management Information and Programme Monitoring

219. A second core task of the programme is to ensure accurate and timely collection, analysis and distribution of information in order to support management decision-making and programme delivery more generally, as well as to support accountability needs and programme learning. Evidence-based decision-making lies at the heart of the programme playing a critical role in enabling actors to play their respective roles at national, regional and school levels as well as facilitating the linkages in between, and to respond to operational challenges as they arise. Both the NSFP Road Map and the NSF policy identify the need to put in place effective systems for data management, monitoring and evaluation⁷⁶.
220. As reported elsewhere, considerable investment has been made to develop a robust management information system, NASIS, as well as to develop a coherent and pragmatic Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEP). These two systems are now in place and are intimately connected, providing a platform for planning, forecasting and knowledge management, including tracking of key programme deliverables. Responsibility for managing these systems are spread across actors at national regional and school levels.
221. Based on interviews with key informants, as well as a review of the outputs of NASIS, it is evident that NASIS is not currently functioning optimally, despite the substantial support provided by WFP to troubleshoot design and implementation flaws. As a consequence, NASIS is not currently able to provide the quality of information required to guide decision-making – a case in point being the accurate and timely ordering of maize blend - whilst the robustness of data quality poses challenges for tracking key output and outcome indicators associated with the NSFP. Contributory factors identified during the course of the team's assessment include: i) Schools and regions are failing to enter data into the NASIS system accurately and on time; ii) Inconsistent national level guidance to regions and schools; iii) System benefits for users at regional and school level are not sufficiently defined. The underlying cause and consequence of these contributing factors are examined in greater detail in annex 11.
222. Notwithstanding the above, it is important to note that:
- The roll-out of NASIS progressed rapidly between 2013 and 2016. By 2015, all 14 regions were entering data into the system and termly reports were produced consistently for the third term of 2014, all of 2015 and the first term of 2016⁷⁷. During this period, substantial training and supervision was provided by MoEAC with the support of WFP. Most regions noted that NASIS functioned well up until 2016.
 - In 2016, more far reaching changes were made to NASIS aimed at improving back-office functions, extending user functionalities and entering checks to strengthen data reliability and accuracy. In the view of regions interviewed, this upgrading marked the start of difficulties. The ET was only able to access one termly report generated for the second term of 2018, otherwise it would appear that no reports were

⁷⁵ MoEAC on the otherhand argues that it cannot take action against a non-performing supplier unless it receives a formal notification from the region.

⁷⁶ See annex for specific listing of provisions in both documents

⁷⁷ TA report for 2014-15 indicates that already in 2014, 70 percent of the then participating schools reported on their term 2 school feeding activities using the NASIS. This increased to 90 percent of schools in term 3 of the same year.

generated for the second and third terms of 2016, all of 2017 and the first and third terms of 2018⁷⁸. That said, data has continued to be entered into the system⁷⁹.

- Regional and circuit officers, school principals and NSFP focal persons indicated their readiness to fully utilise the system and their hope is that current technical problems will soon be resolved. A clear preference is to enable data entry to take place at the school level where computers are already available but where internet reliability remains a challenge, especially in rural areas. The team was informed that steps are being taken to enable off-line data entry to overcome internet down-times. Further training would be required to ensure that a new cohort of programme staff are versed in data collection and NASIS data entry techniques⁸⁰.
- Securing adequate capacity at headquarter level within MPAT to oversee NASIS operations has remained a challenge. Currently, there is no assigned officer to perform this function. As a result, the system, which is widely regarded to be a government system, depends on continued WFP technical support. The absence of a data management/ M&E officer also undermines the Ministry's authority to performance manage NASIS, including to ensure compliance across the system. It also means that there is no designated officer in place to analyse the data emerging from NASIS and to translate the data into reports and management briefs. This then raises questions as to how extensively the outputs of the NASIS systems are being used and interrogated by management at national and regional levels to guide decision-making.

223. Based upon the recommendations of the Road Map, priority attention was given to developing the MEP and NASIS. The MEP provides a practical results framework for tracking programme performance and offers guidance on ways to operationalise it. The MEP however depends on a fully functioning NASIS to ensure that reliable and predictable data is entered into the system. Despite a promising start, NASIS has encountered a number of technical challenges, which have not yet been fully resolved. These challenges are both technical and organisational and undermine the system capability and integrity. As a result, NASIS is failing to deliver the evidence base that is critical for both management decision making and accountability purposes.

2.5.2.3. Core Process no.3 – Food Storage, Preparation and Serving

224. The third core task of the programme takes place primarily at the school level and concerns the storage, preparation and serving of the daily fortified porridge⁸¹. This requires the collaboration of a number of different school level actors. This core task translates the various programme inputs into the main outputs - the daily serving of fortified porridge. Responsibilities for managing this core task are summarised in annex 12. Schools together with regional authorities are expected to ensure:

- Appropriate facilities are in place for the storage (storeroom) and preparation and serving of the school meal (kitchen) as well as adequate implements/ utensils for cooking and eating;
- Access to water supply for food preparation, drinking and hand-washing and washing up purposes;
- Availability of fuel (usually firewood, but sometimes electricity, gas);
- Adequate sanitation facilities responding to specific needs of boys and girls.

225. Both the road map and NSF policy pay considerable attention to tasking the NSFP to ensure that these arrangements are in place, and that minimum standards are upheld. Specific provisions are summarised in annex 11.

226. Based on the reported programmatic outputs, NASIS reports, as well as the results of the survey and regional visits, it is clear that a majority of schools are not yet fully compliant with expected standards of programme delivery. A number of the challenges associated with storage, preparation, and food serving, including hygiene

⁷⁸ Note that the national report is only prepared once at least 70% of schools have completed data entry.

⁷⁹ The TA report for 2017 reported the following with respect to NASIS: "*Constraints in the preparation of school feeding termly reports continued to persist mainly due to late entry of data by Regions into NaSIS coupled with the provision of poor quality data that resulted in a lot of time spent on data cleaning. This situation was worsened by the delay in getting the updated NaSIS operational due to technical problems related to the new software upgrade of the system.*"

⁸⁰ The team was informed that WFP is currently soliciting technical services to address the various technical challenges facing NASIS. Besides dealing with technicalities, work is being done to ensure NASIS can be more user-friendly and streamlined to better serve the needs and working contexts of schools and regions. Another issue being looked at is how to improve the interface between EMIS and NASIS on the reporting of programme impacts on wider education sector outcomes.

⁸¹ There are additional supervisory and capacity building roles played by the regional and national level.

that were identified in 2012 remain today. These are listed below whilst further details on underlying causes and consequences are available in annex 11.

- Storage – i) Few purpose built storerooms and storage equipment (eg palets)
- Preparation – i) Few purpose built kitchens meeting safety and hygiene standards; ii) Shortage of cooking implements; iii) Erratic supply of cooks; iv) Untrained cooks; v) Poor Hygiene standards of cooks; vi) Inconsistent supply of firewood; vii) Irregular supply of water;
- Serving including Hygiene – i) Shortage of serving implements; ii) Inconsistent hand-washing practices; iii) No recording of number of learners eating; iv) Few designated eating areas.

227. Notwithstanding the above, the level of dedication and commitment of staff and volunteers involved on a daily basis needs to be recognised and appreciated. In many respects their leadership and commitment makes up for other shortcomings. In this regard the following observations are made:

228. **The NSFP Operations Manual** – The 2012 NSFP Roadmap required that the programme manual be revised and disseminated to relevant stakeholders, and that it should be further updated once the policy is developed. It was noted that the existing manual dated back to 1996 and was therefore outdated and did not reflect adjustments and changes that had been made to the programme. According to the TA progress reports, an exercise to update the manual was carried out in 2013 with the support of WFP and provisions were made for its distribution.

229. Through the team's consultations with school level stakeholders, it however emerged that very few people possess a copy of the NSFP operations manual, let alone know of its existence. Similar responses were received among regional level stakeholders. In fact, the ET was unable to obtain a copy of the manual either at school, regional or the national level. It remains unclear to the team why this situation should be so as no clear explanation could be provided. By implication, most NSFP operators are having to work without ready access to basic guidance. Whilst a large number of stakeholders have participated in NSFP training and/ or participate in the annual NSFP workshop, there has been a high turn-over of staff and/ or reassignment of staff with the consequence that many current staff have not necessarily received formal training and orientation on the NSFP. It is also the case that information obtained or shared at national or regional workshops/ events may not necessarily filter down to the frontline programme operators.

230. **Leadership and Participation** – The team was impressed with the high level of commitment and "can do" attitude of most of the NSFP focal persons they met and of the initiative they would take to overcome challenges⁸². What came through most clearly was the significance of local leadership and readiness to collaborate towards ensuring effective delivery. Put simply, where NSFP focal persons enjoy the support of their Principals and Board Members, as well as fellow teachers, things will happen, and solutions to problems will be found. Conversely, where the NSFP focal person enjoys little support, or experience indifference or even resistance from seniors, it becomes far more difficult to overcome challenges. The experience of one NSFP focal person who had moved from one school to another comparing and contrasting her experiences in the two schools was instructive in this regard.

231. The team also had an opportunity to engage parent members of one school Board and was impressed with the intimate knowledge and understanding the Board vice-chairperson had of school feeding issues and the readiness to find solutions to on-going challenges. Noteworthy is the fact that three quarters of schools surveyed confirmed that they have established a School Feeding Committee. In another school, the Principal had taken it on to herself to explore sponsorship opportunities and in so doing had been able to mobilise over NAD 90,000 from the private sector for the construction of a combined store room and kitchen.

232. The ET's regional visits to 11 schools revealed a variety of strategies to mobilise resources to help overcome challenges. These include: i) drawing resources from the UPE grant; ii) mobilising financial resources from the community; iii) obtaining sponsorships from private and corporate entities; iv) mobilising in-kind contributions and promoting local community initiatives and v) utilising the proceeds of sales of produce from school gardens. Further details are available in annex 11.

233. **Community Participation** – Mobilising community participation in support of the NSFP is generally reported to be challenging, although over two-thirds of principals indicated that the majority of communities are willing to lend support. According to the survey, the three main forms of contribution in order of importance are i) working as cooks (72.7%); ii) providing fuel (51.5%) and providing finance (45.5%). Providing food was only indicated in 10% of cases.

⁸² The survey confirmed that teachers (focal person) play the lead role in day to day management of the programme. The main roles identified by principals were i) supervising serving of meals (68.1%), providing overall oversight of the programme (51.4%), Store keeping (40.6%) and records management (41.3%).

