



Template

Management Response from WFP Lao PDR to the recommendations of the decentralized evaluation (endline) of USDA LRP in Nalae of Louangnamtha in Lao PDR (DE/LACO/2019/010) from 2017 to 2020

1. This document, finalized in August 2021, presents the management response to the recommendations of the endline evaluation of USDA LRP in Nalae of Louangnamtha.
2. The evaluation, which was commissioned by WFP Lao PDR covers the endline phase of the evaluation cycle. The evaluation serves the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informed.
3. The evaluation made 18 key recommendations with more than 30 actions. The matrix sets out whether WFP agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with the recommendations and sub-recommendations. It presents the planned (or taken) actions, responsibilities and timelines.

<p>Recommendations and related Sub-recommendations (Deadline)</p> <p><i>[as per evaluation report – one (sub-) recommendation per row, deadline in brackets.]</i></p>	<p>Recommendation and Sub-Recommendation Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions)</p> <p><i>[Name of responsible WFP office/division Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]</i></p>	<p>Management Response</p> <p><i>[Is (sub-) recommendation Agreed, Partially agreed or Not agreed? If Partially agreed or Not agreed, provide a brief reason for this.]</i></p>	<p>Actions to be taken</p> <p><i>[Briefly state what action(s) will be taken to address each sub-recommendation – one action per row.]</i></p>	<p>Action Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions)</p> <p><i>[Name of responsible WFP office/division/unit. Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]</i></p>	<p>Action Deadline</p> <p><i>[Month and year – not to exceed related (sub-)recommendation deadline.]</i></p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 1: Providing technical support for small land farming (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>While technical support for small land farming is seen as important, as no follow-up project in Nalae is planned, WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021.</p> <p>In Nalae District - where the school feeding programme has been handed over to the Government - WFP is exploring a further partnership with NGO LWF for follow up.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Organize training on aspects such as seed replacement or building resilience to climate change 1.2 Create a yearly calendar for such training and follow-up sessions to ensure maximum participation from farmers 	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>January 2020 – December 2021 In progress</p> <p>WFP continues to roll-out farmer nutrition schools in 400 villages through the Agriculture for Nutrition Project. These schools help develop technical capacities of farmers through nutrition-sensitive agricultural approaches. Since January 2020, WFP has established 5 climate-smart villages in Phongsaly to serve as learning sites on community-based resilience building approaches. Climate-smart agricultural approaches are being tested, evidence generated and will be scaled to existing and new WFP programmes. Training guides have already been developed on bio-intensive school gardens, agroforestry and community gardens.</p>

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<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Providing farmer groups with technology for self-monitoring Dashboard for DAFO to analyse monitoring data and take corrective actions (May 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>Partially agreed</p> <p>While WFP agrees that a self-monitoring system with feedback from DAFOs would be important in the context of LAO PDR, such project will require dedicated resources, including technical expertise and activities focused on the setup and institutionalization of such system. From technical expertise perspective, such project would need to be led by technical partners in this area (e.g. FAO), while WFP's role in the context of Lao PDR would be to link it to the local procurement in school feeding.</p>	<p>In case the opportunity on the technical leadership on such project is available, as well as dedicated resources to link it NSMP, the following activities could be considered:</p> <p>2.1 Create a self-monitoring system for farmer groups for recording details pertaining to types and quantities of vegetables cultivated. Access to real-time data would enable DAFO to carry out immediate corrective actions</p> <p>2.2 Create a dashboard for DAFO officials connected to self-monitoring tool for farmers, that will present information regarding the quantity of vegetables sowed and produced by farmers across villages, enabling them to identify issues and execute timely course corrections</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>Not started</p> <p>WFP did not embark on this activity as it requires dedicated project and resources to setup up a sustainable system for self-monitoring by the farmers groups. Such resources and project were not available beyond the LRP programme.</p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Formalisation of farmer groups (Sept 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>While no follow-up activity was/is planned in the Nalae District to implement the proposed recommendation, WFP will take it into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021.</p> <p>3.1 Encourage formalization of farmer groups by supporting them in conducting regular meetings, selecting position holders, and</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>Completed (by September 2020)</p> <p>WFP conducted training for School model and farmer group in 148 communities to support school feeding programme after handover, where formalization of farmer groups was conducted. Support will continue to be provided to the communities of</p>

