

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE USDA-SUPPORTED LOCAL AND REGIONAL PROCUREMENT PROJECT IN KENYA

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Subject of the Evaluation

The Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Programme (LRP) was implemented by WFP Kenya, in collaboration with the Ministries of Education (MoE), Agriculture and Irrigation (MoA) and Health (MoH). It was conducted from 2017 to 2020 in three arid counties in north-west Kenya: Baringo, Turkana and West Pokot. It was funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The programme supported the implementation of the Government's Home-Grown School Meals Programme (HGSMP) by helping farmers and local traders to produce and commercialize food for school feeding activities.

LRP main activities include (1) assessment of local food systems; (2) capacity building for institutions; (3) capacity strengthening for farmers and traders; (4) elaboration of school meal menus using local and nutritious produce; and (5) procurement of locally produced drought-tolerant crops.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The endline evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Kenya Country Office and follows a baseline assessment conducted in April 2018. This final evaluation assessed the performance and results achieved through the LRP in the three targeted counties, over the project period from September 2017 – March 2020. The evaluation served the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

Methodology

The evaluation was designed to assess the LRP's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

The evaluation used mixed methods and collected both quantitative and qualitative primary data to answer each of the evaluation questions. The evaluation also utilized WFP Kenya's own project monitoring data to feed into USDA's Performance Monitoring Plan.

KEY RESULTS

Relevance

The evaluation team concluded that overall the LRP complemented the HGSMP and aligned well with the government's strategies and WFP's policies. The planned modality of cash-transfers for providing school meals was identified as the preferred option.

Effectiveness

WFP and partners implemented most of the LRP project activities as planned. However, due to the 2017/18 drought, the MoE decided not to transition the LRP schools onto cash-transfers, but to keep them on in-kind assistance until food price reduced. This has had significant effect on the LRP results.

WFP conducted several formal training exercises, in collaboration with government ministries. While the evaluation received positive feedback on all training work, most participants did not have a chance to put the learning into practice due to schools not requiring local procurement as planned.

Nevertheless, the collaborative implementation approach taken by WFP with the government is considered very effective.

Efficiency

The programme portended to improve the timeliness of procurement of school meals commodities by providing schools with cash transfers and enabling them to do local procurement of commodities. However, since the MoE did not provide any cash resources and in-kind resources to LRP schools for Term 3, 2019¹, the target of 90 percent of LRP schools completing procurement and having their food delivered before the start of term was not achieved.

Impact

The MoE's decision to provide in-kind commodities to schools instead of cash-transfers had a significant impact on the programme. The intended objective of improving the effectiveness of assistance was not achieved. The objective of increasing use of various high quality nutritious foods in school meals by using locally produced crops was achieved only in Turkana Country – only because WFP directly procured and delivered the commodities to LRP schools.

The objective of increasing the capacity of suppliers and school meals procurement committees to effectively procure local commodities was partially achieved. Farmer Organizations (FO), traders and school personnel reported attending training and gaining knowledge on HGSMP. However, they were unable to put their learning into practice as no school-based procurement took place.

The LRP activities resulted in several positive outcomes for FOs and traders, including increased awareness of the HGSMP and procurement process. Interviews also identified some negative outcomes, as Farmer Organizations and traders were left with large volumes of commodities after planning to sell stock to the HGSMP schools. Some traders also allowed schools to buy commodities on credit, pending future payment of the cash-transfers, however with uncertain plans for reverting to cash, it is unclear when schools will be able to pay off those debts.

Finally, women have been actively encouraged to participate in all aspects of the programme. This active recruitment was successful, with women making up half the traders sampled.

Sustainability

As a programme designed to support the HGSMP, the LRP was never intended to be a sustainable programme. It is difficult to state if the LRP results are likely to be sustained or not as it will largely depend on the MoE's future plans regarding provision of cash transfers.

The least sustainable aspect of the LRP is likely to be the use of drought tolerant crops in the school menus because of their higher cost.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. Continue to advocate with the MoE leadership on the importance of school feeding.

Recommendation 2. WFP and MoE to develop a position paper on key decisions and evidence that have led to the cash-based modality of HGSMP.

Recommendation 3. WFP and the MoE to consider ways to support improvements in the MoE's in-kind procurement and delivery system.

Recommendation 4. WFP to continue to work with county/sub-county governments to support farmers, FOs and market system improvement in general.

Recommendation 5. WFP to continue to work with MoH on school health and nutrition related work.

Recommendation 6. WFP to look for funding to continue the work started through the LRP supporting farmers and FOs.

Recommendation 7. WFP to continue to work with the MoA and other relevant ministries on the promotion of small holder procurement.

Recommendation 8. WFP to continue to support MoE's efforts to conduct regular programme monitoring on HGSMP processes and procedures.

Recommendation 9. WFP and partners to continue to support the active inclusion of women and ensure monitoring of gender related indicators, as appropriate.

Photo: WFP/Gabriela Vivacqua

¹ Term 3, 2019 was the last school term of the LRP and therefore designated as the endline term for evaluation purposes

Reference:

Upon approval, full report of the evaluation is available at www.wfp.org/publications
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