234. Challenges are certainly encountered with respect to collection of firewood, or raising funds to meet incidental costs for purchasing non-food items (NFIs) or for improving school feeding infrastructure. Community members are willing to work as cooks but believe they should be formally recruited and compensated monetarily as discussed elsewhere. Despite earlier intentions to remunerate cooks (as reported in TA reports), the Government has determined that the payment of cooks is not affordable.
235. The reasons for low levels of community participation are multi-fold including: i) poverty and lack of means to contribute cash; ii) competing demands on the time of community members, including fetching water, tending to livestock and fields, taking care of dependents, ill-health; iii) belief that the Government should provide, or alternatively compensate them for their level of effort; iv) lack of understanding and appreciation of the potential contribution they could make as community members.
236. Programme success depends critically on the effectiveness of arrangements at the school level to store, prepare and serve school meals in a consistent, appetising and hygienic manner. Effectiveness at school level depends on a combination of local school leadership and initiative, community engagement and access to finance. There is substantial contextual variation in the availability of these attributes. Equally important is adequate supervision and guidance, as well as periodic training from regional and national levels. In this regard, the availability of standard operating procedures in the form of the school feeding manual is of paramount importance. It is therefore of concern to find that the manual is scarcely available.

2.5.2.4. Conclusions

237. This chapter has reviewed the NSFP delivery system from three dimensions; procurement/ supply chain; M&E and MIS; and school level food storage, preparation and serving. These represent the core capabilities that the NSFP delivery system requires in order to deliver on its mandate. The assessment made, which builds on the record of performance presented under EQ 2.1, identifies a number of challenges or bottlenecks in the delivery system impacting on the quality of service delivery. Any improvements at the level of results, especially at the output level, require that attention is paid to resolving weaknesses in the delivery system. Whilst it is important to acknowledge the important progress that has been made toward improving systems, it is of concern that some of the weaknesses in the core delivery systems persist.

2.6. Evaluation Criteria 6: Learning

238. There are four evaluation questions that fall under evaluation criteria 6 on Learning. However, as agreed during inception, evaluation question 6.3. is addressed as part of evaluation question 2.3. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the remaining three evaluation questions as listed below:

- How did implementation of the NSFP and other related actions affect the context of gender inequality in Namibia?
- What are the key challenges and gaps experienced in implementing the activities identified in the 5-year road map, the NSFP M&E Plan, and the Technical Assistance agreements between WFP and MoEAC?
- To what extent were good practices used when facilitating knowledge sharing and improving evidence-based programme design?

2.6.1. How did implementation of the NSFP and other related actions affect the context of gender inequality in Namibia [EQ 6.1.]?

239. This evaluation question is answered at two levels – first, in terms of effects on learners and second, in terms of effects on the wider community.

2.6.1.1. Effects on Learners

240. As earlier reported, school feeding benefits the boy and girl learner equally and that the NSFP has the potential to increase girls' educational attainment and gender parity within schools. The fact that the school feeding meal is served at the school, every school day and is fully available to both boys and girls, enables, by their own admission, their attendance in school and in some cases, their very survival. One girl in Grade 4 in a school in Kavango West stated that "the school food is helpful because there is no food at home".
241. However, while near-equal gender enrolment ratios were attained in most years, the evaluation found that, neither the MEP nor the Roadmap provided a clear analysis of, or strategy to address gender-related constraints underlying the NSFP, which are embedded in the differentiated experiences and needs of girl and boy learners; particularly those vulnerable children who are at risk of dropping out. A number of dimensions are highlighted below.

242. **Vulnerable groups** – Although provision is made for all children in public primary schools to benefit from the NSFP, the meal is especially beneficial to learners who are orphans or vulnerable⁸³ children in need for economic or social reasons, and are at risk of dropping out of school.
243. In the household survey, 55% of households reported having one or more OVCs present in the home who are of school going age. The focus of the NSFP has been to provide food to a general category of OVC in the school context. Schools are required to maintain continuous individual OVC registers for each orphan or vulnerable child that is registered as such with the MGEWCW (to receive social grant) and to submit an annual summarised OVC register to the EMIS. However, not all vulnerable children within the school setting, as identified by Namibia's National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children⁸⁴ are recorded on an OVC register. The ET noted from the discussions held, the close contact between the schools' Life Skills teachers (mostly) who are well placed to identify and link vulnerable children to appropriate services of the MGEWCW and MOHSS.
244. Data analysis tools did not specify OVC subcategories. For the purposes of this argument, it is important to note the diversity of OVCs. Observing this diversity allows for recognising OVCs who have particular needs and experience unique challenges. A gender or vulnerability assessment of OVCs including, educationally marginalised children would require the NSFP to provide targeted interventions that mitigate the particular vulnerabilities experienced by children in the various categories.
245. **Learner Pregnancy** - In the course of the evaluation, concerns were raised regarding the unique vulnerability of the pregnant girl child. Pregnancy was cited as a reason for dropping out amongst 15.3% of girls in the households surveyed. Additionally, the evaluation results reveal that 3.8% of primary school going children in household's surveyed were not currently enrolled in school due to pregnancy.
246. The ET notes that all reasons cited for dropping out are compelling for each child and family who experience them. The team is highlighting learner pregnancy because i) it remains an ongoing gender equality challenge in Namibia⁸⁵ that negatively impacts the MEP outcomes related to access, attendance, promotion: and food security and ii) it reflects the unique vulnerabilities faced by the girl child and iii) it places girls at further risk of missing out on educational attainment if not addressed.
247. Discussions around the nutritional needs of pregnant learners did not yield much from the FDGs with indications of defensiveness from some respondents fearing that the policy on Learner Pregnancy in Namibia may inadvertently promote learner pregnancy. However, the policy⁸⁶ emphasises prevention and respects the constitutional right to education by supporting and encouraging learner-mothers (and learner-fathers) to complete their education, as well as providing measures to encourage them to be responsible parents. This objective is congruent with the objectives of the NSFP education outcomes of retention, attendance and promotion.
248. Discussions with MoHSS reaffirmed that the mother and child should be kept together for as long as possible (promoting 1st 1000 days) and suggested that the school, through the NSFP, could provide a take-home ration for the mother in order to boost her nutritional status.
249. Also highlighted in FDGs, was the importance of noting and carefully responding to the unique vulnerability of especially girl children from resource poor households. Such girls it was noted are vulnerable to harmful coping strategies (such as sex work, cash for books) in times of community shock and household stress brought about by compelling poverty situations and exacerbating circumstances such as the current drought in Namibia.
250. **Availability of sanitation facilities can create vulnerability for girls** – Lack of sanitation facilities for menstrual hygiene management creates vulnerability for girls or influences retention of girls in school. The MoEAC 2013 WASH assessment report indicates that nationally, one in ten schools (10%) have no toilets and their pupils and teachers had to make use of the bush. The report further states that only around one in twenty schools offer hygiene facilities for girls during menstruation. A further concern is the fact that some

⁸³ Three policy options advocate for the care and protection of vulnerable children; namely, the National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2004) , Namibia's National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children (2000) and the Education Sector Policy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2008)

⁸⁴ Namibia's National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children (2000) identified thirteen groups of children most likely to be unable to access schools within the country. They are: Children of farm workers, Khoisan Children from remote rural areas, Children living on the street, Ovahimba Children from remote rural areas, Working children, Children in resettlement camps, Children in informal settlements, Children in refugee camps, Children with special educational needs, Over-age children, Children in conflict with the law, Teenage mothers, and Orphans

⁸⁵ 46,000 female learners dropped out of school due to pregnancy in 2013, 39 percent of them girls under 15 years old

⁸⁶ School Policy on Learner Pregnancy in Namibia: Summary of Background Information, Windhoek: Legal Assistance Centre, 2008 at 2 (available at <www.lac.org.na/projects/grap/Pdf/learnerpregnancysummary.pdf>

The Education Sector Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy 112 (2009)

schools do not segregate the boys and girls toilets and that according to the report, 28% of girls nationally, have to use the same toilet facilities as the boys⁸⁷.

251. Whilst 93.5% of schools surveyed confirmed availability of toilet facilities for all learners, 22% of schools in the evaluation survey reported not having separate toilet blocks for boys and girls. Also, 6.5% of schools reported not having toilet facilities at all. In these schools, children must use the environment outside of the school premises.
252. This places all children at risk, but produces particular risk of food insecurity and vulnerability if they are not able to attend school to eat due to a lack of appropriate or private sanitation facilities. If they are able to make it to school and also participate in the NSFP, it is important that before they eat, including as part of their basic menstrual hygiene management process, they have access to soap and water for washing their hands or their body as required, as well as having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials.
253. This also requires that girls use clean sanitary products, which should be changed in privacy as often as necessary to preserve the dignity of girls. Many girls drop out of school at this stage because schools lack the facilities to manage their menstruation appropriately. This cannot be substantiated by the survey results but the qualitative interviews verified this anecdotally. Not only do sanitation facilities support menstruating girls but they also provide privacy and protection. Girls feel unsafe in using toilets if there is a lack of privacy and security (often provided through separate cubicles). Gender inequality, discriminatory social norms, poverty and lack of basic services often cause girls' and women's menstrual health and hygiene needs to go unmet. Adolescent girls may face stigma, harassment and social exclusion during menstruation.
254. **Risk of stigma possibly stronger with regards to Grade 6-7 boy learner who are at a higher risk of vulnerability** – There are many examples in all regions visited by the ET, of boys abstaining from eating as they become older. Their notions of masculinity held prevent them from eating because as they say, "showing you are hungry (when you are an older boy) is [associated with] weakness", and weakness is not associated with a viable masculinity amongst the boys in all the schools visited.
255. All the FGDs held with children highlighted that stigma was a difficult issue for them. Some proposed a variety of creative activities⁸⁸ to address stigma including: i) providing feedback channels to air their concerns; ii) having increased access to their teachers' who should better acknowledge and support the children to address the bullying that they experience at school in the context of school feeding; and iii) promoting school-wide creative activities to popularise the need for and benefits of school feeding. They were certain that this would alleviate stigma and the bullying associated with it at school⁸⁹.
256. In summary, while achievements in outcomes (enrolment, retention, attendance, promotion) highlight the value of the NSFP to education and other national objectives for child development and poverty reduction, a focus on these outcomes alone obscured gendered impacts related to vulnerability and learner pregnancy, the availability of proper sanitation and hygiene facilities to girls, and the impact of stigma on the boy learner.