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			delineating roles and responsibilities for different members 3.2 Enabling selection of women in decision making positions		916 schools as part of the handover package currently discussed with the Government, including community mobilization trainings, through which point b) will be further encouraged.
Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 4: Providing irrigation support for farmers (Dec 2021)	WFP Country Office	Agreed	While no follow-up activity was/is planned in the Nalae District to implement the proposed recommendation, access to irrigation is agreed to be critical for successful farming activities. Therefore, WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021, particularly on water connections to the target schools and households WFP supporting, 4.1 WFP to provide NFIs to communities to support access to irrigation at the community level 4.2 Mobilize communities to establish water connections to households ensuring access to water on a sustained basis. Irrigation facilities would result in the cultivation of vegetables throughout the year, ensuring their regular supply for school meals.	WFP Country Office	December 2021 In progress: NFIs procured and delivered to target farmer groups, community mobilization being provided. Communities are in process of connecting water.

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<p>Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 5: Promoting off-farm and non-farm activities (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021. 5.1 Identify livelihood options best suited for mountainous, upland and lowland regions, and promote them, instead of offering a standardized solution of cultivating vegetables.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2021 In progress WFP has been collaborating with Government to design the package of support activities for handover process. At this point (in the context of limited capacity and shrinking fiscal space) organic certification is not considered as the priority topic for the discussion in relation to the handover. The longer-term transition discussions with the Government are likely to start towards the end of 2021.</p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 6: Easing the process of organic certification (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>Partially agreed WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when working on the longer-term transition plan with the Government, including the contribution of local agricultural produce into the national school feeding programme, which is a longer-term process. This initiative will also require dedicated resources/project as well as</p>	<p>6.1 Include this topic into discussions with the Government in relation to the longer-term transition process with the Government. 6.2 In case the opportunity on the technical leadership (from partners like FAO, IFAD) on such project is available, WFP can explore how this initiative can link and contribution to the NSMP in collaboration with technical development partners and respective ministries.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2021 In progress WFP has been collaborating with Government to design the package of support activities for handover process. At this point (in the context of limited capacity and shrinking fiscal space) organic certification is not considered as the priority topic for the discussion in relation to the handover.</p>

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		technical expertise through partners specialized in such initiatives.			The longer-term transition discussions with the Government are likely to start towards the end of 2021.
Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 7: Engaging traders for purchasing vegetables from far-off villages (Dec 2022)	WFP Country Office	Partially agreed WFP agrees on the importance of strengthening the links between the school feeding programme and local farmers, including the ones from far-off villages. At the same time as WFP is not planning (at this point does not have resources) to implement a CBT model, and is focused on supporting the Government to roll out its CBT model of NSMP in the 916 schools (planned for handover in 2021). Therefore, this recommendation can be taken into consideration through these activities. Further agriculture support activities focused on linking the farmers to NSMP will require dedicated technical and financial resources for such project, ideally	7.1 Encourage the links to local farmers through training/capacity strengthening done jointly with the Government for the schools to be handed over. 7.2 In case resources are available for a dedicated agriculture supported project, tie-up with traders to ensure that they visit far-off villages to procure vegetables directly from farmers, charging a relatively higher commission in return.	WFP Country Office	December 2022 In progress (point 7.1): WFP is currently in the process of handing over the 916 schools to the Government, while providing package of training/capacity strengthening support during 2021/2022 academic year. This includes CBT training, that includes the topic of local procurement/procurement from local farmers using Government-supplied cash. In addition, WFP will consider tying-up the links with local farmers, including potentially far-off villages for the new MGD20 initiative in the southern part of the country, possibly through exploring partnership opportunities with partners that

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		with technical leadership of development partners (e.g. FAO).			have expertise in this technical area
Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 8: Ensuring coordination between MoPI and MAF for improving the value chain, and reaching out to newer markets (Jul 2022)	WFP Country Office	Partially Agreed WFP will take the recommendation into consideration when designing a longer term capacity strengthening approach, specifically in relation to facilitating the inter-sectorial coordination in support of NSMP (that will aim at ensuring the availability of the locally produced foods at competitive prices to implement the NSMP).	8.1 Inclusion of the topic (and advocacy related to it) in the discussions with Government over the strengthening the capacity in Policy Goal 3 (Institutional capacity and Coordination) for the NSMP - part of the longer-term transition planning discussions, SABER exercise. 8.2 Collaborating with other development partners specialized in this area (e.g. FAO) to advocate with the Government the need for improved coordination.	WFP Country Office	July 2022 In progress WFP has been collaborating with Government to design the package of support activities for handover process. The longer-term transition discussions with the Government are likely to start towards the end of 2021. SABER exercise is planned for 2022 and will represent a platform for advocating (including jointly with partners like FAO) for improved multi-sectorial coordination in relation to improvement of value chains and links to local farmers.

