



Evaluation of Indonesia WFP Country Strategic Plan 2017-2020

CONTEXT

Indonesia is a middle-income country with a population of 263 million, exposed to frequent risk of natural disasters. The rapid pace of economic growth has led to increased inequality and geographical disparities in income, food security, education and gender equality.

Despite the improvement in food availability, access to, and utilization of, food remain problematic, with high levels of stunting in children under-fives and an increased prevalence of adults' obesity. The Government of Indonesia has a strong national policy environment for development, social assistance and health, although not all policies have translated into action at the local level.

SUBJECT AND FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

The Indonesia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) Evaluation covers WFP activities implemented from January 2016 to June 2019, assessing both the earlier Indonesia Country Programme (CP) (2016) and the Country Strategic Plan (2017-2020).

The CSP focuses on three strategic outcomes: i) reduced severe food insecurity; ii) improved dietary patterns; and iii) upgraded national logistics capacity.

The total budget for the CSP was USD 13 million, of which 54 percent was funded as of April 2019.

OBJECTIVES AND USERS OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was commissioned by the independent Office of Evaluation to provide evaluative evidence for accountability and learning to inform the design of the next WFP CSP in Indonesia.

It was conducted between June 2019 and May 2020 to assess WFP's strategic positioning and role and the extent to which WFP has made the strategic shift expected by the CSP; WFP's contributions to strategic outcomes; efficiency; and the factors that explain WFP performance.

The main users for this evaluation are the WFP Indonesia Country Office, the Regional Bureau for

Asia and the Pacific, WFP headquarters technical divisions, the Government of Indonesia, and other partners.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

WFP's strategic position, role and specific contribution based on country priorities and people's needs as well as WFP's strengths

The Indonesia CSP is aligned with the relevant national development plan, policies, United Nations Framework, and addresses the needs of vulnerable people within the parameters of a CSP focused on country capacity strengthening (CCS).

While the CSP has evolved adjusting to emerging Government priorities, WFP's influence on national discourse and policy development was limited due to shortcomings in political astuteness and communications skills, influence by approaches used in direct food assistance programming and WFP knowledge management mechanisms.

WFP's recognized coordination and convening ability was not explicitly reflected in the CSP's initial strategic positioning.

Extent and quality of WFP's specific contribution to CSP strategic outcomes

Outputs: VAM products were among the most appreciated accomplishments. The Government considers WFP's work in VAM was relevant and expects its continued strategic engagement.

A planned campaign on nutrition messaging was not implemented due to resource shortfalls.

WFP provided technical support to the national school meals programme (Progas). Despite significant buy-in by schools, national level roll-out was limited.

The cost of diet study in 2017 was appreciated by stakeholders and is a good example of how technical studies can contribute to shaping government policy in social protection.

Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) activities have seen the greatest expansion during the current CSP cycle, the Sulawesi response having marked a positive turning point in WFP's role.

Full and summary reports of the evaluation and the management response are available at <http://www..wfp.org/independent-evaluation>

For more information please contact the Office of Evaluation wfp.evaluation@wfp.org

Strategic outcomes: WFP's impact is unassessable, and potential contributions may vary by activity.

Capacity Strengthening: The greatest contributions of the CSP are in the individual and institutional domains, and in the two CCS pathways of stakeholder programme design, delivery, M&E and institutional effectiveness.

Sustainable Development Goals: WFP contributions are aligned and positive, even if they are not quantifiable. Qualitatively, stakeholders see WFP as contributing more significantly to food security and emergency preparedness.

Gender, protection, and accountability to affected populations: WFP's primary contribution has been in further nuancing and supporting sensitization of these issues in government activities within a CCS approach.

Sustainability: Potential for sustainability is seen in the areas of technical capacity development, systems development and policy framework, and strategic integration, subject to sufficient ownership.

WFP's efficient use of resources in contributing to CSP outputs and strategic outcomes

The evaluation faced challenges in assessing resource efficiency of the CSP. WFP's responsiveness to emergent opportunities was generally well-received but was at times slow. Synchronizing the timing of WFP plans with government's plans was a challenge. This misalignment affected efficiency and exposed WFP to potential reputational risk. CSP budget mechanism allows for relatively good cost flexibility, with two important exceptions: the difficulty of moving budget among the activities and the funding earmarking at the activity level.

The factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the CSP

Use of existing evidence: The CSP was informed by a 2105 strategic review, and other internal and external evidences.

Resource mobilization: Despite extensive efforts by the country office, the anticipated funding from the Government has not yet materialized and the primary donors have drastically reduced their support. To adapt to the funding shortfall, the country office adjusted the direction of programming; eliminated higher level WFP positions; and kept WFP national staff on short-term service contracts.

Partnerships: WFP has built a wide range of relationships with government entities, while there is a tendency to compartmentalize than to seek strategic connections across CSP activities. Senior government officials would expect WFP to play more strategic role in national policy discourse, but there is a limitation due to current predominance of project-based resourcing. Private sector partnerships were successful in the CSP. This capacity strengthening focused

CSP highlights the need for staff at all levels to have the skills to engage in policy discourse and strategic communication, but there is a lack of corporate resources for staff capacity enhancement in this area.

Additional factors for consideration: Multiple parallel strategic planning processes under way, in which WFP must invest its limited staff resources. While it is synchronized with the United Nations framework cycle, the timing of the new CSP design is still out of sync with the development of the next medium-term national development plan and donor strategic plans, which has implications for future funding. WFP should engage deeply in dialogue with government agencies as they develop their frameworks.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The CSP has achieved positive results despite being implemented for only a few years with limited resources and facing implementation challenges. WFP is viewed by external stakeholders, including the Government, as an organization with technical expertise in emergency response, and food security and nutrition data collection and analysis.

The implications of the CSP being focused solely on capacity strengthening had not been fully identified before the CSP was designed. The experience of CSP implementation highlights elements that should be adjusted to maximize the potential of the approach, including staff profiles and capacities, flexible funding, alignment with government systems, the arrangement of agreements, and the reporting system to reflect gains from country capacity strengthening.

A need for the next CSP will be to determine what needs to be changed to facilitate effective national policy discourse.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Make a strategic shift in direction.

Recommendation 2. Develop a systematic and in-depth analysis of its existing network and partnerships.

Recommendation 3. Consider organizational modifications to maximize its potential for policy input engagement.

Recommendation 4. Operationalize lessons learned from the CSP.

Recommendation 5. Pilot proposed adjustments to monitoring and evaluation and reporting systems.

Recommendation 6. Reinforce WFP's potential convening and coordinating roles to inform national capacity strengthening.

Recommendation 7. Identify guidance protocols for securing government funding.