2.6.1.2. Findings relating to the Community

257. The NSFP enjoys a fair degree of community contribution. This is evidenced by the provision of resources such as firewood, water, cleaning, volunteer cooking services, construction of shelters, donations or financial contributions, amongst others. The evaluation noted that 27% of respondents from households surveyed have been supporting the NSFP for more than 5 years or in some form in the past.
258. While the contribution of the community is generally positive, the ET made some noteworthy observations of the gender-related context (gender roles, gender relations, community norms and beliefs which influence women's or men's participation) underlying the NSFP in the community participation arena. These are highlighted below:

⁸⁷ The onset of menstruation coincides with new opportunities – and vulnerabilities – that arise during adolescence. Menstrual health and hygiene interventions can be an entry point for other gender-transformative programmes during this period, like sexual and reproductive health education and life skills development. By strengthening self-efficacy and negotiating ability, MHH programmes can help girls build the skills to overcome obstacles to their health, freedom and development, such as gender-based violence, child marriage and school dropout. Investments in adolescent girls' well-being yield triple dividends: for those girls, for the women they will become, and for the next generation

⁸⁸ FGD with children: "We need to gather together... the teachers and the children and have an open discussion about our experiences of the food, so we can share what we think and feel. We can have a suggestion box for those of us who don't want to share publicly. The LRC can also take our suggestions forward to the principal. We can make a poster to share information about the benefits of the food and the advantages of taking it such as increased focus, as well as that you can go and receive it if you aren't able to bring food to school. For example if you do not want to eat the food you brought from home or if you forgot your food at home. This will encourage more children to eat it and reduce stigma" – Children in Ohangwena

⁸⁹ Noteworthy here is that the TA report of 2016 notes that during the consultative process leading to the design of the anti-stigma campaign strategy, one of the schools reported that the entire primary 7 shunned from participating in school feeding.

259. Men are generally absent from NSFP except to provide "labour" sometimes. The survey found that just 13.5% of cooks were male. Most male engagement, it was observed in the FGD, was limited to fetching firewood on some occasions and supporting the building of shelters.
260. In Onanke (Oshikoto region) for example, men stated that they do not want to be seen to be cooking in the makeshift school feeding kitchens (which mimic traditional ones) because it would not be culturally appropriate to do so, according to them. They however requested to engage in culturally appropriate activities such as manual labour (construction of facilities).
261. While making the observation that men are largely missing as cooks, a comment made in one of the KIIs was that males cooking is not culturally acceptable. Interestingly, it was added that men would likely become interested in cooking if kitchens were modernised or of a professional standard, including being remunerated with monetary payment, as it was believed that men were unlikely to work voluntarily. This view, although valuable on one hand, to inform future programming, unfortunately also reflects prevailing attitudes of (lower) value placed on women's contributions.
262. **Re-enforcement of gender roles and stereotypes** – Questions directed to the focus groups regarding their views on gender dynamics revealed little in terms of deeper opinions about traditional roles or expectations, except that in some areas respondents cited culture as the reason for men not volunteering as cooks.
263. The voluntary involvement of women as cooks appeared to be accepted as the norm at all levels (school, community, regional and national). Some respondents did not question such voluntary contributions. In fact, women's choice to cook was viewed as a natural extension of the traditional roles ascribed to them as caretakers. This could explain why women are readily available to cook in the variety of kitchens observed in the schools.
264. Other respondents saw this as an unfortunate reinforcing of stereotypes about women and men, perpetuating traditional roles, and preventing the participation of men and women in roles that would otherwise serve to transform gender roles and dynamics. It would also be an opportunity for girls and boys to challenge notions of masculinity and femininity by observing the changes directly at the school level.
265. All the female cooks (99% of volunteers participating) spoken to in the FGDs felt that they did not have a choice and would continue to contribute for the sake of their children and their own livelihood at the household level. They felt the value of the NSFP for their children's survival and participation in school. One woman said: "I am proud and happy to support the children. I am doing it for the children. If I do not volunteer, then my children go hungry at home. I need the bag of maize". Many rely solely on this maize blend to survive.
266. There appears to exist a reinforcement of the conditioning of women to identify with the domestic sphere while men are trained in skills and encouraged to take on roles involved in paid work. Training women cooks in the NSFP context may therefore support the goal of women's empowerment.
267. **Opportunity cost for women providing free labour** – The ET further noted that women did not seem to be overly concerned that they may be disproportionately oversubscribed in the NSFP community participation space as voluntary cooks. The cooks come from poor communities and/ food insecure households. Hence, their primary concerns centred on the need to receive food for their children, as well as the bag they take home for their services rendered.
268. All cooks in the NSFP indicated their wish to be remunerated in monetary terms as opposed to, or in some cases, in addition to, the bags of maize meal received. The cost of a bag of maize varied slightly depending on the location but it was around N175 (USD 11.80)⁹⁰. One respondent's argument against women being given monetary compensation was that the women made an informed choice to participate and thus technically agree to 'earn' a bag of maize meal. They made a supposedly rational choice from the onset that their role will be voluntary, meaning, without financial remuneration. All of the women interviewed argued that they spend anywhere from 6 to 8 hours a day in contributions to the NSFP, which includes collecting firewood, fetching water, preparing and serving the food and cleaning up afterwards. They do this in addition to their household and other responsibilities. Since the women interviewed give substantial unpaid time to productive activities such as cooking, cleaning and caring on the NSFP, the opportunity-cost approach values their time devoted to service on the NSFP at the wage rate that a cook could have earned on the labour market. The underlying assumption is that the volunteer cook has foregone some earnings for the volunteering activity. Some suggestions given in the KIIs include looking at the government minimum wage wage for comparable services to estimate what a reasonable compensation might be for cooks, as the cost of a bag of maize may not be adequate remuneration.
269. It becomes clear that participating in the NSFP places additional burdens on the female cooks, who attested that they already experience poverty-related difficulties at home that are compounded by having limited

⁹⁰ Current prices at time of writing the report based on sample of costs obtained in Oshikoto and Nkurenkuru
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employment opportunities due to low levels of educational attainment. Survey results indicate that just 3% of respondents have a tertiary qualification, with only 24% progressing beyond the primary level and almost a third (32.5%) having received no education / not completed primary.

270. Despite a notable increase in the number of women involved in labour force participation worldwide including in Namibia, women still have fewer job opportunities than men do, and are often found in lower paid or volunteering roles and tend to be oversubscribed in the unemployed, vulnerable, elementary, informal and seasonal employment categories. Individuals in these categories are likely to lack formal work arrangements, benefits or access to social protection. They are also more likely to be affected by economic cycles, thus making their employment relatively precarious.
271. **Domestic level mistrust over use of time and access to money** - Unanticipated effects include women being threatened with violence at home if they do not bring home the bag of maize blend on a weekly basis. Some only receive the bag at the end of the month as opposed to every week that they are committed to cooking. Issues of suspicion at the household level can arise regarding where the women go for so long if they come home with no money or maize bag.
272. In summary, community participation is generally positive, with high involvement and contributions to the NSFP. Observations have been made with respect to gender roles, gender relations, community norms and beliefs which influence women's or men's participation in the NSFP. The ET found a general absence of men in the NSFP, a re-enforcement of gender roles and stereotypes, disproportionately impacting on women including the negative opportunity cost for women providing free labour, and instances of domestic level mistrust over women's use of time and access to money.

2.6.2. What are the key challenges and gaps experienced in implementing the activities identified in the 5-year road map, the NSFP M&E Plan, and the Technical Assistance agreements between WFP and MoEAC [EQ 6.2.]?

273. Key challenges and gaps associated with the 5 year road map, the NSFP MEP and the TA agreements have been identified in responses to various other evaluation questions. Therefore, the opportunity is taken here to summarise those that would appear to be most pertinent and which could inform the way forward. Attention is focused on the provisions of the Road Map because these include aspects related to the MEP and also because the Road Map has served as the main tool for guiding the TA agreements.
274. A summary of the provisions of the Road Map is contained in annex 13. The road map is divided into a set of 5 standards, based on the World Bank SABER diagnostic tool⁹¹, with an associated set of actions. Each standard is reviewed in turn in terms of gaps and challenges:
275. **Policy, legal framework and budget standard** – Two issues are identified; i) the road map anticipates that a manual would be produced and thereafter updated once the NSF policy is approved. As discussed earlier, the non-availability of the manual has been a source of concern. With the policy now in place, the opportunity exists to revisit and update the manual and ensure its availability at all levels; ii) the road map anticipates that the programme budget expands to accommodate the growth and reach of the programme and that a dedicated regional budget for the programme should be put in place. Our understanding is that the budget has not kept pace and indeed, regions have had to cut back on procurements due to budgets not meeting needs. Regional budgets for the programme are also not fully ring-fenced meaning that budgetary allocations assigned to the programme can be utilised for other education related expenditures such as settling of utility bills or meeting needs of school hostels.
276. **Design standard** – there are 9 provisions under this standard, a number of which have either been partially or not yet addressed: i) 75% of commodities are locally produced and the food basket is diversified – this is not yet the case though both provisions are to be addressed through the HGSF pilots. At the same time it is noted that some schools are operating functional school gardens and others obtain foodstuffs from private benefactors/ sponsors; ii) All schools follow the correct implementation standards and procedures for NSFP – as discussed elsewhere standards vary considerably across schools. Whilst improvements have been made over the evaluation period, achievements fall short of the 100% target that is set in the MEP with regard to school feeding infrastructure, provision of NFIs and remuneration/ training of cooks; iii) timely preparation and distribution of meals – generally when food is available, this standard is being met, though some schools have chosen to vary the time when meals are served. The main constraint to the achievement of this standard is the number of non-feeding days associated with late deliveries of maize blend or absence of cooking fuel or cooks; iv) a more holistic approach including other stakeholders i.e. MOHSS. – this has been partially achieved but as discussed elsewhere, the potential for the programme to do more to work with other sectors and other actors at policy and operational levels has been highlighted; v) Ration should be differentiated according to the needs of the area (i.e. urban vs. rural), non-subsidised community hostels and the needs of

⁹¹ See further: <http://saber.worldbank.org/index.cfm>

the learners. As far as the ET is aware, this provision has not been acted on; vi) All learners will be eligible including pre-primary, primary school children and up to Grade 12 with the primary beneficiaries still being the most vulnerable. De facto the programme has been extended to include ECD learners whose schools are in close proximity to a participating primary school and to grade 8-10 learners in Combined schools; vii) Specific, measurable, achievable, reliable and timely objectives of NSFP are clearly defined. Generally this is the case, however, as pointed out in our analysis of programme results, tools to measure indicators associated with nutritional and dietary status have not been put in place. It is also noted that programme outcome indicators are those for educational performance in general and therefore do not allow for determination of impact beyond the level of contribution.

