Operational Context

While India has made tremendous progress over the last few decades in food grain production and a reduction in malnutrition rates, it continues to bear a huge burden of food and nutrition insecurity, ranking 94th out of 107 countries on the 2020 Global Hunger Index. Despite recent improvements in the nutritional status of children, the prevalence of malnutrition is well above acceptable levels, and with large number of people, especially women and children, with micronutrient deficiency disorders. The Government of India has undertaken many reforms to their food-based safety nets to better ensure nutrition and food security.

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has been working in partnership with the Government of India for more than 50 years to contribute to its efforts to achieve food and nutrition security. WFP is currently doing this by demonstrating scalable pilots and best practices, providing specialized knowledge and international experience for effective implementation of food safety nets and supporting evidence-based analysis. WFP also is working to strengthen capacity of national NGOs in the areas of food security and nutrition and supports sharing of India’s success through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC).

Operational Updates

Promoting Access to Food

- In collaboration with the Country Capacity Strengthening Unit in WFP headquarters, WFP submitted a proposal for the Catalytic Impact Funding. Building on existing work, the proposal aims to use a food systems model to align WFP support at various levels, from production, to transformation, to consumption, with a focus on harmonizing and optimizing the transport supply chains. The pilot will be implemented in a single district in Odisha and will focus on increasing incomes of smallholders, especially women, reducing post-harvest losses and improve nutrition, while saving money for the state Government through optimization while also empowering women. It will serve as a template for state-wide and even national scale up. Approval is expected in June.

Improved Nutrition

- Under the partnership with the Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihoods Mission (UPSRLM) WFP provided technical support for production of age-appropriate, energy dense take-home supplementary foods in two districts with a total production of 62.9 mt which were distributed to nearly 25,000 children 6 months to 6 years and 6,500 pregnant and lactating women.
- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP has been tracking the state-level responses in implementing the food component of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme on a quarterly basis. WFP recently completed the 1st edition of the ICDS Tracker Report for 2021 and disseminated it widely to Government and partners. The tracker reports have been appreciated by National Ministries and Development Partners and has also been used by various State governments to learn from each other.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The final report on the food security and vulnerability assessment of vulnerable groups in Odisha (September 2020) was finalized and shared with the Government of Odisha. In general, the study showed that the Government responses to the 1st wave of

Highlights

The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in record numbers of new cases and deaths. Adapting information, education and communication (IEC) materials developed last year for the first wave, WFP created a new video to build the capacity of national front line workers on the safe distribution of food which has received 15,000 views and has been shared multiple times by partner agencies. WFP reposted and circulated other videos on preventing domestic violence, stigma against frontline staff working on the COVID-19 response, and the importance of nutrition for pregnant women to government counterparts and on social media.
COVID-19 were successful in preventing deterioration of food security amongst vulnerable groups. However, there were still many slum dwellers and migrants who had not been included in the public distribution system. Once the report is cleared by the Government, it will be posted on WFP India’s website.

- WFP has seconded a staff member within the Planning Department (PD) of the Government of Rajasthan (GoR) to provide direct technical support to the team on developing an SDG 2 dashboard and strengthening evaluation capacity of state officials. Also, WFP is planning to pilot remote food security monitoring in the state in the coming months.

- WFP India Country Office facilitated the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office’s (DMEO) participation in the EvaluVision panel organized by WFP Bangkok Regional Bureau in the gLOCAL week and developed a blog co-written with DMEO highlighting the approaches to using EvaluVision in India.

- WFP is supporting the Inter Agency Group (IAG) in Odisha in conducting the Joint Rapid Needs Assessment to examine the impact of cyclone ‘Yaas’ on multiple sectors for the worst affected districts of Odisha.

**Gender and Inclusion**

- WFP collaborated with UNICEF to organize a Townhall event on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) on 5th May under the aegis of the Inter-Agency PSEA network. The Townhall was a two-hour intensive training session on recognizing, reporting, and responding to incidents of sexual abuse or exploitation. More than 500 UN personnel from across the country participated in this virtual event.

- WFP finalised the report on “Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods in Rajasthan: a gender and inclusion assessment” and shared it with the Government of Rajasthan.

**South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)**

- WFP is finalizing the selection of the agency to undertake the assessment and documentation of good practices and lessons learned of Odisha Millets Mission to prepare policy briefs for mainstreaming millets.

- The report on the assessment & documentation of the Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (e-NWRS) is being finalized by WFP and will be shared with the Technical Advisory Group next month for their approval.

**Donors**

- The Government of India; Associated Data Processing, Inc.; Cargill; DSM; Ericsson India Global Services; General Mills Foundation; Stop Hunger Foundation; Sodexo Food Solutions India Private limited; WFP Trust for India; WFP 2030 Fund; WFP Innovation Accelerator; and Individual donors via WFP SharethMeal and wfp.org