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Mid Term Evaluation of the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2018-2021

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Acronyms

BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Program Implementation Plan
CEHRD	Centre for Education and Human Resource Development
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CO	Country Office
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFHS	District Food Security Network
DL	Digital Literacy
EDC	Early Childhood Development Centres
EDCU	Education Development and Coordination Unit
EDP	Extended Delivery Point
EFA	Education for All
EGR	Early Grade Reading
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EGRP	Early Grade Reading Program
EMIS	Education management and Information System
ERO	Education Review Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDP	Final Delivery Point
FCEA	Free and Compulsory Education Act
FEFO	First Expired First Out
FFECN	Food For Education and Child Nutrition
FFEP	Food for Education Project
FIFO	First In First Out
FINNIDA	Department for International Development Cooperation, Finland
FMC	Food Management Committee
FY	Financial Year
GEEW	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoN	Government of Nepal
HDI	Human Development Index
HGSF	Home Grown School Feeding
HKI	Hellen Keller's International
IDI	In-depth Interview
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDS	Integrated Development Society
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ITHS	Internal Transport and Handling Support
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEDPG	Local Education Development Partner Group
LIFO	Last In First Out

MDM	Mid-Day Meal
MFWR	Mid Far Western Regions
MGD	McGovern Dole
MoALD	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MoWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
MWDR	Mid-Western Development Region
NLSS	National Living Standard Survey
NSMP	National School Meals Programme
NPR	Nepalese Rupee
ODF	Open Defecation Free
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
OLE	Open Learning Exchange
PCD	Partnership for Child Development
PPE	Pre-Primary Education
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
RB	Regional Bureau
THR	Take Home Ration
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Educational Results
SABER-SF	Systems Approach for Better Educational Results-School Feeding
SF	School Feeding
SIDP	School Infrastructure Development Program
SMC	School Management Committee
SMP	School Meals Programme
SMMPP	School Meal Menu Planner Package
SMSFM	School Meal Standards and Facilitation Manual
SO	Strategic Objectives
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
T-ICSP	Transitional-Interim Country Strategy Plan
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNEG	United Nations Ethical Guideline
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
UN Women	United Nation’s Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA FAD	United States Department of Agriculture Food Assistance Division
VDC	Village Development Committee

WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WE	World Education, Inc.
WFP	World Food Programme

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Executive Summary

Overview of Evaluation

1. The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole (MGD) International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme for the budget Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) in the Sudur Paschim, Karnali and Lumbini Provinces of Nepal, was carried out between November 2020 and March 2021. This study, commissioned by the World Food Program (WFP), Nepal Country Office (CO), aimed to understand the change that has been created by the McGovern-Dole Program since its inception.

2. The McGovern-Dole Program operates in a context which has been historically afflicted by poverty and food insecurity. Despite efforts by the Government of Nepal and other donors to address poverty, Nepal continues to be one of the poorer nations where geographic and socioeconomic exclusion continue to limit opportunities for disadvantaged groups. The situation gets exacerbated in the three provinces, Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini, due to remoteness of these provinces which limits access to basic services and are disadvantaged in terms of chronic poverty, vulnerability to natural disasters, risk and resilience and food insecurity. In coherence with the government of Nepal (GoN) implemented and funded National School Meal Program (NSMP), the WFP-Nepal provides in-kind support to 11 districts[1] in the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces, which began in the fiscal year 2018, with a gradual transition of the government cash support to these districts in the subsequent fiscal years till 2021.

3. Two strategic objectives (SOs), which are *(i) improved literacy of school-aged children and (ii) improved use of health and dietary practice,* have guided the implementation of the McGovern-Dole Program. To achive its objective, WFP has worked in close coordination with Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Centre for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD), Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU) as the government stakeholders. In addition, WFP implements the McGovern-Dole program in partnership with World Education, Inc. (WE), Open Learning Exchange (OLE), Partnership for Child Development (PCD) and Integrated Development Society (IDS). The program is operational across the 11 intervention districts in the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini Provinces. In a sub-set of the schools, in selected districts, light touch technical interventions on Digital Literacy (DL), School Infrastructure Development Programme (SIDP) and Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) program have also been carried out.

4. The MTE bases itself on the results framework to capture the key changes along the identified indicator. The objective of the MTE will be to inform WFP and the diverse set of program partners about the impact trajectory of the program, including the set backs caused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the MTE has been designed to identify possible course correction areas and generate recommendations to inform and strengthen implementation. The MTE identifies possible action areas and allots a timeframe to these action points. The users of the report will benefit from the layered analysis of the changes measured and can refer to the recommendations for future course of action. The key users of the report will be the WFP CO and the implementation partners. The report will also be of interest for the central government stakeholders such as the MoEST and the EDCU. Other potential funders in this domain and geography might also draw utility from the report.

Methodology

5. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability has formed the guiding framework for the MTE enquiry and analysis. The findings are also presented along the same lines.

6. Given that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic struck during the planning phase of the evaluation, the MTE had to adapt its methodology to suit the travel restrictions imposed due to COVID-19. With the COVID-19 inducing movement restrictions, the MTE adapted itself from an in-person interaction-based study to a remote interaction led study. The MTE modified itself to rely more on qualitative interactions and literature review while also integrating a quantitative component of interacting with primary stakeholders.

7. The key subjects of evaluation, thus, included the direct stakeholders of the McGovern-Dole Program involving head-teachers, teachers, parents of beneficiary students, cooks, and storekeepers. Semi-structured interviews were administered to this group. In addition to the direct stakeholders, strategic stakeholders such as representatives from MoEST, CEHRD, Education Directorate (under the Ministry of Social Development) as well as EDCU were also subjects of the evaluation. In addition, representatives from the implementation partners WE, OLE, PCD and

[1] Achham, Baitadi, Bajhang, Bajura, Doti, Dadeldhura, Dailekh, Darchula, East Rukum, West Rukum, Jajarkot

IDS were also interacted with. Key informant interviews were administered to this cohort. With the COVID-19 restrictions in place and being mindful of ethical considerations, the MTE chose to not interact with children. Hence, the study involved semi-structured interviews with direct stakeholders and informant interviews with indirect stakeholders (Table 4). The Annexure XI outlines the stakeholders of the MTE.

8. The MTE adopted the longitudinal panel of schools identified during the baseline. The quasi-experimental design necessitated the presence of a treatment arm comprising of 180 schools that were equally distributed between schools with SMP+WASH and SMP+WASH+EGR interventions. The comparison arm comprised of 45 non-McGovern-Dole Program schools[2] from within the same districts. A mix of purposive and random sampling was adopted to select the stakeholders for the study. The head teachers and EGR trained teachers were selected purposively for the study. However, a random sample of parents, whose numbers were collected during the baseline, was drawn from the sample frame.

9. The EGR is an integral component of the program. However, the lack of interactions with students limited the study to execute the EGR assessment in its true form. Instead, perception-based queries were addressed to teachers and head-teachers on EGR domains to generate a broad understanding of learning outcomes. In addition, case studies have been developed for EGR schools as well[3]. Moreover, to assess the light touch technical interventions, the MTE adopted a case study approach. One case study, highlighting the success stories of schools from each district where each of the light touch interventions are operational has been developed.

10. The MTE faced critical limitations. Some of them include a) limited comparability with baseline data due to change in research design during MTE, b) limited time and complexity of questions, c) selection bias due to purposive sampling of respondents, d) limitations posed by remote mechanisms of data collection, e) inability to measure outcomes and e) lack of observation data limiting understanding on key outcomes. Bearing these limitations posed by the nature of the research design, the questions for the MTE have been framed in a manner that speaks of the change observed during the two years of the implementation as well as the impact of COVID-19.

Summary of Evaluation Findings

Relevance and Coherence

11. To address the needs of the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces, the McGovern-Dole Program's efforts towards providing the regular and fortified school meals proves highly relevant towards addressing access related food insecurity issues. Moreover, the interventions on early grade learning and digital literacy are well-designed to address the low enrolment and attendance concerns in the region. The program also works towards addressing any sanitation and hygiene concerns that might deter students from attending school through its WASH efforts.

12. The program efforts resonate the education initiatives in Nepal such as the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) by focusing on improving learning environment through a holistic set of interventions that include **digital literacy**, **nutrition-sensitive learning** and **construction and rehabilitation of kitchens and rehabilitation latrines** along with **early grade reading and provision of food**. In line with the SSDP as well as with the earlier Education for All (EFA) policy (2002-2015), the McGovern-Dole Program stresses on reducing the gender gap in learning. The program extends this approach by incorporating gender sensitive components such as inclusion of women in School Management Committees (SMCs), trainings on menstruation and ensuring a hygienic environment that encourage female students to attend school. Alongside SSDP and EFA, the program, through its focus on teacher training and performance, resonates with the key feature of the National Education Policy- 2019 i.e., providing education counselling services to them and evaluating teacher performance based on learning achievements of students. The key component of the program, i.e., providing nutritious school meals to children in chronically food-insecure areas with the aim of their overall development, is also in line with the Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan (MSNP) II 2018-2022 which envisions reducing malnutrition so that it no longer becomes an impending factor towards enhancement of human capital and for overall socio-economic development. The goal of MSNP II is to improve maternal, adolescents and child nutrition.

[2] These schools do not receive the program intervention but are recipients to similar support from the GoN and other implementing agencies.