277. **Programme Implementation Standard** – There are 8 provisions under this standard, all of which relate to issues that have been discussed under the sustainability criteria and the associated evaluation questions (EQ 5.1. and 5.2.). Thus this standard relates directly to challenges of delivery capacity. Some progress has been made across most of the provisions but represents very much a work in progress. The standard thus calls for functioning delivery systems related to supply chain management, including proposal to decentralise management of the distribution component to the regional level, management information systems and school level delivery. It also calls for improved food management and quality assurance systems. All these areas demand further attention in order to ensure that a full capability is in place that can deliver to standard.
278. **Institutional Capacity and Coordination Standard** – There are 8 provisions under this standard. Most continue to focus attention on dimensions of capacity raised under the previous standard but also expand to include issues of collaboration and coordination. Gaps and challenges associated with these various provisions have already been discussed throughout this report and therefore care is taken not to repeat what has already been said. A few points are however highlighted. With respect to coordination, there are three provisions calling for stronger engagement at national and regional level and between government and non-state actors. The team has commented on the mixed picture that currently exists and the extra efforts that need to be made to build stronger relationships with other actors and initiatives. With respect to establishing a central unit to coordinate the programme and to the development of skills and competencies of all staff associated with programme implementation, the team has discussed extensively achievements and on-going challenges particularly with respect to attraction and retention of staff and difficulties of sustaining institutional memory. With respect to monitoring information occurring on a timely basis, the ET has raised concerns regarding the current functionality of NASIS including the team's own experience in drawing credible data from the system.
279. **Community Participation Standard** – There are just three provisions associated with this standard. These call for a high level of community participation and contribution and strong level of participation of the school Board in programme management. The view of the team is that overall this standard is being achieved but to different levels of depth and impact across the many schools involved in the programme. Community participation is a process that demands on-going attention and nurturing and cannot be taken for granted. With new staff deployed and changing membership of the board, there is need to continuously review and support school/ community level structures, as has been discussed elsewhere. Leadership is in particular a critical attribute that needs to be reinforced to ensure that local joint action between schools and communities continues to support the realisation of programme objectives.
280. This rapid stock-take of progress against the road map and remaining gaps/ challenges confirms the utility of the road map as a tool to guide further strengthening of the system responsible for guiding and implementing the NSFP. The updates conducted in 2014 and again 2016 have helped to keep the road map current and relevant providing a reference for MoEAC and WFP to routinely review where efforts have made impact and where additional effort is required. It would therefore make sense for the road map to undergo a further updating on the basis of this evaluation so that it can continue to guide the delivery of support going forward. What is surprisingly absent from the road map is any reference to gender. That absence has been discussed in the last section and recommendations are made to ensure gender is adequately mainstreamed into future NSFP operations, including into the road map.

2.6.3. To what extent were good practices used when facilitating knowledge sharing and improving evidence-based programme design [EQ. 6.4.]?

281. The ET did not find it easy to respond to this evaluation question. For instance, the concept of good practice is not defined either in relation to the facilitation of knowledge sharing or in relation to evidence-based programme design. The following considerations are nevertheless presented. These either reconfirm or build on observations and findings already presented in other parts of this report. Moreover the Inception design team concluded that it would be difficult to obtain evidence in relation to this question as the evidence base is weak. This proved to be the case.
282. **Facilitation of Knowledge Sharing** – As has been discussed under EQ 2.3., a variety of methods were used to promote learning and knowledge sharing. These included training events and workshops including building a training of trainers capability, study/ benchmarking tours to other countries, south-south learning,

public promotional events and campaigns, mentorship and on-the-job learning through advisory support, and production of a television documentary and associated media events.

283. All these actions have the potential to contribute towards learning and knowledge sharing. The extent to which good practices were applied is however difficult to discern without a more granular examination of the way in which specific interventions were planned and executed. This was not possible within the timeframe of this evaluation. From a broader perspective, one can applaud the use of different approaches which go beyond the standard delivery of classroom-based learning or recruitment of external experts to deliver discrete products.
284. Good practice would require that adequate diagnosis was carried out to identify the knowledge requirements to be addressed among different stakeholder groups, and therefore to identify appropriate tools to address the knowledge gap or knowledge requirement. Good practice would also require that appropriate recruitment/procurement procedures were followed including elaboration of clear terms of reference. Good practice would further require that adequate supervision and quality assurance measures were in place to accompany implementation of the measure and finally that appropriate assessment of results and follow-through were conducted.
285. Equally important is ensuring appropriate sequencing and complementarity between knowledge sharing activities. Timing plays an important role here as does the selection of appropriate participants to benefit from the action. Therefore, a theory of change that explains how interventions are expected to influence the acquisition of knowledge and its translation into effective practices is recommended. Lastly a further indicator of good practice is the extent to which the identification of need and design of interventions was done in a participatory manner so that the final product/ event was equally owned by all concerned.
286. The evaluation team was not able to establish the extent to which such good practices were systematically followed. However, the evaluation has confirmed the overall relevance of the support provided through WFP, the overall satisfaction of MoEAC with respect to the support provided and the generally high level of effectiveness. The team, however, recommends that going forward, WFP reviews the robustness of the way in which it plans its capacity development support, ensuring that it is underpinned by an effective capacity diagnostic and accompanied by an explicit intervention logic and monitoring framework. It is also suggested that a bi-annual or annual review process is put in place to allow MoEAC and WFP to reflect on progress in the domain of knowledge sharing together with other aspects of capacity strengthening support.
287. **Improving Evidence-based Programme Design** – The ET has on various occasions in this report noted the important role that diagnostic work conducted in 2012 and the ensuing roadmap (including its 2014 and 2016) updates have played in guiding efforts to improve NSFP design (and implementation). This may be considered an example of good practice. The roadmap has continued to provide a helpful metric for reviewing progress over the evaluation period.
288. The establishment of NASIS is another example of good practice in terms of ensuring that the NSFP is equipped with a management information system that can support learning and decision-making that should feed a process of continuous improvement. NASIS moreover feeds the NSFP MEP with the data upon which progress in programme delivery can be gauged. The MEP is very well set out providing on the whole clearly defined output and outcome indicators, and clearly presented implementation arrangements. Together NASIS and MEP should facilitate a culture of results-based management. The team has however identified a number of weaknesses in the current system that undermine the effective operations of NASIS. Moreover, tools to support the tracking of indicators associated with nutritional and related dietary impacts are not yet in place. There is also the question as to whether alternative indicators at outcome level could be introduced that can better gauge the specific contributions of the NSFP to educational outcomes.
289. Lastly, the ET notes the use of WFP's School Feeding Cost Assessment tool for guiding the analysis of costs associated with the operations of the programme. A baseline conducted in 2014 provided a first reference for comparing costs and tracking changes over time. The ET has drawn on the Tool to conduct a follow up rapid assessment as reported earlier on in this report. The ET was impressed with the tool and considers its use in the context of the NSFP as an example of good practice that can contribute to evidence-based programme design.

2.7. Evaluation Criteria 7: Benchmarks for Design Improvements and Home Grown School Feeding

290. This chapter addresses a single evaluation question associated with Evaluation Criteria 7:

- With the envisaged expansion to include a home-grown school feeding component that links school feeding to smallholder farmers and enterprises, what should be the key design considerations given the lessons and experience with NSFP so far?

2.7.1. With the envisaged expansion to include a home-grown school feeding component that links school feeding to smallholder farmers and enterprises, what should be the key design considerations given the lessons and experience with NSFP so far [EQ 7.1.]?

2.7.1.1. Introduction and Context

291. The Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) approach was identified in the 2012 NSFP Road Map (Design Standards 5, 6, and 7), and prompted a number of feasibility/ exploratory studies. HGSF also features prominently in the just approved National School Feeding Policy, 2019 (under Pillar 2: "Enhanced Health & Nutrition", strategy 1: "Ensure/ Explore means of diversifying school meals"; and Pillar 3 Support to Smallholder Producers", across all Pillar 3 strategies).

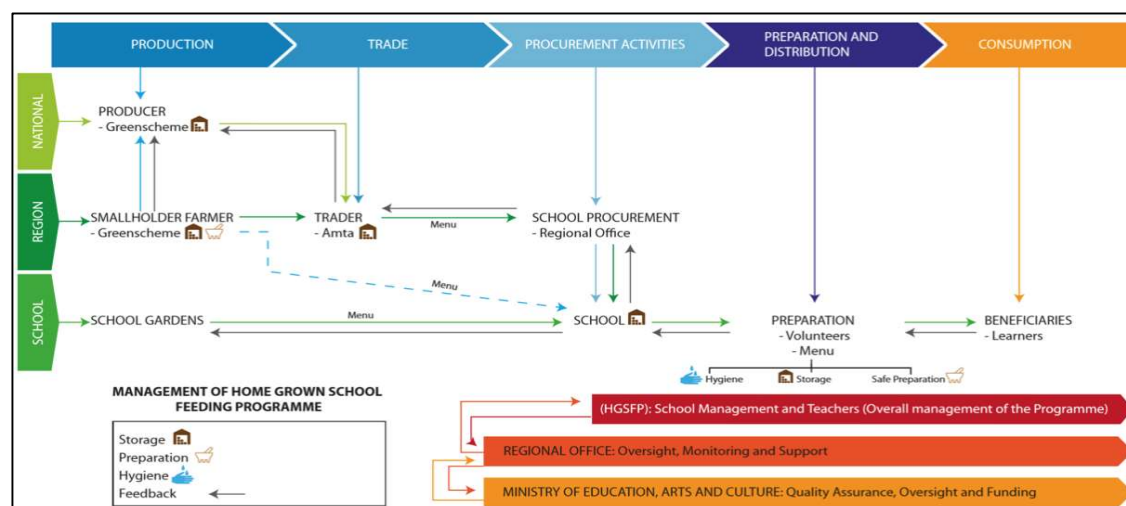
292. Notwithstanding these clear ambitions, implementation has yet to start. The ET was, however, informed that a set of pilot HGSF initiatives will soon be launched in four regions, as part of the current cooperation agreement between WFP and the Government of Namibia.

293. The original evaluation Terms of Reference required the ET to propose a set of indicators to measure progress with the implementation of the HGSF. In consultation with the EM, it was subsequently decided to remove this request and instead to focus on soliciting views and opinions of stakeholders on the feasibility of different options for implementing HGSF⁹². The findings of these consultations would feed into an on-going process led by WFP to consolidate current HGSF design considerations and perspectives and in particular the design of the proposed pilots.

294. The ET, therefore, met with a range of stakeholders with interest and insight on HGSF to test various ideas and options for advancing the agenda. The ET used as its point of reference, the study conducted by the National University of Science and Technology (NUST)⁹³, and in particular a set of scenarios presented in that report which is reproduced below. Figure 19 identifies potential actions related to production, trade, procurement, preparation/ distribution and consumption that may be undertaken by different role players at school, region and national levels.

295. In its consultations, the ET assessed i) levels of interest and awareness on HGSF; ii) issues and contextual considerations surrounding the feasibility of different HGSF modalities; iii) opportunities for advancing and testing HG modalities. These are summarised below. On the basis of these three dimensions, a number of conclusions are drawn and recommendations proposed.