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<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 9: Formalising the role of cooks (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Agreed</i></p>	<p>The role of cooks is already formalized in the 2014 National guidance for NSMP, that includes the role, envisaged payment and roles expected for this function. However, formalization is not necessarily reflected in the implementation on the ground in the Government-supported areas (e.g. in relation to the payment to cooks). WFP will continue advocating with the Government the implementation of the national guidance, especially through the lens of sustainability of the implementation arrangements.</p> <p>9.1 In WFP supported programmes a specialist cook from within the community should be provisioned for each school. It is important that the cook is trained to cook meals according to the menu book to ensure retention of nutrition and consistency of taste.</p> <p>9.2 As part of handover/transition negotiations with the Government WFP will be advocating for de facto implementation of the national guidance in relation to the cooks positions (creation of positions, stable payment), as well as exploring the possibility of institutionalizing the training for the cooks.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>Completed (point 9.1): establishment of cooks and their training is integrated into WFP's implementation (MGD17 – completed, and MGD20 – planned).</p> <p>Planned (point 9.2): given the long term nature of the capacity strengthening discussions with the Government in relation to handover and transition this topic will be repeatedly included in WFP's advocacy in the next four years (i.e. the timeframe for the current project).</p>

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<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 10: Promoting dietary diversity among all the community members (Dec 2020)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Agreed</i></p>	<p>WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021.</p> <p>10.1 VECD members must be trained to ensure the transmission of knowledge among fellow villagers with respect to the importance of ensuring dietary diversity and including vegetables in meals.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2020</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>During Nov-Dec 2020, 1,018 VEDCs members in 4 districts 254 villages were trained on school lunch management. Similar training is planned for the new areas.</p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 11: Monitoring of vegetables grown and quantity produced (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Partially agreed</i></p> <p>WFP recognizes the importance of monitoring of the volume of agricultural products produced. However, the setup of the self-monitoring system for farmers will require a focused project with strong technical component (ideally led by the partners specialized in this area, e.g. FAO). WFP, however, can contribute to such project with efforts to link the local production with the NSMP, which such project is available.</p>	<p>11.1 WFP to integrate the data collection in relation to the share of local produce to the school lunches in its own programme component for the areas where it is applicable (primarily for advocacy purposes with the Government).</p> <p>11.2 In case resources are available for a follow-up project, WFP will contribute to the work of partners specialized in this area on creation of a self-monitoring system for farmer groups, encouraging them to record details pertaining to the types and quantities of vegetables cultivated can be considered in case additional/dedicated resources are available for such project.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>Completed (point 11.1): Monitoring of this aspect has been integrated and is currently undertaken by DCF and DAFO counterparts in 7 provinces and 21 districts</p> <p>Not started (point 11.2): WFP did not embark on this activity as resources for a dedicated project were not available beyond the LRP programme.</p>

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<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 12: Ensuring that the groups meet regularly to decide who is to grow what for each season (Dec 2023)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Partially agreed</i></p> <p>While no follow-up activity was/is planned in the Nalae District to implement the proposed recommendation, WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools, for instance in MGD20 supported schools.</p>	<p>In the guidance and training for the new MGD20-supported schools, WFP will:</p> <p>12.1 Encourage inclusion of non-intervention farmers as part of farmer groups. 12.2 Encourage conducting all-farmers’ meet before every season which would ensure better planning and help avoid the overproduction of certain vegetables.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2023</p> <p>Planned: provision of specialized training to the selected MGD20 schools is planned for Year 2 and Year 3 of the current project. Current project design and budget does not allow for inclusion of such component for all targeted schools.</p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 13: Using traditional knowledge of processing food for future use till new methods are introduced (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Agreed</i></p>	<p>WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021</p> <p>13.1 Invest in the processing of vegetables at the cluster level for increasing shelf-life of vegetables. 13.2 Encourage farmers to use traditional knowledge to prepare local pickles to increase the shelf life and value of vegetables.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>Ongoing: WFP will provide training on the processing and storage of vegetables in 4 provinces (10 districts, 50 villages for a total of over 1,000 participants).</p>