[3] Parents were asked about the general performance of the students. However, literacy information was sought from the teachers since they would have been in a better position to respond to perception based changes on the EGR domains. EGR tests over phone was not carried out due to children not having access to mobile phones. Moreover, the tools administered were limited to a 20 minute duration. EGR tests over and above the existing questions would have extended the overall interview time.

13. The McGovern-Dole Program also upholds the WFP's Nepal Country Strategic Plan and aligns itself to all the five strategic objectives. The program specifically addresses the nutrition and hunger needs of vulnerable communities from geographically disadvantaged locations while also strengthening the government capacities to address these vulnerabilities in future.

14. In addition, the McGovern-Dole Program also supports the World Bank and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in their involvement on the SSDP. Moreover, various components of the McGovern-Dole Program are also coherent with other development program such as the Plan International's support in building of girl-friendly toilets and other WASH facilities. It also complements USAID's Suaahara II "Good Nutrition" Program trying to improve nutritional status of women and children in 40 underserved rural districts in Nepal.

15. The program adaptation in the form of introducing take home ration in June and July 2020 and October 2020 for the school-going children from grades one to eight in rural Nepal, was extremely relevant during the extended closure of school during the COVID-19 pandemic. The school closure meant that 2.4 million children who used to benefit from the government's school meals program were not getting supplementary nutritious food. The take-home- ration comprising of fortified rice, lentils, and vegetable oil and salt for the school-going children proved to be an important mitigation and coping strategy which helped in addressing the food and nutritional requirements of children even during the lockdown.

Effectiveness

16. The MTE brings up the evidence indicating an increase in the enrolment and the attendance levels of students post the McGovern-Dole Program. Most stakeholders perceived a greater increase in these metrices for girls. More than four-fifth of the parents cited that the attendance of their children has become more regular after exposure to the program. Parents identify the improved learning techniques along with the regular meals have been able to increase the interest of the children towards attending school. An increase in attentiveness for both girl and boy students was also perceived by most teachers. Teachers even reported that not only the attentiveness but also the degree of interest among students had increased which has had a positive effect on the students' performance. Nearly 91% teachers perceive an increase in the pass rates in the schools. Girls appear to outperform boys with 94% teachers noting a marked improvement in the pass rate of girl students[4].

17. The MTE also highlights effective results on the WASH efforts. The MTE points out that a higher proportion of project schools (64%) have a functional toilet with flush facility as compared to non-project schools (~49%). A significant proportion (~43%) of head teachers were also found to be satisfied with the fact that toilets were readily available in the schools with reduced waiting time. Head teachers reported that the trainings around menstruation were the most helpful as the knowledge and awareness about menstruation, along with the availability of sanitary pads at schools, had reduced female student absenteeism and contributed to better menstrual hygiene practices where more girls have started using sanitary pads.

18. Parents have also reported an increase in the hygiene practices of students over the project period. Improved WASH access at schools has had a positive impact on absenteeism of girls and boys and has also led to reduced dropout rate of female students. Most students, boys and girls practiced at least one health and hygiene behaviours, most notable being handwashing with soap and water, followed by regular use of toilets at home and school.

19. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has acted as a roadblock to the result trajectory derailing the momentum of achievement. With children put out of schools due to the pandemic led restrictions, there has been a gradual decline in the level of interest children showed towards their studies. Moreover, with the schools being used as quarantine centres, there is an apprehension of infrastructure loss due to poor maintenance during the lockdown period.

Efficiency

[4] The McGovern-Dole Program Outcome monitoring Report 2020 also concluded that in most EGRA sub-tasks, female students scored higher than male students.

20. The study does not use a cost-benefit analysis as a measure of efficiency since the design did not accommodate measurement of outcomes. The MTE looks at efficiency in terms of design and implementation of activities. The high investment of the program in teacher capacities have yielded results in terms of enhancing classroom management and hence, participation by students. However, high attrition of teachers has disadvantaged the program in terms of this investment not leading to the anticipated outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic also affected the efficiency of the program with all activities getting stalled. However, the program re-directed its efforts to provide take home ration to all 156,000 children enrolled under the McGovern-Dole Program in lieu of meals at schools.

Impact

21. The MTE indicates that there has been a higher perceived improvement in the key domains pertaining to early grade reading for Grade II students in project schools as compared to non-project schools. Even in project schools, schools that have designated EGR trained teachers, teachers perceive a higher improvement on the early grade domains than teachers in the non-EGR designated schools. The innovative teaching methods and shift to outcome-based learning, alongside the improved performance of children, have acted as motivational factors for the teachers who are enthusiastic about using the new teaching methods and resources.

22. The program also worked towards achieving increased community participation through SMCs. However, the participation of parents in the committees has not been optimal. Data shows that more women have been participating in the SMCs which has led to effective management of the mid-day meal and has indirectly had a positive impact on gender relations in the society as women find spaces to voice their concerns and exercise a degree of power. However, it is important to note that while there are more women members in the SMCs, there are a greater number of men occupying leadership positions in the same. Gender equality thus requires more focus with respect to gender balanced selection for leadership roles in school committees. Women's participation has also resulted in mothers encouraging girl's education which has created a chain effect on gender empowerment in the community.

Sustainability

23. The successful implementation of HGSF program in non-program pilot districts has been much appreciated and applauded by different stakeholders for providing quality meals while also promoting local ownership of the program. There is a felt need for the HGSF program to be scaled up as an effective model to increase nutrition along with learning outcomes. Community ownership and engagement is critical for programme efficiency and sustainability. With the transition of some distrcits to a cash-based model and the government's focus on improving child education and nutrition, most stakeholders are confident about the program handover to the government, but with technical support from WFP.

24. The SMP with the multi-faceted interventions need to gradually be handed over to the government machinery for sustainable continuation in future. However, budgetary constraints of the government especially in terms of provision of learning materials, infrastructure development, capacity building of school staff, poses to be one of the sustainability risks. Moreover, maintenance of infrastructure that gets provided also poses a significant sustainability risk. However, increased community participation is expected to enhance maintenance of infrastructure. WFP currently involves local civil society organisations (CSOs) to mobilise communities to enhance their ownership. While they have been effective, there needs to be more focus on improving their coordination with the local government[5].

Influence of COVID-19 on the McGovern-Dole Program outcomes

25. This extended closure of school meant that 2.4 million children who used to benefit from the government's school meals program were not getting supplementary nutritious food – especially in the grain deficit Sudur Paschim, Karnali and Lumbini Provinces. To address the situation, WFP along with the GoN, put in place take home rations, starting June 2020, which comprised of fortified rice, lentils, and vegetable oil and salt for the school-going children from grades one to eight in rural Nepal. This helped in addressing the food and nutritional requirements of children even during the lockdown.

[5] After the federalization, there are 3 tiers of government; federal, provincial and local. There are altogether 1 federal government, 7 Provincial governments and 753 local governments (Palika).

26. The extended school closure due to the COVID situation has had a negative impact on children's interest in studying. The COVID-19 induced lockdown is also expected to have a regressive effect on gender equality. While some teachers, residing locally have facilitated home based learning, girl students were found to be more involved in household chores instead. The pandemic and the subsequent closure of the schools has raised some concerns regarding the poor maintenance of WASH infrastructure and the damage to the same, especially in schools which do not have fencing. However, overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the importance of handwashing and sanitation practices which has drawn focus to the WASH program and helped in further and stricter implementation of the same.

Summary Conclusion and Recommendations

27. The MTE indicates the positive change that the McGovern-Dole Program has been able to create across learning outcomes. More than the outcomes, the MTE highlights the program's effectiveness in establishing processes and creating an enabling ecosystem towards improved learning outcomes. The program reflects a strong understanding of the country as well as the local contexts. This has aided its effectiveness. Most stakeholders perceive an increase in improvement in enrolment, attendance, attentiveness, and other learning outcomes. Stakeholders are also appreciative of other infrastructural interventions that have helped create an enabling environment in schools that encourage improved attendance. COVID-19, however, has had a significant impact on the program's outcome trajectory. The restrictions due to COVID-19 is expected to have a bearing on the learning levels of students while also affecting the metrices on which the program has made significant improvements since its inception in 2018.

Good practices

28. There are key program attributes that have stood out and need to be exemplified. Attributes such as the HGSF, Digital Literacy, EGRP as well as the SMCs which have focused on building community ownership through participation in programme activities, have been well-received and implemented effectively. Alongside building ownership, aligning the program with the government's policy on education and NSMP, has ensured greater institutionalization and thereby the sustainability of the same. The participatory approach to development and collaborations with multiple actors at various levels- government and local- are good practices that offer valuable lessons.

29. There are a few areas that deserve WFP's attention to strengthen the FY17 programme. Most important among these is better coordination with all levels of the government. Other areas of concern are building capacity of local government and stakeholders for smoother transfer of the program, ensuring the quality of infrastructural facilities like toilets and kitchens, increasing program coverage. The areas that deserve WFP's attention have been presented below:

S. No.	Recommendations	Stakeholder	Type	Timeframe
1.	Advocate for expansion of the McGovern-Dole Program to secondary schools to enhance inclusivity of the program.	WFP; Government stakeholders (MoEST; EDCU)	Strategic	Long Term
2.	Enhance participation of local governments to ensure sustainability and increase local accountability	Local governance machinery	Strategic	Medium Term
3.	Adapt teaching medium and supplementary materials in local language to ensure better understanding.	WFP; Program partners	Operational	Medium Term
4.	Strengthen gender and equity dimension by encouraging a more equitable selection and election of women to school committees and the leadership position	School stakeholders and community	Strategic	Medium term
5.	Advocate low transfer rate of EGRA teachers with the government.	Government stakeholders (MoEST; EDCU)	Strategic	Long term

1. Introduction

30. This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole (MGD) International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme (the McGovern-Dole Program), FY17 award cycle, implemented in the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim province of Nepal, commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP), Nepal Country Office. The study was conducted between **November 2020 and March 2021.** The rationale behind conducting the mid-term study was to understand the change that has been created by the program within the first two years of its implementation. The MTE will act as a mid-course estimation of changes. It will also help gain deeper insights into the program's operational aspects and its vision for this cycle.