Figure 19: The HGSF Programme Model



2.7.1.2. Interest in and Awareness of HGSF

296. **Widespread interest and awareness of the HGSF agenda** - Interviews with different stakeholders in Windhoek, at regional headquarters as well as at school level confirm a generally high level of awareness of the HGSF concept as well as a high level of support and readiness for its implementation. At the same time, there are many different interpretations as to the scope and intent of HGSF, ranging from promotion of

⁹² The EM had initially intended to prepare indicators but this was not done

⁹³ NUST: Project Document: Home Grown School Feeding Project (Draft 0), 2019

smallholder production and/ or encouraging school gardens, improving nutritional status of learners, addressing issues of monotony, taste and stigma, empowering schools to decide on own menu and to procure locally. There is also a general appreciation that HGSF implementation poses many challenges and that a pragmatic and cautious approach should be followed, adapted to regional contexts.

297. **HGSF is consistent with various Government of Namibia policies, strategies & directives** - The HGSF concept responds to and aligns with numerous Government of Namibia policies, strategies and directives aimed at promoting local agricultural production especially among small-scale producers, addressing drought and food security and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Particular emphasis has been placed on creating a market for local produce by leveraging government institutions' purchasing power. The most noteworthy of these policy orientations are; i) National Development Plan 4 and 5; ii) The Harambee Prosperity Plan 2016-2020'; iii) The Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication; iv) the Namibia Agriculture Policy 2015, and the 2017 Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated and Integrated Agricultural Development Project (HACCIADep, 2017); Public Procurement Act, 2015 (section 73 on reservation of procurement of local goods and services); and v) MoEAC Directive on establishing functional school gardens.

298. **Perspectives of different role players** - The ET held insightful discussions with various role players. These comprised:

- Regional Farmers Union Kavango West - on the production capacity and readiness of subsistence farmers and emerging farmers to respond to demand;
- Agro-Marketing and Trade Agency (AMTA) (HQ and Rundu Hub) on the potential role of AMTA to link producers to consumers and in addressing post-harvest management challenges such as storage, processing and distribution;
- MAWF (HQ and regional) on the various policies, strategies and initiatives of the Ministry aimed at promoting local production, facilitating market access as well as the Ministry's potential role in supporting school level initiatives such as school gardens. Follow up discussions were also held with the FAO;
- Regional Directorates of Education on the management, procurement and coordination implications of supporting a decentralised HGSF approach;
- School Principals, Board members and NSFP focal persons to understand and learn about existing and potential school level initiatives to diversify the school feeding menu and/ or supplement the serving of the maize blend;
- Food Namibia – on the the various challenges and opportunities associated with HGSF and current pilot interventions supported by Food Namibia in Kavango East and West;

299. The team also met with the author of the NUST report⁹⁴ to exchange ideas on what the ET had learned from the field.

2.7.1.3. Feasibility

300. **HGSF introduces complexity, risk & potentially higher cost** - Whilst the HGSF approach is clearly attractive and enjoys support at various levels (as indicated above), it comes with many potential operational challenges. As noted in the NUST report, HGSF introduces higher levels of complexity, risk and potentially cost. Given the current operational challenges to make the current (much simpler) system work smoothly, issues of complexity, risk and cost need to be considered carefully.

301. Complexity and risk arise because of the number of additional role players that would potentially be involved in the production and supply of food commodities as well as the greater number of and specific characteristics of supply chain processes that would be operating in tandem. It also arises because of the diversity of approaches that are likely to work across different regions. As figure 19 above illustrates, there might be procurement taking place at school, regional and national levels, with different arrangements for storage and distribution depending on volumes and types of produce. These in turn would raise different food quality (including nutritional status) hygiene and food safety considerations that would need to be taken into account. This would demand a more sophisticated regulatory/ oversight system with higher levels of coordinated action, and reporting at all levels.

302. Meanwhile potential cost escalations can be foreseen in terms of i) the upfront investment required to test out and put in place new standard operating procedures to support the HGSF approach, ii) additional expenditure required to procure foodstuffs over and above the maize blend, and iii) investment in the strengthening of regional capacities. A fundamental question is whether a diversified menu is expected to replace or supplement the existing supply of maize blend and whether the expectation is for the introduction of HGSF to be budget neutral or not. An equally critical question would be whether the motivation to introduce HGSF is

⁹⁴ Dr. Villett, Director, Graduate Business School, NUST

to reduce the overall costs of the programme, or to deliver food to learners more effectively and with higher nutritional/ dietary value. The pilots in the four regions will be expected to provide answers to these questions amongst others, and even more importantly, discern whether there would be a political appetite for an HGSP model that could be more expensive to deliver than the current NSFP.

303. **HGSP offers an opportunity to empower schools & regional education directorates to improve the quality of school feeding** - Putting these inevitable challenges aside, HGSP offers an opportunity to empower schools and regional governments to take more direct control over school feeding decision-making, choices and management. In so doing, this should create conditions to achieve more relevant and cost effective delivery that is better aligned to regional preferences and opportunities.
304. In this regard, the on-going decentralisation of national functions to regional government will play a critical role in facilitating the process. For example, the extent and pace of financial decentralisation including procurement will be a key determinant of the scope for regional and school level procurement. Decentralisation also offers scope for achieving a higher level of inter-sector coordination and operational collaboration that would be a pre-requisite for rolling out an HGSP approach.
305. For the HGSP to work will demand a high level of collective action among state and non-state actors under the stewardship of strong Ministry and regional government level leadership. Coordination arrangements will be required across concerned government departments (vertically and horizontally), as well as between governmental entities and non-state actors within the private sector and civil society. It would also be contingent on putting in place adequate safeguards and capacity strengthening provisions to support the transfer of authority and responsibility to regional Directorates of Education (including circuits) and schools.
306. **Identified Supply Chain Challenges and Possible Solutions** – A list of potential challenges facing HGSP were identified during the Evaluation Team’s discussion with stakeholders. These relate to production, post-harvest management, market access, procurement and school level management of school feeding. A table detailing specific challenges and associated actual and/ or potential solutions linked to these different dimensions is included in annex 12. Readers seeking more insight are encouraged to refer to the annex.
307. **Gender Considerations** - The promotion of smallholder farmers and their participation in home grown school feeding raises a number of important gender perspectives warranting attention. It was noted that many small producers are women, who face specific barriers to participation, yet in practice, there are comparatively few interventions that take these barriers into consideration, notably in relation to enhancing productive capacities, as well as access to credit and markets in relation to agriculture. It would therefore be important for HGSP to explicitly examine gender issues and proactively integrate gender components into value chain analysis and development strategies in order to increase competitiveness, respond to gender equity goals and ultimately enhance poverty reduction impacts. This might include i) an appreciation of men’s and women’s roles and relationships along different stages of the value chains; ii) promoting and creating equitable participation in interventions; iii) addressing the distinctive needs of women (eg land laws, titles etc also inheritance laws and property rights that restrict women’s ability to access and accumulate wealth). It would also be important to develop gender-sensitive indicators that track changes in women’s participation in the production process (including proportion of women’s proportion of increased sales and yields) as well as their role in farmer’s association membership or leadership.

2.7.1.4. Opportunity for Advancing the HGSP Agenda

308. In this section, a number of opportunities/ solutions to build upon, and which can give impetus to the HGSP agenda, are highlighted, some of which have been mentioned already in the aforementioned table that can be found in annex 12.
309. **Production** - Under the auspices of MAWF, various instruments and initiatives are being promoted aimed at boosting agricultural production especially among smallholders. A review of these initiatives is not, however, within the scope of this evaluation but include:
- Dryland crop production programme;
 - Greenschemes initiatives (which will be evaluated during first and second quarter 2020);
 - Comprehensive conservation agriculture initiative;
 - Horticulture programme (currently under design);
 - Promotion of backyard and schools gardens (“SCORE”)⁹⁵;
310. Under the auspices of MoEAC, a directive requires all schools to develop and sustain functional school gardens (see further box 2 below). Whilst numerous schools have responded to this directive, others have struggled due to lack of water, poor soils, lack of budget to cover input costs and infrastructure such as fencing, and lack of know-how. In some schools, produce is already being used to supplement the maize blend whilst in

⁹⁵ With FAO support. MAWF is promoting climate-wise drip-line and shade netting and climate smart water pumping.

other schools, produce is being sold to the community as a fund raising initiative. Clearer guidance on the relationship between functional school gardens and NSFP would enable schools to better integrate school gardening into the perspective of HGSF. An arrangement with MAWF would moreover ensure that adequate technical and extension support is provided to schools on matters related to water management (using water-wise technologies as per SCORE scheme, or related) and horticulture production, as well as contributing to agriculture curriculum development.

Box 2: Survey Insight - School Gardens

Just under half of all schools (44.9%) have access to land/ facilities that can be used to produce food. Of these, almost all (93.2%) have a garden or green house (3.4%), with only one school mentioning having a dairy farm. However, only half of these facilities have been in use during the past year (48.4%), whilst, just over a third (38.7%) have used the produce to support the NSFP. The main produce used are i) vegetables (87.5%) ii) root crops (25%); and iii) cereal crops (20.8%).

311. **Creating Markets** - Further to the 2018, 2nd land conference, the Ministry of Finance issued a directive requiring all government institutions to procure 75% of produce from local producers. It was not clear to the ET to what extent this directive is being observed and enforced. Producers consider this a critical intervention to give confidence to producers to invest and scale-up production, and in so doing to go some way to break the monopoly of commercial farmers and importers.
312. **Post-Harvest Management** - In principle, AMTA offers realistic and relevant solutions to address the challenges facing small producers to connect up with markets. As such, and given their social mandate as a parastatal, AMTA has a potential role in linking farmers to markets and taking over the burden of post-harvest management responsibility (processing, storage and distribution) from the farmer while being able to provide assurances of consistent, quality assured and predictable supply to schools. Such services obviously come at a cost reflected in the purchase and sale prices offered. There has been concern expressed by small holders that purchase prices are too low and that they are therefore not willing to sell to AMTA so this is an issue that would demand further exploration.
313. AMTA is by no means the only potential intermediary in place though suitable alternatives (traders) are considered to be few. Other actors working on a smaller scale do exist such as Food Namibia (mainly in Kavango East and West) that facilitate market access and improved agricultural practice among small producers through provision of training/ advisory services in entrepreneurship and agricultural innovation, and by facilitating market access through negotiating deals with buyers and assisting with collection and distribution.
314. **Sponsorship** - Various schools have found sponsors in the private sector and civil society that provide supplementary food stuffs. De facto, such schools have found ways to build in additional ingredients into the menu demonstrating the ability of schools to store, prepare and adjust the school feeding menu. In Erongo for example, all schools in Walvis Bay receive tinned fish and bread to supplement the maize blend. In some other schools, cabbage and potatoes have been introduced. Meals prepared with these ingredients are alternated with the standard maize blend so the menu changes during the course of the week.