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<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 14:</p> <p>Technological support for program monitoring (May 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Partially agreed</i></p> <p>WFP recognizes the importance of the national monitoring system to provide real time data for decision making and corrective actions for the national lead agency in agriculture sector. However, establishment of such systems will require the collaboration of specialized technical partners (e.g. FAO) and a dedicated project focused on such initiative, where WFP can be one of the partners that links it to national programmes, such as NSMP.</p>	<p>In collaboration and with technical leadership of development partners specialized in this area, WFP can provide technical support to MAF in creating a monitoring system and linking with the dashboard to capture information for undertaking corrective actions.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>Not started: Within currently resources and priority activities in relation to capacity strengthening at the national level, establishment of dashboard for MAF has not been prioritized. However, WFP will continue working with partners like FAO to explore the possibilities of supporting such initiatives, including collaboration on fundraising for such initiative. Additional resources/project to support these activities have not been available so far.</p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 15:</p> <p>Need for a feasibility study for market accessibility and community needs (May 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Partially agreed</i></p> <p>While no follow-up activity was/is planned in the Nalae District to implement the proposed recommendation, WFP will take the recommendation into consideration in case a similar project is planned for implementation.</p>	<p>WFP should plan a need assessment study before designing a similar program or replicating it in other geographies. The scope of different livelihood activities in the targeted areas, market potential, forward and backward linkages, etc. need to be ascertained before rolling out a similar program in another area.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>Not started: A follow up project has not been resourced for/started after the LRP initiative.</p>

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<p>Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 16: Ensuring more meaningful engagement with women (Dec 2021)</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Agreed</i></p>	<p>WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021</p> <p>16.1 Both women and men should be encouraged to volunteer for the SMP activities such as cooking, gardening, fetching water and collecting wood. This would help in breaking down the stereotyping of gender roles at the household level and, subsequently, reduce women’s workload.</p> <p>16.2 Ensure inclusion of women farmers in exposure visits, and provided with opportunities to lead farmer groups.</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>Completed: A stronger gender equality component has been introduced in the design of the VEDC training. Through the community mobilization efforts, VEDCs have been trained and guided to encourage women and men to share responsibilities such as cooking, gardening, fetching water and collecting wood.</p> <p>Peer-to-peer exchange visit to other communities facilitated by WFP provides the opportunities for women farmers to learn and exchange experience. During set-up farmer groups, encourage 70% of women to be a leader of the groups.</p>
<p>Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 17: Supporting MAF in easing the process of organic certification</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p><i>Partially agreed</i> WFP recognizes the importance of easing organic certification. WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when working on the longer-term transition plan with the</p>	<p>17.1 Include this topic into discussions with the Government in relation to the longer-term transition process with the Government.</p> <p>17.2 In case the opportunity on the technical leadership (from partners like FAO, IFAD) on such project is available, WFP can</p>	<p>WFP Country Office</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>In progress (17.1) on the transition planning with government and inclusion of related topics.</p>

Recommendations and related Sub-recommendations (Deadline) <i>[as per evaluation report – one (sub-) recommendation per row, deadline in brackets.]</i>	Recommendation and Sub-Recommendation Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) <i>[Name of responsible WFP office/division Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]</i>	Management Response <i>[Is (sub-) recommendation Agreed, Partially agreed or Not agreed? If Partially agreed or Not agreed, provide a brief reason for this.]</i>	Actions to be taken <i>[Briefly state what action(s) will be taken to address each sub-recommendation – one action per row.]</i>	Action Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) <i>[Name of responsible WFP office/division/unit. Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]</i>	Action Deadline <i>[Month and year – not to exceed related (sub-)recommendation deadline.]</i>
(May 2021)		Government, including the contribution of local agricultural produce into the national school feeding programme, which is a longer-term process. This initiative will also require dedicated resources/project as well as technical expertise through partners specialized in such initiatives.	explore how this initiative can link and contribution to the NSMP in collaboration with technical development partners and respective ministries.		Not started (17.2) on dedicated technical project supporting the ease of the organic certification
Priority: High/Medium Recommendation 18: Organising joint workshop of ministries across levels to help finalise (Dec 2020)	WFP Country Office	<i>Agreed</i>	WFP will take the recommendations into consideration when rolling out “agriculture for school feeding” activities in other WFP-supported schools across 7 provinces in 2020 and 2021 to ensure that coordination among WFP, central and sub-national local government authorities functioning. WFP to include an annual multi-level workshop, lessons learnt events as part of the project implementation and interaction of key stakeholders. Joint workshop/s of the ministries with their provincial and district-level officials could be considered wherein roles, procedures, and communication channels for each stakeholder could be delineated. Internal	WFP Country Office	December 2020 Completed. Annual workshops engaging various ministries and their regional representatives have become part of the WFP’s approach to engaging with the Government for the implementation of the programme.