31. The main objectives of the MTE are to reinforce:

    a. ***Accountability:*** *By assessing and reporting on the performance of the McGovern-Dole Program, the MTE allows for an understanding of the program's progress and provide course correction recommendations if necessary.*

    b. ***Learnings:*** *The MTE determines the reasons for specific results as well as derives good practices and pointers for learning. These will inform operational and strategic decision-making, help in further planning and adjustment of the activity and implementation procedure for reaching the target within the set time frame. Findings will be actively disseminated, and lessons will be incorporated into relevant lesson sharing systems.*

32. Apart from these key objectives, the MTE will also make recommendations to strengthen and improve project implementation, including the technical assistance components for strengthening National School Meals Plan (SMP) policy framework, pilots for home-grown school feeding on both food and cash based SMP and other complementary interventions for the remaining period.

33. The MTE has kept Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) as an integral lens to assess program impact. It has also tried to ensure adequate focus on incorporating gender queries and analyses at all stages. While the corona virus disease (COVID) adaptation to the approach limited our access to students and suspended all participatory observation, the queries were placed to parents about the effectiveness and impact of the program on their children. The analyses look at the data disaggregated across gender of students. Moreover, the questions addressed to the teachers and head teachers captured their perception about the changes and results envisioned by the program across gender of the students.

34. The programme has formed partnerships and collaborations with several stakeholders which have aided and shaped programme implementation and its vision for this operation, engaged actively throughout the evaluation and are also the primary users for this report. The MTE findings can help the users get a mid-term understanding how the McGovern-Dole Program has progressed till date and possible areas which might require course corrections. The users can also get an understanding on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the programme as well as the interventions that accompany it. The evaluation engaged multiple stakeholders for evidence building which include relevant government stakeholders, implementing partners- at central, provincial and the district level, development partners and direct and indirect beneficiaries of the programme.

1.1. Overview of the Evaluation Subject

35. **Program background:** In Nepal, the McGovern-Dole Program has been mainstreamed into the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) National School Meal Program based on which WFP Nepal Country Office (CO) received four different MGD grants**:** 1) the FY 12-14 award cycle 2) the FY14-FY16 award cycle (therein referred to as FY14), 3) the FY18-FY21 award cycle (therein referred to as FY17) 4) FY 20 -FY 24 (therein referred as FY20 award cycle). This report pertains to the MTE of the third grant of McGovern-Dole program. The third grant was approved in 2017, with implementation starting in 2018, which will continue till 2021. The end line evaluation for the current award cycle is scheduled for June 2021. McGovern-Dole Program focuses on improving literacy and health and dietary practices of school age children, especially for girls, through provision of school meals, and other complementary activities.

36. **Geographical coverage and program outreach:** These grants were to provide mid-day meals to targeted pre-primary, primary and lower secondary grade school students in all moderately and highly food-insecure Village Development Committee (VDC) which, in 2017, were merged into 82 Palikas. The program reached out

to **1,975 schools, serving 211,647 (100,357 boys and 111,290 girls) students** across **11 districts** in the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces of Nepal, i.e., Achham, Baitadi, Bajhang, Bajura, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Doti, West Rukum, Jajarkot, Dailekh and East Rukum. The planned target was 218,815 students (103,583 boys and 115,232 girls). For FY17, a change in food basket from corn-soya blend and vegetable oil (*haluwa*) to fortified rice, lentils, vegetable oil and salt (*dal-bhaat*) has been introduced in all the program districts. Students are currently provided with a daily mid-day meal comprised of a daily ration of 80g of fortified rice, 20g of lentils, 10g vitamin A fortified vegetable oil, and 2g iodized salt for 200 days per year per student.

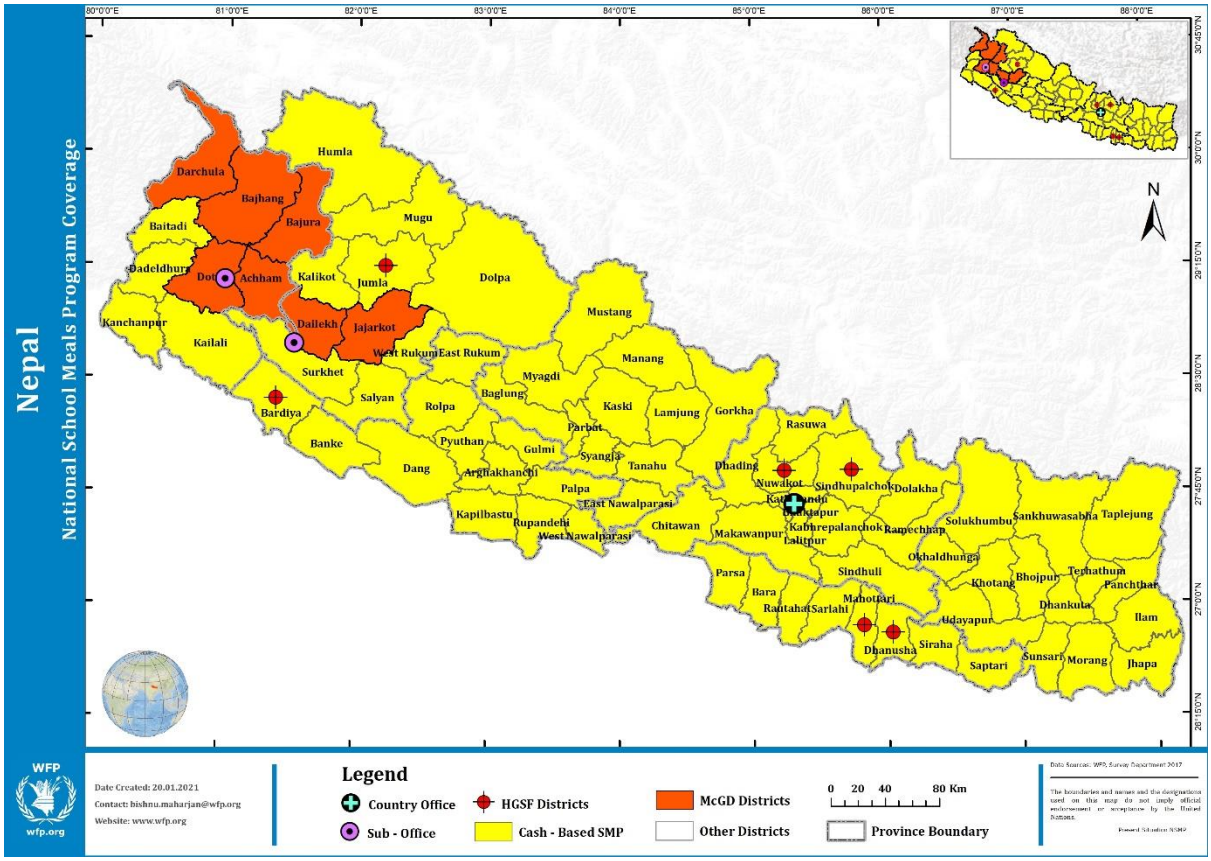

Figure 1: Map of Updated Food based and Cash based School meals programme.

37. In addition to the SMP, other program components—Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) (that reached out to 105,320 students across 1,005 schools), Digital Literacy (DL; reaching to 1,805 students across 104 schools), School Infrastructure Development Programme (SIDP; 14,408 students across 60 schools out of which 20 schools have been reached) are being implemented as part of the FY17 award cycle. The four-year activity budget is 29 million US dollars, out of which approximately 6 million is allotted for capacity strengthening, 7 million have been allocated for food transfer and 7 million for Internal Transport and Handling Support (ITHS). The program, by design, reaches out to the intended number of students (Annex XVIII), through various interventions, multiple times. The details of the MGD funding cycles, starting 2005, are provided below.

Table 1: McGovern Dole Funding in Nepal

Partner	Awarded	Budget	Duration	Areas covered
WFP	FY2020	$25 million	3 years	Doti, Jajarkot, Bajhang, Darchula, Accham, Bajura
WFP	FY 2017-20	$29 million	4 years	Karnali (West Rukum, Dailekh, Jajarkot); Sudur Paschim (Accham, Baitadi, Bajhang, Bajura, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Doti) and Lumbini (East Rukum) provinces
WFP	FY 2014-16	$26.9 million	3 years	Mid (Dailekh, Rukum and Jajarkot) and Far-Western Districts (Bajhang, Baitadi, Doti, Dadeldhura, Achham, Bajura, Darchula,)
WFP	FY 2011-13	$18 million	3 years	Mid (Dailekh, Rukum and Jajarkot) and Far-Western Districts (Bajhang, Baitadi, Doti, Dadeldhura, Achham, Bajura, Darchula,)
WFP	FY 2005-11	$6.2 million	5 years	Rasuwa, Makwanpur, Nuwakot, Ramechhap and Udhaypur

38. **Planned outcomes:** The program has two strategic objectives, **i.e., Improve Literacy of School Aged Children (SO1) and Increase Use of Health and Dietary Practices (SO2)**. In the FY17 cycle, WFP has continued the holistic approach to programming, with activities grouped into seven major interventions: a) Distribute Food: Provide School Meals; b) Improve Student Enrolment/Attendance: Parental Engagement; c) Promote Improved Health: WASH; d) Support Improved Literacy: Early Grade Reading Program; e) Promote Improved Nutrition: School Meals Menu Planner Package (SMMPP) and Home-Grown School Feeding program (HGSF); f) Support Improved Safe Food Preparation and Storage and g) Build Capacity to strengthen the MoEST at the national and sub-national levels[6].