2.7.1.5. Summary Remark

315. The recently adopted National School Feeding Policy has reconfirmed the commitment of the Government of Namibia to adopt the HGSF approach. As the team's review has found, discussions on HGSF are not new and the idea was already floated at the time the Road Map was launched in 2012. Since then considerable analytical work and consultations have taken place on how best to translate intentions into action on the ground.
316. Overall there is a good level of appreciation of what HGSF entails and of the considerable challenges that will need to be addressed if the HGSF approach is to be viable. The Teams' consultations with stakeholders during the course of the evaluation was able to reaffirm the high level of commitment of stakeholders to try HGSF out, the appreciation of the challenges that will need to be addressed and the opportunities that are already in place to build upon.
317. It is now time to move to action. In this respect, it is noted that MoEAC plans to launch four pilots to test out different modalities in different parts of the country and intends to do so with the assistance (both technical and financial) of the WFP. With specific reference to EQ 7.1. the following design considerations are proposed:
- Clarify the linkages between the different objectives of HGSF: promoting local production; enhancing nutritional status of meals, making meals more appetising;
 - Accommodate regional contextual variations into a generic HGSF approach; balancing regional variation with national standards, reporting and oversight arrangements;

- Take account of the cost implications of adopting the HGSF Approach - Is the Government, its development partners and other actors interested in supporting HGSF ready to absorb additional costs especially at initial stages to achieve the overall objectives noted in bullet 1 above?;
- Take account of current operational bottlenecks, recognising the additional complexity of the HGSF approach in terms of human, organisational and institutional capacity needs/ arrangements at all levels;
- Recognise the need to establish and maintain strong relationships with other state and non-actors to facilitate collective action, resource mobilisation and access to expertise;
- Identify a range of different value-chains, which offer potential to respond to the HG agenda, in the short, medium and longer term, and to the investments required to make these viable;
- Pay specific attention to gender dimensions of women's potential participation in HGSF.

Part 3: Conclusions & Recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

318. NSFP has evolved from a pilot initiative into a nationally funded and executed programme operational in all districts and reaching over 377,000 learners. This is a commendable achievement. MoEAC as custodian of the programme has over the life of the NSFP reached out to WFP for technical support and guidance to assure application of good practice and improved results. Through this collaboration, a strong partnership has been forged. Below, broad conclusions drawn from each of the evaluation questions is presented.

319. In terms of **relevance**, NSFP enjoys broad support and appreciation - its contribution to relieving hunger and promoting access to and retention in primary education seems unquestioned – it remains relevant particularly in a period of recurring drought and economic downturn, responding to core Government of Namibia policy frameworks whilst providing relief to learners and carers/ parents alike. Relevance can be enhanced by forging stronger linkages with complementary government policies and programmes, particularly in the areas of social protection, health, gender and food production. Programme relevance can be further established by strengthening tools for measuring the contribution of the programme to nutritional status of learners. Whilst the NSFP is not able to address all the challenges that relate to access and retention, it could do more to tackle these in partnership with other interventions. The evaluation has allowed for the identification of a number of adjustments with respect to the design and implementation of the NSFP that could enable the programme to better contribute to national development objectives. These include i) enhancing coordination arrangements and opportunities; ii) rolling out the HGSF approach; iii) mainstreaming gender in programme design and implementation and v) strengthening the indicator framework to better capture results and improve the evidence base. Meanwhile, the technical assistance provided by WFP has overall been considered relevant and is highly appreciated by MoEAC. This is because it is grounded in solid diagnostic work, is demand driven, builds on WFP comparative advantage and is supported by a mature working relationship. With respect to alignment with other TA support beyond NSFP, it is noted The NSFP is very much at the nexus between food security and social protection. WFP is strategically placed to work with the Government of Namibia to facilitate linkages between these policy arenas and to ensure they are mutually reinforcing. Whilst this has been happening implicitly to some extent through the TA support provided to MoEAC, as well as to OPM and to MPESW, giving further visibility to these opportunities should be considered so that efforts are not focused only within each policy arena but between them as well.

320. In terms of **effectiveness**, the NSFP has recorded mixed results although overall educational outcomes reflected in the NSFP MEP have clearly improved. Whilst contribution is indicated, it is not necessarily possible to ascribe attribution of these educational outcomes to the programme alone. At the output level, the main cause of concern is the late delivery of maize blend to schools. Late delivery has a knock-on effect on the ability of schools to serve meals on a daily basis according to specified standards. And anecdotal evidence points to increased levels of absenteeism when food is unavailable. With respect to arrangements for storage, preparation and serving of meals, there is clear evidence of improvement over the evaluation period but the very high targets set remain to be achieved. Thus many schools continue to serve food with substandard storage and cooking facilities and few schools have sheltered eating areas. Implements for cooking and eating are typically in short supply. The issue of cooks' remuneration remains a challenge. From the perspective of WFP TA, support has been effective at the output level – in terms of the deliverables accruing from the TA support, but is less clear at the outcome level – in terms of enhancing NSFP performance and resolving some of the operational bottlenecks, the results of which manifest themselves at programme output level. As concluded later, whilst the delivery system is functional, it is performing sub-optimally. Systemic challenges identified already in 2012 have to some degree been overcome and it is clear that WFP TA support has helped MoEAC to address a number of these. Moreover, TA support has contributed to awareness and understanding of the NSFP and to strengthening ownership among a wide range of stakeholders.

321. In terms of **efficiency**, the cost assessment exercise was able to establish the average cost of school feeding borne by MoEAC at all levels to be NAD 326.8 (USD 22) per child per year. The total cost of school feeding including community level contributions and those from other partners (WFP) is NAD 359.1 (USD 24.2) per child per year. These are a significant rise from the costs as projected in 2012, which estimated the unit cost at NAD 282 (USD 18.96), representing a 27.3% increase over a 5-year period. Capital, commodities, transport, staff, and administration remain the most relevant cost categories. Within these, commodities take up about 81% of the total costs leaving only 19% to be shared amongst the other categories. While this might seem desirable, it might also signal an under investment in programme support components such as M&E, or on staffing. The ET considers the overall unit cost per learner to be optimal in its current state. Any reduction below NAD 359 per learner per year could potentially reduce the quality of the programme. This is because the assessment was unable to establish any excesses in expenditure that might be of significant effect on the overall cost of the programme. The team was unable to judge with any degree of certainty whether TA support had a positive effect on programme cost management. Whilst WFP facilitated the conduct of a Cost Analysis in 2014, it is not clear how this information was subsequently acted on. Whilst TA supported the development of NASIS and the MEP, the observed weaknesses in reporting through NASIS, impacting on the reliability and timeliness of data, will have limited the opportunity to use such data to manage costs. For example, data on actual food delivered compared to food ordered, and on actual consumption patterns at the school level is difficult to obtain.

322. In terms of **Impact**, the ET notes that the NSFP results framework as reflected in the MEP only specifies results at output and outcome levels. Accordingly, the evaluation has not been able to conduct a systematic analysis of results at the level of impacts. What is provided is a set of ideas and insights obtained during the course of discussions with stakeholders, which provide pointers on possible longer term impacts of the programme with respect to boys and girls; schools; households and communities. These are generally positive and include i) the expectation that learners will progress to secondary school and eventually equip themselves with know-how and skills to progress to tertiary education and/or to allow them to compete in the labour market. In turn, they will pass on this experience of the value of education to future generations; ii) for households, the prospect of raising an educated and healthy child who will be expected to provide support to other family members, offering a pathway out of poverty and vulnerability, raising the income, health and general well-being of vulnerable households; iii) for schools, it is the prospect of achieving better results across the school population and obtaining a reputation for being a performing and caring institution. Participation is also likely to generate insight and experience into the impacts of poverty and hunger on child development; iv) Stronger performing schools can be expected to have a positive knock-on effect on the surrounding community eliciting pride and confidence in the functioning of their local institution. This might attract higher levels of participation in the School Board thereby strengthening links between the community at large and the school.

323. In terms of **sustainability**, the ET argues that the future sustainability of the NSFP depend on four core factors that relate to NSFP relevance, performance, leadership and capacity. If programme relevance can continue to be demonstrated and broadened, if high levels of performance can be achieved across all output indicators and if capacity and leadership can be nurtured to facilitate actions to secure relevance and performance, then the sustainability of the programme in an evolving political, economic and environmental context is possible.

The ET understands that the MoEAC took over the full management of the NSFP as far back as 1996 when the pilot programme was handed over to the Government. The team has, therefore, approached the question, from the point of view of assessing the current capacity of the NSFP delivery system and the effect this has had on programme performance. Broader public sector management challenges related to the on-going process of decentralisation and human resources management and development that impact on delivery capacity are identified. Whilst challenges associated with the bedding in of new work processes associated with decentralisation are noted, the opportunities that decentralisation can bring in terms of enhanced coordination and accountability are recognised. The attraction and retention of staff with appropriate skills and know-how to fully support programme implementation has remained a challenge. Instability in the workforce characterised by high levels of staff turnover and competing demands for attention of officers can undermine efforts to build sustainable capacity. This impacts on the functioning of some of the core processes associated with programme delivery, particularly supply chain management, the management of information and M&E, and the storage, preparation and serving of meals at schools. Specific challenges facing the functioning of each of these three core processes have also been examined, with some suggestions on how best these might be remedied. It is noteworthy that programme performance has depended heavily on local leadership and commitment at the school level to innovate and seek coping strategies, where core systems have failed to perform optimally.

324. In terms of **learning**, three different facets of the programme were examined. With respect to programme effects on gender, these are examined from the perspective of learners and the community at large. The analysis notes that whilst boys and girls appear to have benefitted equally from the NSFP as reflected in outcome indicators, at a more granular level, there are sub-sets of learners that are at risk of not enjoying the

full benefits. These relate to various aspects of vulnerability including recognising vulnerable learners are not a homogenous group and therefore face different challenges and have different needs. The specific circumstances of pregnant learners, the requirements of the girl child to have access to appropriate menstrual management facilities and the stigma associated with older boys being perceived as poor and the impact this can have on their sense of masculinity are highlighted. With respect to the community at large, the analysis notes that whereas the programme enjoys a fair level of community support, the manner in which responsibilities are assigned tends to reinforce gender roles and stereotypes with women being predominantly involved in food preparation tasks and men, to the extent they are involved at all, being involved in construction and physically demanding tasks. Issues related to the opportunity cost for women providing free labour are also discussed noting that their readiness to cook with little compensation should not obscure the opportunity costs of their doing so and the demands placed on them to attend to other household responsibilities.

325. In terms of identifying remaining gaps and challenges in implementation of the road map, MEP and TA agreements, a rapid stock-take of progress against the road map's five standards was conducted as a proxy for all three reference documents. The stock take acknowledges a good level of progress overall. However there are many areas – too many to list here - that remain a work in progress and a few were action remains to be taken. It is noted that the updates conducted in 2014 and again 2016 have helped to keep the road map current and relevant providing a reference for MoEAC and WFP to routinely review where efforts have made impact and where additional effort is required. What is surprisingly absent however is any substantive discussion of gender. That absence has been discussed elsewhere and recommendations are made to ensure gender is adequately mainstreamed into future NSFP operations, including into the road map.
326. In terms of application of good practices in relation to knowledge sharing and evidence-based programme design, the ET notes that the concept of good practice is not defined. Various methods were indeed used to promote learning and knowledge sharing. The extent to which good practices were applied was however difficult to discern. The evaluation has confirmed the overall relevance of the support provided, the overall satisfaction of MoEAC and the generally high level of effectiveness. Going forward, WFP is encouraged to review the robustness of the way in which it plans its capacity development support, ensuring that it is underpinned by effective capacity diagnostic and accompanied by an explicit intervention logic and monitoring framework. The ET meanwhile has identified various actions that could be considered good practice with respect to improving evidence-based programme design. These include the diagnostic work carried out at the start of evaluation period which led to the road map, the setting-up of NASIS as a management, learning and reporting tool along side the MEP, and the application of WFP's Cost Assessment Tool as a means for better understanding cost parameters.
327. In terms of **benchmarking**, the ET notes that the recently adopted National School Feeding Policy reconfirms Government commitment to adopt the Home Grown School Feeding approach. Discussions on the Home Grown approach are not new with the idea already in discussion at the time the road map was launched in 2012. Overall there is a good level of appreciation of what HGFSF entails and of the considerable challenges that will need to be addressed if the approach is to be viable. The Teams' consultations with stakeholders reaffirmed the high level of commitment of stakeholders to HGFSF, the appreciation of the challenges that need to be addressed and the opportunities that are already in place to build upon. It is noted that MoEAC plans to launch four pilots to test out different modalities in different parts of the country and intends to do so with the support of WFP.

3.2. Recommendations

328. Based on the foregoing analysis and conclusions, a set of 9 recommendations are proposed for consideration by MoEAC and WFP. These do not align directly with each of the evaluation questions but are rather synthetic in nature drawing from across the various findings and insights contained in the responses to each evaluation question. They are written in a way that can be utility-focused particularly from the perspective of stakeholders who are responsible for NSFP delivery and TA support.

1. Recommendation with respect to Evidence Based Decision-Making	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>To ensure programme decision-making is guided by evidence and learning, MoEAC, with support from its development partners should further enhance the MEP and MIS of the NSFP. These enhancements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Developing tools for measuring progress against MEP outcome 5 on nutritional status; ii) Integrating selected NSFP monitoring data into EMIS; iii) Expanding NASIS to include routine cost centre monitoring; iv) Incorporating indicators that recognise women's contribution to programme delivery; 		

v)	Recording the numbers of learners actually receiving a meal, by gender and age/ grade, on a daily basis;		
vi)	Rectifying remaining bottlenecks/ adjustments with respect to NASIS functionality;		
vii)	Developing a MoEAC dissemination strategy to routinely analyse, publish and communicate NASIS data to relevant users.		
1.1.	Develop appropriate tools for measuring progress against MEP outcome 5 on nutritional (and dietary) status, given the important role the programme plays towards enhancing the nutritional status of learners. It should also allow for the programme's contribution to poverty alleviation in general and hunger more specifically, to be registered. As necessary, this is expected to require joint effort with the MOHSS to develop suitable metrics/ methodology, including possibly periodic anthropometric assessments within select schools	MoEAC – Lead MOHSS - Support WFP - Support + UNICEF	By end 2020
1.2.	Integrate selected NSFP monitoring data into EMIS, such as information on the number and percentage of schools in the programme, the number of learners registered in the programme by gender, as well as availability of school feeding infrastructure, in order to support planning and monitoring and to better track the contribution of NSFP to overall educational outcomes.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end 2020
1.3.	Expand NASIS to include routine cost centre monitoring covering critical cost categories such as capital and staff costs and community level contributions that are currently difficult to identify and record;	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end 2020
1.4.	Incorporate quantitative and qualitative indicators that recognise women's contribution to programme delivery at school level and track changes in attitudes and practices over time. This might require joint effort with MGECW, OPM, NSA, NPC.	MoEAC - Lead MGECW, OPM, NSA, NPC – Support WFP - Support	By end 2020
1.5.	Record the numbers of learners actually receiving a meal, by gender and age/ grade, on a daily basis to fully understand levels of demand, planned versus actual levels of consumption, portion sizes etc. This should complement data on quantities and quality of food actually delivered and compared to quantities ordered.	MoEAC – Lead WFP Support	By end 2020
1.6.	Rectify remaining bottlenecks/ adjustments with respect to NASIS functionality (input and output), and communicate to relevant stakeholders a plan of action including timeline for rectifications to be completed. This should include drafting a training plan and back-stopping arrangements to accompany the roll-out and bedding in of the improved NASIS system inclusive of development of an on-line guide and updating of training manual for TOT purposes.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	Within next 6 months
1.7.	Develop a MoEAC dissemination strategy to systematically and routinely analyse, publish and communicate NASIS data to relevant users, including parents of learners. This should include recruitment of a qualified individual to assume overall responsibility for programme NSFP MIS and M&E at MoEAC headquarter level and to serve as technical backstop to the regions.	MoEAC - Lead	Within next 6 months

2. Recommendation with Respect to Guaranteeing Delivery of Fortified Porridge to Participating Schools	Actioned By	Time Frame
To ensure learners receive a meal each and every school day without exception, urgent actions is required to resolve existing supply chain bottlenecks and optimise standard operating procedures. Actions include: i) Conducting a diagnostic study of supply chain bottlenecks with a view to proposing a set of short term remedial actions and longer term solutions; ii) Developing procedures and assigning clear responsibilities to ensure the systematic, timely and routine quality checking of maize blend along the supply chain;		

iii)	Reviewing existing guidelines and preparing a directive on the correct procedures to follow with respect to handling of expired and/ or spoilt maize bags;		
iv)	Expediting the transfer of responsibility for procurement of delivery services to schools, to regions in line with the on-going decentralisation process.		
2.1.	Conduct a detailed diagnostic study of supply chain bottlenecks with a view to proposing a set of short term remedial actions and formulation of longer term solutions that tackle systemic blockages that are responsible for repeated delivery delays.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	Within next 6 months
2.2.	Develop procedures and assign clear responsibilities to ensure the systematic, timely and routine quality checking of maize blend technical specifications (eg: raw material, maize blend, packaging) along the supply chain by appropriate national and regional regulatory authorities.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end 2020
2.3.	Review existing guidelines and prepare a directive for schools on the correct procedures to follow with respect to handling of expired and/ or spoilt maize bags.	MoEAC – Lead MOHSS - Support	By end 2020
2.4.	Expedite the transfer of responsibility for procurement of delivery services to schools, to regional government as soon as possible in line with the on-going decentralisation process. As necessary this will require terminating existing contracts between the Ministry and service providers, which are currently being extended on a termly basis.	MoEAC - Lead	By end of FY 2020-21

3. Recommendation with respect to Sustaining Delivery Capacity	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>To assure the long-term sustainability of the NSFP, action is required to ensure that adequate human resources are mobilized, trained and retained at all levels. This is especially important in light of on-going decentralization to regions, intentions to expand the programme's reach beyond the primary level, and introduction of new modalities such as HGSF. The following actions are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reviewing the minimum staffing requirements to support the implementation of the NSFP at national and regional levels, and carry out a time-bound recruitment drive; ii) Developing a NSFP training module and induction programme available to all new staff joining the programme at all levels; iii) Reviewing and redrafting the Programme Manual, ensuring its distribution to all staff working on NSFP; iv) Exploring ways to motivate NSFP staff through the introduction of appropriate rewards, incentives and sanctions. v) Introducing training on school feeding and health into teacher training curriculum at tertiary institutions. 		
3.1. Review the minimum staffing requirements to support the implementation of the NSFP at national and regional levels, taking account also of workload associated with the envisaged HGSF approach and recommendations for greater outreach and coordination with other role players. Thereafter, to undertake a time-bound recruitment drive to ensure all vacant and budgeted positions are filled with qualified and experienced personnel.	MoEAC - Lead	By end 2020
3.2. Develop a NSFP training module and induction programme for all new staff joining the programme at all levels. This should be built along the lines of the Programme Manual (see further below), and should be made available on-line, or as an app.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end 2021
3.3. Review and redraft the Programme Manual and ensure its availability in both hard and soft copy versions to all staff working on NSFP at national, regional, circuit and school levels.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end 2020
3.4. Explore ways to motivate NSFP staff through the introduction of appropriate rewards, incentives and sanctions. This could include introducing rewards such as prizes to recognise individual or group achievement, whilst using events such as the annual workshop as opportunities for structured learning and sharing of experiences. A simple termly newsletter or flyer highlighting innovative practices and regional	MoEAC - Lead	By end 2021

initatives could be developed whilst the NSFP termly implementation reports could be translated into a user-friendly 2 pager info-graphic. The feasibility of introducing NSFP performance indicators/ KPIs into the performance contracts of staff, who play a critical role in the delivery of the NSFP should also be explored.		
3.5. Introduce training on school feeding and health into teacher training curriculum at tertiary institutions. This will ensure broader knowledge and awareness among teaching staff entering teaching service equipping them to better support objectives of the NSFP and related health and hygiene interventions (eg integrated school health, school-led total sanitation etc.).	MoEAC, UNAM, NUST	By end 2020

4. Recommendations with respect to Non-Food Items related to the Storage, Handling and Preparation of meals at School Level	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>To ensure that the storage, handling and preparation of meals meets expected standards as envisioned in the NSF policy, various actions should be undertaken that ensure schools have the necessary infrastructure and associated non-food items. Actions comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Distributing standard drawings, specifications, and guidelines for the construction/ upgrading of school kitchens, storerooms and handwashing facilities; ii) Including kitchens, kitchen equipment, storerooms and handwashing facilities as part of the basic infrastructure provided to schools in new builds, upgrading or expansions; iii) Issuing a directive and guidance on the availability of UPEG for NSFP NFI purchases; iv) Developing updated guidance and a directive with respect to arrangements for remunerating and/ or training NSFP cooks, in line with provisions of the NSF Policy; v) Exploring feasibility of utilising kitchens and storage facilities attached to school hostels where NSFP schools are located in close proximity. 		
4.1. Distribute standard drawings, specifications, and guidelines, to all regional education directorates, for the construction/ upgrading of school kitchen, storerooms and handwashing facilities. Guidelines should include a number of options ranging from minimum standards that could be implemented through community participation and local builders to higher level specification to be implemented by certified/ registered contractors.	MoEAC - Lead	By end 2021
4.2. Make provisions to Include kitchens, kitchen equipment, storerooms and handwashing facilities as part of the basic infrastructure provided to schools in new builds, upgrading or expansions.	MoEAC - Lead	By end 2021
4.3. Issue a directive and guidance on the availability of UPEG for NSFP NFI purchases.	MoEAC - Lead	In time for start FY 2020-21
4.4. Develop updated guidance and a directive with respect to arrangements for remunerating and/ or training (certification) NSFP cooks, in line with provisions of the NSF Policy and cognisant of current budgetary constraints.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	In time for start FY 2021-22
4.4. Explore the feasibility of utilising kitchens and storage facilities attached to secondary school hostels where NSFP schools are located in close proximity, to avoid having to cook and store school food in sub-standard facilities.	MoEAC	By end of 2020