39. The program has been implemented by WFP CO in collaboration with national implementation partners. Over time, there have been certain modifications from the original program design. For the SMP, two districts (Baitadi and Dadeldhura) have transitioned into a cash-based mode in 2019 while two more (Rukum East and West) were expected to during 2020. The three-star WASH intervention[7] has been adopted across all SMP schools while SMMPP has been adapted and expanded across 2 programme districts[8].

Table 2: Implementation partners and activities.

Component	Implementation partner	Partner type	Key change in implementation[9]
School Meal Program (SMP)	CEHRD, GoN	Government	The SMP in the session 2075/76 will focus on 1,591 schools across 9 districts, with 2 districts having transitioned to the government cash-based program
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	Integrated Development Society	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	The three-star approach for WASH has been implemented in 9 program districts, in schools where SMP is functional
Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP)	World Education	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	Collectively the intervention is covering 6 districts (Bajhang, Darchula, Doti, Jajarkot, Rukum East and Rukum West).
Digital Literacy (DL),	Open Learning Exchange, Nepal	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	
School Meals Menu Planner Package (SMMPP) and Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF)	Partnership for Child Development	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	WFP is adapting the SMMPP to the Nepal context and implementing the approach in the existing cash-based SMP districts in consultation with CEHRD and will later be expanded to other NSMP districts.

1.2. Context

40. Over the years, the Government of Nepal, along with various national and international development agencies, have undertaken initiatives to reduce poverty and promote economic growth in the country. Despite the efforts, Nepal remains one of the poorest nations in the world. The Human Development report puts Nepal's poverty prevalence rate at 25.2 percent with a Human Development Index of 0.579 (2018)[10]. While the poverty prevalence rate has been falling in Nepal, there are still signs of large geographical variation with much higher levels of poverty in rural and mountainous areas, especially the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces. The provinces have been the focus of development interventions over the last 30 years or more. The National Living Standard Survey (NLSS) II (2003-4) and III (2010-11)[11] show that Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces had significantly higher chronic poverty than the rest of Nepal. With the issues plaguing the Karnali,

[6] USDA, 2020. *Annual Work Plan*. McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Nutrition Program. USDA.
[7] The Three Star Approach for WASH in Schools is designed to improve the effectiveness of hygiene behaviour change programmes for children and complements UNICEF's broader child-friendly schools initiative and GIZ's 'Fit for School' approach, which promote safe, healthy and protective learning environments.
[8] USDA, 2020. *Annual Work Plan*. McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Nutrition Program. USDA.
[9] USDA, 2020. *Annual Work Plan*. McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Nutrition Program. USDA.
[10] UNDP. (2019). Human Development Report 2019. Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century. New York.
[11] CBS. 2004. Nepal Living Standards Survey, 2003/04: Statistical Report, Volume One. Kathmandu, Nepal: Central Bureau of Statistics.

Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces, the region awaits a sustainable development approach with proper planning.

41. Like in other developing countries, emigration of Nepalese citizens, especially male members, to neighbouring countries in search of improved earning options has been growingto address the wide-spread poverty and is seen to be the most opted form of livelihood strategies across the country[12]. Among the districts in these provinces, Jajarkot, Dailekh, and Achham report maximum migration incidences. While emigration has a significant positive effect on Nepal's economy, there are significant socio-economic ramifications. The NLSS 2011 data show that out of those aged 6-24 years who never attended school/college, a quarter (25.5 per cent) could not go to school as they had to help at home[13].

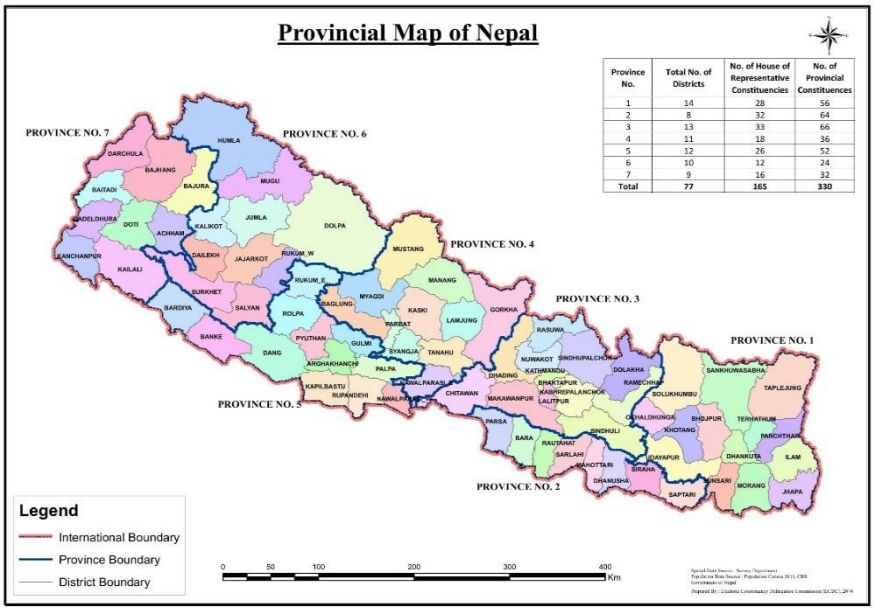

Figure 2: Provincial map of Nepal. Source:

42. The already existing contingencies in Nepal have been adversely affecting the basic health and education parameters with high malnutrition and food insecurity rates. The same is only expected to be amplified with the onset of the recent pandemic, especially in regions which have poor access to facilities. The overall socio-cultural fabric of the nation has played a role in determining access to services, and hence, development of the different regions. Historically, formal education in Nepal had been limited to the elite. With the onset of democracy, formal education has seen greater uptake. However, the access remained largely inequitable with women not encouraged to enroll themselves. It is also seen that there is a gender disparity in the outreach of services and benefits. Despite the government's focus on women's equality, cultural barriers, patriarchal norms, and discriminatory practices like the practice of *Chaupadi*[14], negatively affect the status of women in Nepal. With a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.476, Nepal ranks 115th out of 162 countries, gender inequality and discrimination still plagues the country[15].

43. The situation gets exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak. The UN Women Nepal findings[16] pointed out that the COVID-19 has not only affected access to healthcare facilities but have increased the overall domestic drudgery for women. Food insecurity, loss of livelihood and return of migrant workers make many women susceptible to gender-based violence. Also, evidence suggests that women's food consumption is most at risk when a household access to food diminishes. Moreover, the closure of schools has increased the unpaid care burden on women and girls. These contextual factors stress upon the need for interventions that focus on gender equity or GEEW metrices.

44. With all the factors notwithstanding, the Government of Nepal has been focusing on holistic approach towards education as a key driver of development. It has been making consistent and significant progress in achieving its education goals, a key initiative being the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP), 2016-2023. The SSDP focuses on developing quality education that responds to the specific needs of school children, particularly considering marginalized communities such as those in the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces.

45. **Presence of WFP:** WFP has been working closely with the GoN since 1964 to inform policy decisions and to provide support on developmental issues relating to food security, focusing on social safety nets in the areas of

[12] Laxman Singh Kunwar. (2015). Emigration of Nepalese people and its impact. Economic Journal of Development issues
[13] UNICEF. (2016). Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children: Nepal Country Study (2016).
[14] Chhaupadi is a social system in the western part of Nepal for Hindu women which prohibits a woman from participating in normal family activities during menstruation because they are considered impure.
[15] UNDP, (2019). Human Development Report 2019
[16] UN Women. (2020). Gender Equality Update, Gender in COVID response, UN Women.

nutrition, education, and rural livelihoods especially in the remote mountainous regions as well as responding to needs during natural calamities which Nepal experiences frequently. With the completion of the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan in 2018, WFP officially commenced its Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2019-2023, in January 2019. As part of the same, WFP continues to support vulnerable populations living in remote and hard to reach areas across Nepal through providing cash and food assistance, designing a national school meal programme which provides a nutritious meal to over 2 million students, developing inclusive and coherent policy frameworks across national, provincial, and local levels of Government and working closely with the Ministry of Home Affairs to strengthen emergency preparedness (Annexure XXI).

46. **Presence of other international organisations**: Assistance in these efforts have also come by other international bodies which have consistently supported Nepal in its initiatives.

Table 3: International Aids in Nepal

International body	Program Domains	Geography
UNICEF	UNICEF's programmes for 2018-2022 will focus on areas related to health, nutrition, child protection, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, and social protection.[17]	Country level
Save the Children, Nepal	Program domains include Childs Rights Governance, Child Protection, Education, Health and Nutrition, Livelihoods, HIV and AIDS and Humanitarian Response.	Working with over 100 partners in 63 districts of Nepal
Plan International, US	Interventions specific in health, education, earthquake response and COVID 19 response [18]	Presence in 8 districts of Nepal and working through partners in 42 districts across the whole country, including districts in Karnali Province.
Helen Keller Nepal	Activities include essential nutrition actions, homestead food production, local multisector governance, and improved nutrition interpersonal communication. Also using ARCH research to advocate for improved programs for infant and young child nutrition, and COVID-19 response[19].	Country Level
GIZ	Support to the Health Sector Programme (S2HSP)	Far Western, Mid-Western and Central development regions
Water Aid	Multiple programs addressing WASH needs of communities and their surrounding environments.	16-20 districts with the lowest ranking HDI number and severe water and sanitation issues (which includes districts in the three provinces targeted by the program)
Action Aid Nepal	Women's rights, Education, disaster management, Resilient livelihoods and COVID 19 mitigation[20].	16 districts across Nepal (Including Doti, Bardiya, Bajura) in collaboration with 10 project partners.

Other organizations like Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Internal Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Department for International Development Cooperation, Finland (FINNIDA), Care Nepal, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), WaterAid and Adara Development have also been working in Nepal. (Annexure XXII).

47. One of the key development programs implemented and funded by the Government of Nepal is the **National School Meals Programme (NSMP)** under which children are provided with a mid-day meal at schools. The NSMP runs in 70 districts out of 77 districts and serves as a social safety net as a part of the education equity strategy. The government's program has a dual-modality, both cash and food-based and is implemented by the Centre for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) which was formerly the Department of Education (DoE). The WFP-Nepal provides in-kind support to certain districts in the Lumbini, Karnali and

[17] Country Programme Action Plan 2019-2022, Available at: https://www.unicef.org/nepal/media/191/file/CPAP%202018-2022.pdf
[18] Plan International, Activities in Nepal, Available at: https://plan-international.org/nepal
[19] Using ARCH research to advocate for improved programs for infant and young child nutrition, Available at: https://archnutrition.org/where-we-work/nepal/
[20] ActionAid, Nepal, Available at: https://nepal.actionaid.org/

Sudur Paschim provinces. Under the current grant, in-kind support began with all 11 districts in the fiscal year 2018 with a gradual transition of the government cash support to these districts in the subsequent fiscal years.

48. **The School Meals Programme (SMP)**, implemented by WFP since 1974, plays a significant role in bolstering the government strategy to strengthen the education system as well as reducing child malnutrition. The program, moving beyond its initial approach of providing school meals, now encompasses diverse child development aspects while maintaining its flagship activity of school feeding. The SMP has adopted a holistic approach to education by introducing several non-food activities like **early grade reading program, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, digital literacy**, **nutrition-sensitive learning**, construction and **rehabilitation of kitchens and rehabilitation of latrines and home-grown school feeding**. The program works closely with the MoEST and development partners to complement and support the government education and school feeding objectives. As per the Cost-Benefit Analysis report for the program implemented in 2017-2018, for every US $1 invested in the school meals, an economic value return of US $5.2 is generated over the lifetime of a beneficiary in the country's economy[21].

49. For the programme, which is to run over four years (2018-2021) to reach 236,000 school aged children in the hills and mountains of 11 districts in the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a key roadblock for implementation. In order to restrict the spread of the disease, Nepal institutionalized a nationwide lockdown. The lockdown led to closure of schools since April 2020 with partial re-opening of schools in around mid-November 2020 with the endorsement of the School Reopening Framework by the MoEST. With children not attending schools, the project implementation came to a standstill with only school meals being provided as a take-home ration in June/July 2020 and October 2020. To adapt to the school closure due to COVID-19 and ensure continued learning, alternative learning mechanism i.e. Tole Sikai or 'ward-focused education', was leveraged by the program, While the lockdown was lifted and schools gradually reopened towards December2020, the project implementation had been largely restricted in the pre-MTE phase while commenting on the perceived impact of COVID-19 on children's education.

50. Following the FY 14 end line study which highlighted the need for scalability and sustainability of the program, the MTE informs about the progress of the program while also commenting on the impact of COVID-19. While the COVID-19 restrictions limited the MTE's access to the direct beneficiaries, it relied on an evolved methodology to adapt to the situation and respond to the key asks. Despite the delays caused due to the COVID situation, there was a felt need to conduct the MTE at this juncture to take note not only of the perceived progress of the program towards the objectives but also the impact of COVID. Moreover, responding to the learning roles, the MTE has summarized the findings and has provided recommendations that can prove to be helpful for the program in its due course.

51. The MTE is mindful of the key issues that such programs, conducted worldwide, have faced and has attempted to establish a corollary in context of Nepal. In India, a similar study on micro-nutrient fortified school meals saw a positive response to the nutritional status of children. The study suggested standardization of fortification of school meals while also stressing on the need for encouraging hand-washing practices[22]. Evaluation of a similar program in Lao PDR[23], pointed out the need for strengthening gender component of such programs by encouraging both girls and boys to volunteer for the school meals programme activities such as cooking, gardening, fetching water and the collection of wood.

52. The FY17 intervention has stressed on interventions that could have an impact on gender dimension within the target group and the society. Programme components have gender-sensitive indicators such as ensuring participation and involvement of women members in the school management committees (SMC). Through its WASH component, WFP has supported the development of toilets for both boys and girls in some districts so that the lack of access to toilets does not hinder their attendance. At the community and school level, the programme aims to create a comfortable environment where discussions around girl child education can be initiated. In case of baseline assessment, indicators such as the number of school days for girl child, knowledge, and practices on WASH (menstrual hygiene in particular) vis-à-vis engagement in the child club, dropout amongst girls, and decision making for girls in case of dropouts were developed. The baseline had concluded that the SMP programme had influenced the gender dynamics of the community positively by encouraging education

[21] WFP (2018). National School Meals Programme in Nepal:Cost-Benefit Analysis.Kathmandu:WFP

[22] Assessment of fortification of Mid-Day Meal Programme in Dhenkanal, Odisha, Evaluation Report September 2019 Commissioned by WFP India Country Office, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)/ Indian Institute of Public Health, Bhubaneswar (IIPH)

[23] Decentralized Evaluation USDA Mc-GOVERN DOLE FY14-16; End-line evaluation in Lao PDR; Report of End line Evaluation October 2018; Prepared by: NR management Consultancy

for girls and emphasizing on its importance. Similarly, the MTE tries to understand the programme's impact on gender inclusion and analyse if the programme has been able to build upon the improved gender dynamics. Multiple activities such as the inclusion of girl child in education; overall involvement of women in the management of the SMP; discussions around WASH and menstrual hygiene have been carried out around improving gender dynamics within the community. The MTE will assess whether these activities have led to a more equitable distribution of gender roles.

53. The primary stakeholders and users of this evaluation are a) WFP (WFP CO, Nepal Office, WFP-HQ, and Office of Evaluation), b) USDA, c) Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), d) Food for Education Project (FFEP), e) Department of Education, Science and Technology f) Partners such as World Education Inc., Open Learning Exchange Nepal, Partnership for Child Development and Integrated Development Society (see Annex XII: Activity-wise Stakeholders Analysis Matrix). The findings from the MTE will also be useful to other Local Education Development Partner Group (LEDPG) like United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Civil Society and others under the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) who are supporting the government of Nepal's education sector plan and programs.

1.3. Evaluation methodology

54. The MTE study findings have been enquired and analysed in line with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Based on the OECD DAC criteria and as defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR), these criteria were considered a priority for the MTE. While the ToR does not mention Coherence as a criterion, the MTE has included Coherence since it has been included under the revised OECD-DAC evaluation criteria[24].

55. Key line of enquiry against each of the criteria as proposed in the ToR is annexed (Annex I). Some of the questions have been reframed as deemed appropriate to the evaluation subject and in discussion with WFP team. The evaluation matrix (Annex II) as highlighted in the ToR lists out the evaluation questions. The MTE has not completely responded to the questions around timeliness and efficiency. The evaluation was not designed to measure outcomes but understand perception of change around outcomes. In absence of this measurement, the MTE has not executed a cost-benefit analysis of the programme at its mid-term. Therefore, the key evaluation questions posed by the MTE study are:
    - ***Relevance:*** *How appropriate is the programme given the needs of the vulnerable groups Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces context of Nepal?*
    - ***Coherence:*** *Does the intervention aid or undermine other interventions by WFP or the government?*
    - ***Effectiveness:*** *To what extent is the learning and nutrition requirements of the school going children in Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces of Nepal being addressed by the program?*
    - ***Efficiency:*** *Is the return from the programme, vis-a-vis investments at par with other WFP initiatives in other countries as well as in Nepal?*
    - ***Impact:*** *Did the programme ensure or create a direction of the achievement of wider results at the beneficiary, programme or at the policy level?*
    - ***Sustainability:*** *Has the programme been able to influence policy or systems within the space of learning and nutrition in Nepal for future uptake by the system?*
    - ***Adequacy:*** *Is the programme outreach adequate or improvement are needed to be brought with respect to targeting?*
    - ***Transparency:*** *To what extent have all stakeholders been involved in the Programme's activities?*
    - ***Timeliness:*** *To what extent has the Programme activities been implemented in a timely manner?*

56. The MTE has attempted to respond to the evaluation questions. However, given the COVID-19 restrictions and the ensuing modification of the approach, the MTE could not respond in detail to a few criteria such as efficiency and timeliness. While efficiency necessitates the measurement of benefits, the MTE was limited in its capacity to measure outcomes. Hence, the cost benefit ratio could not be computed. Similarly, timeliness has not been discussed in detail since the program was disadvantaged in its execution due the COVID-19 induced lockdown. While some discussions have been included within efficiency sections, the discussion has largely been around COVID-19 adaptation approaches taken up by the program. The report also touches upon the THR distributions carried out during June/July and October 2020. For effectiveness and impact, the MTE used perception-based information from a sample of purposively selected respondents. While it was not advisable to conduct an in-person outcome and impact measurement, the MTE chose to report on these criteria since it would enable the

[24] OECD (December 2019). Better Criteria for Better Evaluation. Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for use. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf.

program to understand its achievements till date and devise course correction measures for the FY17 grant and strategies for future grants. It was also critical to understand how the program continues to address the key developmental gaps in the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim context and delves into the relevance of the program and its coherence with other national level as well as internationally funded initiatives.