5. Recommendation with respect to NSFP fulfilling its role as a vector for social transformation, gender equality and community resilience	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>To help realise the NSFPs potential as a vector for social transformation, gender equality and community resilience, various actions are proposed that will enable the programme to work in a more integrated manner with related policy frameworks and interventions. These include:</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Establishing the long recommended national NSFP coordination forum/ committee, or establish an NSFP sub-committee under an appropriate existing forum such as the Integrated School Health task force; ii) Convening an adhoc task force/ working group to explore specific opportunities for collaboration between the NSFP and relevant health, watsan, nutrition, gender and social protection programmes; iii) Drafting and adopting a NSFP Gender Action Plan advocating for gender-transformative results in the NSFP; iv) Aligning the NSF policy with relevant policy provisions relating to educationally marginalised children, to OVCs and the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy; v) Identifying specific activities to promote greater male engagement in school level activities; vi) Establishing strong connections with networks of gender focal points. 		
<p>5.1. Establish the long recommended national NSFP coordination forum/ committee (or establish a NSFP sub-committee under an appropriate existing forum such as the Integrated School Health task force) to facilitate joint actions with ministries, departments and agencies, as well as non-state actors, identified within the policy as having a role to play in NSFP delivery. In the context of decentralisation, it would be equally important to establish coordination structures at the regional level to address policy and operational issues as they arise and to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration and joint action.</p>	<p>MoEAC – Lead WFP Support</p>	<p>By End 2020</p>
<p>5.2. Convene an adhoc task force/ working group to explore specific opportunities for collaboration between the NSFP and relevant programmes that are concerned with social protection (registration and support of OVCs), health (deworming, cook health checks, food inspections), agriculture (school gardens), and water & sanitation (WASH), among others.</p>	<p>MoEAC – Lead WFP Support</p>	<p>By End 2020</p>
<p>5.3. Draft and adopt an NSFP Gender Action Plan with clarifications and indicators advocating for gender-transformative results in the NSFP. A well-informed gender analysis will facilitate this necessary output. Based on the action plan, MoEAC should revise and update the school feeding policy implementation plan to include clear gender equality goals and mainstreaming activities.</p>	<p>MoEAC – Lead WFP Support</p>	<p>By End 2021</p>
<p>5.4. Align the NSF policy with relevant provisions of Namibia’s National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children (2000) and the Education Sector Policy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2008) which advocate for the right of vulnerable children, to education. It should furthermore, align the policy with provisions of the Education Sector Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy, which promotes and allows the learner to stay in school as well as the constitutional right to education.</p>	<p>MoEAC – Lead WFP Support</p>	<p>By End 2021</p>
<p>5.5. Identify specific activities to promote greater male engagement in school level activities. This could include creating spaces for targeted dialogue in the community that involve messaging and community sensitisation about the importance of transforming gender stereotypes, evolving traditional norms and valuing women’s contributions. It is equally important to acknowledge where men indicate willingness to assist and extrapolate as good practice examples.</p>	<p>MoEAC – Lead MGECCW Support</p>	<p>By End 2021</p>
<p>5.6. Establish strong connections with networks of gender focal points, including an ongoing one with MGECCW as the custodian of national gender policy oversight, the coordination and integration of gender in national and decentralised government programmes.</p>	<p>MoEAC – Lead MGECCW Support</p>	<p>By End 2020</p>

6. Recommendation with respect to Programme Cost and Long-Term Financing	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>With ambitions to further scale up the programme to reach more learners, demand higher delivery standards including school feeding infrastructure and broaden the school feeding menu, further analytical work is required to understand current and future costs. The following actions are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Commissioning a comprehensive school level cost assessment to determine the different resource mobilisation strategies used and arrangements made for storing, preparing and serving meals at different schools; ii) Commissioning a comparative analysis of alternative school feeding modalities to inform policy makers as to the costs and benefits of different modalities. 		
<p>6.1. Commission a comprehensive school level cost assessment to determine the different resource mobilisation strategies used and arrangements made for storing, preparing and serving meals at different schools, and distinguish models that work, and those that are less efficient, in order to inform additional investments required at the school level. This will help to address the current lack of data on capital investments for school feeding.</p>	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end of 2021
<p>6.2. Commission a comparative analysis of alternative school feeding modalities to inform policy makers as to the costs and benefits of different modalities. This will help policy makers to understand options ranging from sustaining the current modality (as a model of choice) to adopting alternatives such as HGSP, or Child grants, etc.</p>	WFP – Lead MoEAC - Support	By end of 2021

7. Recommendation with respect to Home Grown School Feeding	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>To facilitate the testing, adoption and implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding as envisioned in the NSF policy, and cognizant of MoEAC intentions to launch a set of HGSP pilots, actions should be taken to support learning and to accompany the scaling up process. These include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Establishing a multi-actor reference/steering group, reflecting the different interests and role players in HGSP; ii) Drafting a clearly defined plan of action cum roadmap to guide the implementation of the pilot activities, cognizant of design parameters proposed in this evaluation; iii) Developing clear guidelines on the use of school gardens to support the NSFSP; iv) Undertaking a mapping of all privately-sponsored school feeding initiatives to learn how sponsored schools are managing the storage, preparation, and quality assurance of a diversified menu; v) Ensuring that gender-sensitive indicators are developed that track changes in women’s participation in the food production storage and distribution processes; vi) developing an agreed conceptual framework of the scope of HGSP. 		
<p>7.1. Establish a multi-actor reference/steering group, reflecting the different interests and role players in HGSP in order to provide expertise, draw lessons and formulate the way forward, including investment cases to support the emerging preferred modalities/ regional approaches;</p>	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By time of launch of pilots
<p>7.2. Draft a clearly defined plan of action cum roadmap to guide the implementation of the pilot activities. This should ensure that all design considerations including those addressed in this report are taken account of;</p>	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	In time for launch of pilots
<p>7.3. Develop clear guidelines on the use of school gardens to support the NSFSP, building on the Ministry directive on establishing functional school gardens;</p>	MoEAC – Lead MAWF - Support	End of 2020

7.4. Undertake a mapping of all privately-sponsored school feeding initiatives to learn how sponsored schools are managing the storage, preparation, and quality assurance of a diversified menu;	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	By end of 2021
7.5. Ensure that gender-sensitive indicators are developed that track changes in women’s participation in the production process (including proportion of women’s proportion of increased sales and yields) as well as their role in farmer’s association membership or leadership.	MoEAC – Lead MGECW – Support	In time for Launch of the pilots
7.6. Develop a working document outlining a conceptual framework of the scope of HGFS that allows stakeholders to have a shared understanding of what HGFS comprises in a Namibian context.	MoEAC – Lead MGECW – Support	In time for launch of pilots

8. Recommendation with respect to Effective Delivery of Technical Assistance for Capacity Development	Actioned By	Time Frame
<p>Given the overall positive contribution that WFP TA has made towards the NSFP, actions should be taken to assure the continued relevance and effectiveness of external support going forward. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Updating the revised Roadmap so that it takes full account of progress made to date, as well as identifying remaining and/ or new tasks/ challenges; ii) Introducing a framework for annual mutual reporting and accountability on effectiveness of the partnership; iii) Focusing future WFP support on strengthening capacities at the sub-national levels; iv) Developing a capacity development strategy for WFP to guide future TA support to the NSFP. 		
8.1. Update the revised Roadmap so that it takes full account of progress made to date, as well as identifying remaining and/ or new tasks/ challenges. The Roadmap should take account of the different capacity needs of the programme at all levels and across different actors so that this may also evolve into being the master plan guiding future capacity strengthening support.	MoEAC – Lead WFP - Support	End of 2020
8.2. Introduce a framework for annual mutual reporting and accountability, given that capacity strengthening depends equally on the joint actions and commitments of the provider of external technical support and the recipient of such support. This will allow both sides to assess each others strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats in the partnership.	MoEAC & WFP - Lead	End of 2020
8.3. Focus future WFP support towards assistance aimed at strengthening capacities at the sub-national levels, especially regional governments, in view of the shift towards decentralisation and promotion of HGFS. In so doing, whilst a more hands-on approach is recommended, it should be clear that the default is capacity strengthening and not capacity substitution.	MoEAC & EFP - Lead	End of 2020
8.4. Develop a capacity development strategy for WFP to guide future TA support to the programme that sets out how sustainable capacity at the human, organisational and institutional levels is to be realised and that clearly distinguishes different forms of capacity strengthening support that can be brought to bear. This would include expanding the capacity strengthening tool box to include more innovative approaches and methods including blended learning techniques, mentorship and change management support.	WFP – Lead MoEAC - Support	End of 2020
<p>9. Recommendation with respect to Promoting NSFP Inclusiveness and benefits for all learners</p> <p>To ensure that the objectives and benefits of school feeding are well understood by all NSFP stakeholders, and that there is strong demand and ownership of school feeding among all learners and schools, actions are required to reinforce understanding as well as to facilitate the voices of participants to be heard. Actions should include:</p>	Actioned By	Time Frame

i) ii)	Developing an advocacy strategy to reinforce the message that NSFP is an inclusive programme that benefits all learners and all schools and is not only targeting the poor; Establishing a school level complaints and grievance system that enables all NSFP stakeholders to feedback concerns as well as to propose ways to improve programme operations.		
9.1.	Develop an advocacy strategy to reinforce the message that NSFP benefits all learners and is not a programme for the poor. This is required to mitigate risks of stigmatisation and non-participation associated with lingering perceptions that the programme is for the poor and vulnerable only. This should be targeted towards different stakeholder groups including parents and community leaders, school staff, public servants and political leaders.	MoEAC - Lead	By end of 2020
9.2.	Establish a school level complaints and grievance system that enables NSFP stakeholders to feedback concerns as well as propose ways to improve programme operations that may be taken up by relevant authorities at school, regional and national levels. This could be stand alone or preferably part of a school-wide system.	MoEAC – Lead WFP in support	By end 2020

[Place, Month and Year, Report number]

– the month, year of completion of ER and Report number will be provided by OEV KM focal point

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