57. The key subjects of evaluation, thus, included the direct stakeholders of the the McGovern-Dole program involving head-teachers, teachers, parents of beneficiary students, cooks, and storekeepers. Semi-structured interviews were administered to this group. In addition to the direct stakeholders, strategic stakeholders such as representatives from MoEST, CEHRD, FFEP, Education Directorate (under the Ministry of Social Development) as well as EDCU were also subjects of the evaluation. In addition, representatives from the implementation partners WE, OLE, PCD and IDS were also interacted with. Key informant interviews were administered to this cohort. Annex XI outlines the stakeholders of the MTE.

Table 4: MTE stakeholders

S. No	Stakeholder category	Stakeholders	Type of interaction	Total # of interaction
1.	Direct	Head teachers	Semi-structured interviews	225
2.		Teachers teaching early grade		225
3.		Cooks		225
4.		Storekeepers		32
5.		Parents of early grade children		450
6.	Indirect	Ministry of Education, Nepal	Key informant interview	2
7.		Department of Education, Nepal		2
8.		Food for Education Project, Nepal		2
9.		Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU), District offices		11
10.		Implementing partners		4

58. The MTE adopted the **quasi-experimental[25] design** with a **longitudinal panel** as adopted during the baseline. The comparison schools were selected during baseline from a sample frame of schools which were in the intervention geography but did not receive any program support. It was also ensured that these schools were basic schools and did not cover secondary schools which had early grade standards. Using the same panel of schools in the baseline, 45 comparison schools were included in the MTE.

59. **Sampling approach:** The MTE based itself on the longitudinal panel of schools selected randomly during the baseline. To reach the stakeholders, the study adopted a mix of purposive and random sampling approach. For the school staff, the study relied on purposive sampling. However, for parents, the study relied on sampling frame of parents whose telephone numbers had been collected during the baseline. Two parents, whose children were in early grade, were selected from each school. The key limitation of the sampling approach has been the preparation of the sampling frame. Since, the requirement of the study had been the availability of a mobile phone, this limited outreach to a significant proportion of the population. Hence, the MTE runs the risk of providing biased assessment of impacts especially through interactions with parents. The Annex XIV details out the sampling strategy. However, the study triangulation and validation approach, described later, assures of mechanisms to counter the possible biases.

60. **Primary data collection**: The MTE interacted with school staff and parents as the direct stakeholders of the program. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with these stakeholders to understand their perception of change due to the programme on child enrolment, attendance, attentiveness, education outcomes and hygiene practices. Annexure XV details out the objectives of the tools. These interactions were conducted over telephone. Key informant interviews were carried out with strategic stakeholders over telephone as well. The stakeholders involved government stakeholders and programme partners. These interactions have been useful in sieving out the perception of the stakeholders of the change. However, the study gets limited by the absence of actual

[25] Quasi-experimental designs help attribute changes to an intervention by creating a counterfactual. By analysing the difference in outcomes between the intervention units and the counterfactual, this design helps measure the attributable change. In this case, with the intervention areas already having been decided, a quasi-experimental design suited best.

measurement of change. To enhance the robustness of the findings, the study also relies significantly on secondary data to triangulate with primary findings. Annexure XX describes the study protocol.

61. With the COVID-19 acting as a roadblock to the implementation as well as the evaluation, methodological changes had to be made. Given the risks involved for the research team, implementation team as well as the stakeholders, in carrying out an in-person survey with the COVID-19 pandemic underway, the MTE chose to **adapt from in-person interactions** and shift to a **remote based data collection exercise**. Though the study, used a mixed method approach, it relied more on the qualitative approach with respect to its primary data collection efforts.

62. The MTE, hence, relied on telephonic interactions in a geography that is afflicted by poor network connectivity. This constrained the MTE in terms of its outreach. While reaching out to head teachers and teachers had been relatively simpler owing to their proximity to improved connectivity regions, outreach to cooks and parents who were local posed to be a challenge. Moreover, with both these categories of respondents being significantly affected by COVID-19 induced lockdown, ethical challenges also came into being. Many respondents were affected significantly by COVID and administering interviews to them posed certain ethical challenges.

63. **Literature review:**MTE also reviewed and analysed other relevant literature that helps triangulate the research findings.Reports by Government of Nepal, WFP as well as relevant journal articles were analysed. In addition, program assessments conducted by individual partners were also analysed. The MTE relied on perception based inputs from stakeholders and was limited in quantifying change in its actual terms. Triangulation, hence, formed to be a key requirement to adjudge if the perception trends matched with actual results. The MTE was fortunate to have followed the outcome monitoring exercise and hence a number of data points could be validated using such a literature resource. Multiple other resources were also used to triangulate the MTE findings. However, the McGovern-Dole program outcomes were affected by COVID-19 and the MTE faced the challenge of not having sufficient resources to triangulate these findings. A framework analysis approach was adopted for the secondary data. Key findings, from multiple resources, were bucketed into themes that pertain to the MTE evaluation queries. A summary of each bucket has been utilized in the study as a triangulation mechanism for the primary data. Across multiple queries, the MTE did not use the primary data to build the primary argument. Instead, it has focused on the secondary review and used qualitative findings as triangulation medium.

64. **Data validity and reliability:** The literature review also served the dual purpose of addressing data validity and reliability concerns while simultaneously providing metrics for program performance. The findings were triangulated with the McGovern-Dole program outcome monitoring reports in the same geography as well as reports of the partners. This helped ensure reliability of data. Back checks were also conducted by the data collection team with selected stakeholders. Moreover, the tools were also designed in a manner to measure internal and external validity of the responses by adding check questions across multiple stakeholders. For instance, both head teachers and teachers were asked about the change in student attention and attentiveness. This approach has been useful in validating the trends and has enhanced the reliability of the data. The findings have frequently used perceptions of both teachers and head teachers to establish an argument.

65. The study has also incorporated GEEW as a key assessment lens across most indicators. The MTE analyses the data disaggregated across gender of students. The McGovern-Dole program monitoring reports as well as the earlier evaluations delve slightly into a gender disaggregated analysis. The MTE has aimed at strengthening the gender lens by reporting on gender focused initiatives as well as intended and unintended impacts on gender. While the study delves into these aspects, remote means of data collection has limited capturing the nuances of gender impacts. Capturing gender impacts requires significant in-person interactions to tease out the nuances which the MTE was limited in its execution.

66. The study was carried out in accordance with United Nations Ethical Guidelines (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluations. A verbal consent was taken from the all the respondents before starting the interview. The respondents were given a choice to not participate in the data collection exercises. The enumerators were trained specifically to communicate the objectives of the study clearly to all stakeholders. Moreover, the MTE ensured anonymity of all stakeholders and confidentiality of their responses. The ethical challenges cited above were also

dealt by the data collection team by seeking permission from the respondents for participation. In case any respondent were not comfortable in participating, the interviews stood cancelled.

Assessment approaches for key study components

67. **Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA):** One of the significant components of the evaluation is EGRA which helps to understand the progress made in student learning outcomes attributable to the program. During the baseline evaluation, conventional EGRA instrument was used to measure oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, letter recognition, and phonemic awareness, among other skills predictive of future reading success. Given the guidelines, EGRAs are required to be conducted through one-on-one interactions, the feasibility of which appeared limited given the COVID-19 scenario. Hence, **interviews with schoolteachers** of Grade II**, head teachers** as well as **parents** were conducted to elicit qualitative understanding on the learning outcomes. These are not comparable to the EGRAs conducted during the baseline.

68. **School Meal Menu Planner (SMMP) and the Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) program**: In 2019, Baitadi and Dadeldhura transitioned from WFP's in-kind SMP program to the government's cash-based program. In one municipality of both the districts, PCD was to implement the SMMP program while facilitating linkages with local producers for homegrown produce for school feeding. However, due to the COVID-19 restricitions and obstacles posed by the same, the program was not implemented in the aforementioned districts. Since the HGSF program was much applauded by different stakeholders, the MTE found value in understanding how HGSF was implemented in previosuly piloted districts, document best practices and lessons. Thus, case studies were conducted in Bardiya and Mahottari. One school from each district was selected in consultation with WFP and key stakeholders were contacted and information was collected through telephonic interviews. Previous monitoring, evaluation, and other studies by partner organisations were reviewed and data was triangulated to construct a narrative.

69. **School Infrastructure Development Programme (SIDP):** For the SIDP intervention as well, a case-study approach was employed for getting insights. 60 schools were planned in FY 17 (20 schools each from Achham, Dailekh and Jajarkot). The implementation was successfully completed in Dailekh and is near completion in Jajarkot. One school from each implementation district was selected in consultation with WFP and IDS. Telephonic interviews were conducted with the head teacher at the schools selected based on a qualitative guideline developed. Questions were asked to understand the change in the hygiene practices, water use and health outcomes due to improvement in school infrastructure.

70. **Digital Literacy initiative**: Like the baseline, a case-study approach of assessment was opted for the DL initiative as well. One school with DL intervention was selected from each of the six DL intervention districts in consultation with, OLE. Telephonic interviews with one early grade teacher teaching with e-pati (digital interactive learning activities) and headteacher were conducted for each school. Questions were asked to understand aspects relating to session delivery, student response and enthusiasm as well as the state of infrastructure and equipment.

1.4. Limitations of the approach

71. The methodology proposed for the MTE—keeping in mind the COVID situation and the most feasible options of conducting the MTE during these times—posed certain limitations.

- *Using remote data collection mechanisms:* The lack of visual cues (that ease communication), loss of non-verbal visual data and the inability of the researcher to use body language for probing were limitations considered by the MTE. The lack of observational data posed an additional challenge in triangulating information. In addition, poor mobile connectivity also led to dropping of some sample points and re-sampling new respondents.

- *Limited time and complexity of questions:* While the tools used during the baseline face-to-face study were more detailed, phone surveys are unavoidably contrained by time and hence, require shorter and concise tools. Perceptive of the time constraints of respondents, the tools were modified and concisely put together with focus on key issues and indicators relevant to the stakeholders.

- *Selection bias of respondents:* The purposive sampling of respondents exposes the MTE to selection biases. Alongside this, only those respondents who could be reached using the medium of phone calls were selected for

the study. Using remote data collection mechanisms also limited the reach to the vulnerable population of the study regions.

- *Lack of comparability with baseline:* Since, the design of the baseline and the MTE have been significantly different, comparison with the baseline has been limited. Bearing these challenges in mind, the questions for the MTE have been framed in a manner that speaks change observed during the two years of implementation This restricted the comparison of MTE results with that of baseline results.

- *Lack of updated data for triangulation:* Though the MTE made use of data triangulation wherever possible, there were challenges faced due to the changing circumstances in lieu of COVID-19 and availability of limited data. Also, the protracted timelines and delay caused in conducting the MTE owing to the pandemic added to the challenge of finding relevant and up to date data.

- *Inability to measure outcomes***:** With the design being adapted to suit COVID-19 restrictions, the MTE has been limited in its ability to measure outcomes. This has led to the MTE not being able to calculate the cost-benefit of the programme.

- *Lack of observation data:* Key outcome indicators (skills of teachers, administrators, cooks; personal hygiene; sanitation behavior by students) could not be reported due to lack of observation data. Since, most stakeholders were away from the school, photographic evidence and access to school records could not be sought as well.

2. Evaluation Findings

72. This section presents the field findings and assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the program with gender equity and inclusion mainstreamed throughout. The section also includes findings on coherence of the program; the sixth criteria added by Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD DAC) in 2019, to provide a more comprehensive picture of the intervention, the process of implementation, and the results. The findings have been reported based on data collected from both primary and secondary sources.

73. For the primary survey, conducted through telephonic means, quantitative and qualitative findings from the stakeholders were triangulated before arriving at the overall findings. Wherever appropriate, gender dimensions were factored into the sub-questions, assessment criteria, and the indicators for each evaluation question.

2.1. Relevance

How appropriate is the programme given the needs (of the vulnerable groups) in Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces of Nepal?

74. The relevance of FY17 program has been examined by looking at the needs that the program intended to support; if the changes in the program design were appropriate and in line with the needs of the community; the appropriateness of the program with government policies and strategies as well as WFP's country strategy (2019-23); the choice of activities implemented through the program, including gender responsiveness.

75. As highlighted in previous section, despite efforts by the Federal Government as well as national and international development agencies to promote economic growth in Nepal, the poverty prevalence rate remains high (25.2 %[26]) with 28.6% of Nepal's population remaining multi-dimensionally poor[27]. Moreover, the country has been historically exposed to high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition. With a score of 19.5, Nepal now falls in the "moderate" category as per the Global Hunger Index 2020. The Global Hunger Index, over the years, reflects significant progress on reducing undernourishment, a declining—though still high—rate of child stunting, modest improvement in child wasting, and a substantial decline in child mortality[28]. While the development indices show improvement in Nepal, there are large geographical variations with much higher levels of poverty in rural and mountainous areas, especially the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces. Due to remoteness of these provinces, access to basic services in these regions have been limited. Studies point out that these provinces are disadvantaged in terms of chronic poverty[29,30], vulnerability to natural disasters, risk and resilience and food insecurity.

Adequacy

76. In light of this context of the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini, the McGovern-Dole Program was designed to address nutritional and educational needs of the region. The program targeted schools located in difficult terrain through provision of mid-day school meals in nine districts and two districts through cash-assistance. FY14-17 cycle consisted of a 110 grams portion of hot fortified porridge (locally known as Halwa) which was prepared with: 90 grams of corn soya blend (CSB), 10 grams of sugar, and 10 grams of vegetable oil. While the food was scientifically fortified with vitamins and mineral to address nutritional deficiency and the need of the region, the FY14 end line findings commented on the appropriateness of serving Halwa instead of rice, the stable food grain in the MFWR region. Since, it was not the stable diet of the student, the students had to acquire the taste of CSB which had often led to children not consuming the food and wasting it. Drawing on the end line findings of the FY14 cycle, for FY17, a change in food basket from corn-soya blend and vegetable oil (haluwa) to fortified rice, lentils, vegetable oil and salt (dal-bhaat) was introduced and is being followed in the all the 9 programme districts. students are provided with a daily mid-day meal comprised of a daily ration of 80g of fortified rice, 20g of lentils, 10g vitamin A fortified vegetable oil, and 2g iodized salt for 200 days per year per student. This is also supplemented by vegetables and fruits from school gardens. Thus, presenting a diverse food basket to the students, tailored to local preferences and demographic profile of region. The School Meal initiative,

[26] UNDP. (2019). Human Development Report 2019. Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century. New York. Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-2019

[27] Central Bureau of Statistics of Nepal and OPHI. (2018). Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index 2018: Analysis towards Action. GoN and OPHI. Retrieved from https://ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Nepal_MPI-22-12-2017.pdf

[28] A Closer Look at Hunger and Undernutrition in Nepal. (2021). Retrieved 10 January 2021, from https://www.globalhungerindex.org/case-studies/2020-nepal.html

[29] CBS. (2011). Nepal Living Standards Survey, 2010/11: Statistical Report, Volume One. Kathmandu, Nepal: Central Bureau of Statistics

[30] DFID. (2017). Regional Dimensions of Poverty and Vulnerability in Nepal, Department of International Development.

as expressed by government officials, have become a necessity to not only be a driver for school enrolment but a program that is helping ensure better education outcomes. Thus, highlighting the continuing relevance of the programme in the current education development context.

77. Moreover, in the districts (Dadeldhura and Baitadi) which transitioned in 2019 from food to cash, the program has stressed on capitalizing on local food basket by promoting procurement of food items—based on pre-designed school menu—from local farming community. While the implementation of the same has suffered because of the COVID situation, the pilot of the program component in non-SMP districts yielded positive results. The implementation of the same is expected to not only encourage nutritional intake for students but also aided local farmers by providing them with a market platform for their produce. This perspective was also shared by officials who see immense potential in promoting local food basket produced by local farming community.

"WFP is supporting school meal programme since a long and will continue three years more in this district. It is supporting food-based transfer but after three years will change the modality of cash transfer for the school meal. Cash transfer modality will create opportunity to use locally produced nutritious food for day meal. The changing modality will encourage farmers to produce more nutritious food for selling and for their own consumption. It also will create a sense of community ownership and more accountability for the school because they have to manage and procure locally produced food." (EDCU Official, Bajura)

78. Socio-cultural norms prevalent in Nepal have also contributed to inequitable access to education. Female children as well as children belonging to the backward communities have been historically denied access to quality education[31]. The causes for inequity ranges from intra-household to community level socio-cultural barriers. The deep-sheathed patriarchal approach to household dynamics comes up as a key cause. Girls are continued to be identified as an outsider to a household, leading to a lower investment in their education by the families[32]. At the community level, discrimination against *Dalits* have denied generations access to quality education. The situation is worse in the Karnali and Sudur Paschim regions[33]. The new Nepalese federal constitution has worked towards reducing this inequity by instating compulsory and free basic education as a constitutional right. The SSDP has also worked towards reducing these gaps by preparing pre-aged children through Early Childhood Development Centres (EDCs) for basic education, ensuring equitable access to quality education for all, especially women and people from marginalized groups[34].

79. The McGovern-Dole Program FY17 concurs with the vision of reducing this inequity and has emphasized on increasing enrolment, attendance, and retention for girls, along with boys. The WFP School Feeding Policy (2013) and Gender Policy (2015-20) emphasized recognizing and including specific needs of young girls, ethnic and religious minorities. These approaches are highly relevant given the socio-cultural fabric of the regions. The program advocates raising awareness at the community level and inclusion of women through creation of FMC and SMC involving women members at each level of these local institutions. Moreover, to enhance the effectiveness of the MGD initiatives, program partner PCD introduced the concept of mother empowerment by making mothers responsible for the home-grown school feed supply chain. This initiative belies on the assumption that once well sensitized, mothers will show greater readiness to be actively involved in the overall SMP.

"Increased female representation SMC/FMC/PTA, LG due to the program efforts has created an enabling environment for gender empowerment in respective communities." (MoEST Official)

80. School meals have been provided under this program to not only address the food insecure conditions of the three provinces but also to aid learning outcomes. One of the strategic outcomes of the McGovern-Dole Program is to enhance student attentiveness and attendance through the school meals. Interactions with head teachers

[31] Neupane, Pramila (2019). Policy Framework for Education. International Education Studies (89-97)
[32] Sapkota J. B., Paudel, D. B., Neupane, P., & Thapa, R. B. (2019). Preference for sex of children among women in Nepal. Global Social Welfare, 6(2), 69-78
[33] Department for International Development [DFID]. (2006). Unequal citizens: Gender, caste, and ethnic exclusion in Nepal. Kathmandu: The World Bank.
[34] Ministry of Education (2016). *School Sector Development Plan 2016/17-2022/23*. Government of Nepal

and teachers indicate that the School Meals Programme has led to significant increase in attention and attentiveness. The increase appeared higher for girl students than boys.

"Where the program is being implemented, it is observed that the enrolment of students has increased for basic education and the attendance rate has also seen an increase (than before). Not only this, but the students also pay attention on their studies, they are able to concentrate better because they receive the day meal on time in the school and they do not feel hungry." (EDCU Official, Bajura)

81. To ensure student attendance, attentiveness and learning outcomes, the program goes beyond providing midday meals. In partnership with the World Education Inc. (WE) and Open Learning Exchange (OLE), MGD worked towards introducing improved learning techniques. The main interventions include provision of early grade reading materials, supplementary reading materials to schools along with on-site support to teachers by reading motivators, provision of interactive digital content on computer devices, trainings for teachers and school administrators, and trainings for parent teacher associations and school management committees to improve literacy of school-aged children. Also, to reduce health-related absenteeism, WFP collaborated with IDS to improve access to water, rehabilitate toilets for boys and girls, and impart training on hygiene.

82. The relevance of the programme implementation modalities is also subject to federal structure. Like in case of the baseline study, there remain to be ambiguities on the implementational modalities of the SMP. The shift to federal structure of governance, expected to have an impact on how the programme is monitored and implemented. However, there are still uncertainties whether the same will be positive or negative. The currently inadequate involvement of local government was expressed as a matter of concern by some officials.

"There are limited roles given to the local government in kind model. Though some of the local elected representatives are taking initiation to support the SMP, for example, some municipalities in Dailekh district have opened the discussion to manage the midday meals on their behalf, it is not the case everywhere." (Official at the provincial level)

"I don't think that local institutions are fully influenced by the WFP. A big reorientation is needed to manage food locally. Only providing token amount of money to the schools/students does not work as expected." (Official at the provincial level)

But the strength of the federal system, if implemented correctly, was recognized, and appreciated by implementing partners.

"Federalism is a great opportunity for the School Meals Program and its various components. In the new context, if everyone is sensitized, the successful implementation (of the program) is possible even if the national govt. funding is insufficient. Local govt. can allocate the budget and if they are really sensitized, it works very well." (Implementation partner)

"Previously the local government did not support, understand and know about the activities (we were engaged in). Support was given to school, but there was a gap in terms of the right person to oversee and maintain the school activities and the infrastructure. Thus, chances of misuse then were higher. Now with the local govt. education units, they will monitor, oversee, and extend support to the schools. They will also feel proud and take accountability of the school. Thus, the infrastructure provided as well as the program efforts will be sustainable in a way." (Implementation Partner)

83. However, the program targets only basic schools. Given that the contextual difficulties also exist for secondary school students, the MGD does not reach out to those students. This outreach appears inequitable since the students of the same age group get denied of the key development attributes such as food, education, and nutrition.

"There are 4123 basic schools and 6, 96,589 students are enrolled in Karnali. Among them, only 401 schools and approximately 44,000 students are privileged with the fortified rice. Looking at the figure of beneficiaries there is very little impact of the program in education in Karnali province." (Official at Provincial level)

2.2. Coherence

Does the intervention aid or undermine other interventions by WFP, the government or other international bodies?

Coherence with Government Policies

84. The McGovern-Dole Program FY17 is coherent with the relevant national policies and strategies for improving the education and nutrition sectors. The Government of Nepal (GoN) addresses holistic well-being of students through the **School Sector Development Plan (SSDP)** developed by the Ministry of Education[35]. The SSDP intends to streamline education in Nepal by focusing on quality learning environment. The SSDP acknowledges and works towards ensuring a safe and hygienic school environment for children. There has been focus on building logistical and teacher capacities to promote learning. Additionally, the SSDP identifies improved nutrition and adequate food as a driver for improved cognitive abilities of students, hence instituting school meals in areas of poverty and food insecurity.

85. The SSDP had attempted to enhance schooling systems by addressing short-term hunger among school children and micro-nutrient deficiencies. The National Education System Plan also clearly laid out the need for the provision of physical facilities in schools such as lighting and ventilation, furniture appropriate to classroom needs, school garden, playground, and sports field. Basic and Primary Education Program Implementation Plan (BPEP II, 1999- 2004) focused on improved access, particularly for girls and disadvantaged children, to reduce overcrowding in Grade 1 and 2, enhancing the quality of classroom space, and upgrading environmental and health situation in primary schools by a strong emphasis on sanitation and water supply.

86. The SSDP is also designed to address significant inequities that affect education access in Nepal. Historically, education access in Nepal, has faced gender and caste barriers with girl students as well as students belonging to ethnic minority groups denied access to quality education. The SSDP founds itself on equity and quality as two objective pillars while focusing on remote areas, gender, and ethnic minorities. The focus on gender was also observed for earlier Education for All (EFA) policy (2002-2015) which stressed on gender mainstreaming and training teachers and other school stakeholders to be gender sensitive[36].

87. Given Nepal's food and nutritional insecurity standards, the GoN identifies education policies as means to enhance children heath and nutrition status. School feeding initiatives have been introduced in Nepal since 1974 and have covered 43 districts through two types of school feeding programs by 2019-20. The Education Policy, 2019 also discusses provision of school feeding. However, there is presently no separate and specific policy or strategy for school feeding. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) has developed a School Meal Standards and Facilitation Manual (SMSFM) for public schools, which provides some guidance for implementers, but this document does not consider as the mandatory provision by the local governments. The **National School Meals Program (NSMP)** by the GoN provides midday meal at schools for children under the **Free and Compulsary Education Act, 2018 (FCEA**). This initiative has been designed as a social safety net as a part of the education equity strategy. The government's program has a dual-modality, both cash and food-based, and is implemented by the Centre for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) which was formerly the Department of Education (DoE). However, a review of the school feeding program in Nepal indicates that the provision is currently not mandated and is limited in terms of its outreach. Currently, the meal provision under the FCEA 2018 does not include students beyond Grade V. Moreover, it does not cover students going to private schools under its ambit[37].

88. To complement the current GoN efforts towards school feeding, the WFP-Nepal provides in-kind support to certain districts in the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces. Under the current grant, in-kind support began with all 11 districts in the fiscal year 2018-19 with a gradual transition of the government cash support to these districts in the subsequent fiscal years. The **School Meals Programme (SMP)**, implemented by WFP since 1974, plays a significant role in bolstering the government strategy to strengthen the education system as well as reducing child malnutrition. The program, moving beyond its initial approach of providing school meals, now encompasses diverse child development aspects while maintaining its flagship activity of school feeding.

[35] Ministry of Education (2016). *School Sector Development Plan 2016/17-2022/23*. Government of Nepal
[36] Neupane, Pramila (2019). *Policy Framework for Education*. International Education Studies (89-97)
[37] Poudel, L.N., Haag, P.(2020). *System Approach for Better Education Results –School Feeding, Nepal*. World Food Programme *(Draft)*

The SMP has adopted a holistic approach to education by introducing several non-food activities like **digital literacy**, **nutrition-sensitive learning** and construction, **rehabilitation of kitchens and rehabilitation of latrines**.

89. The SSDP also emphasizes on reducing gender-based disparities in the education system. It looks at ensuring gender-sensitive learning environment by creation of toilets for girl students, enhancing access to learning materials and teaching facilities. Aligning with the government objectives, MGD promotes gender and social equality by giving equal opportunity to different groups to engage in the SMP. As part of the program, interactions were carried out with adolescent girls on menstrual health and female community members were encouraged to be a part of the School Management Committee (SMC) and Food Management Committee (FMC). The various components of the program like provision of day meal, improved focus on the sanitation and hygiene practices as well as continuation of different learning mechanisms put in place due to COVID-19, like Tole Sikai, are also coherent with the Government's (MoEST) school re-opening framework which was formulated with the help of a technical committee comprising of UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP and World Bank.

Coherence with WFP's Country Programme

90. The WFP Nepal Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023) reflects the zero hunger strategic review recommendations to achieve zero hunger by 2030. The CSP provides support for the government in its work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The CSP outlines five strategic objectives to address the SDG targets: 1) timely access to adequate food and nutrition during and in aftermath of natural disasters, 2) food-insecure people in targeted areas to have improved nutrition throughout the key stages of their lives, 3) vulnerable communities in remote food-insecure areas have improved food security and resilience to climate and other shocks, 4) Strengthened capacities of the Government to provide essential food security and nutrition services and respond to crises, 5) Government efforts towards achieving zero hunger by 2030 are supported by inclusive and coherent policy frameworks across all spheres of government[38].

91. The McGovern-Dole Program aligns with all the strategic objectives of the CSP. The program works towards enhancing nutritional status of children through its school feeding initiatives. The dual school feeding approach (cash and food support) ensures necessary nutritional support. Resonating with the second strategic objective, MGD works towards improving nutrition for a specific yet key life stage i.e., early childhood. Although not a natural disaster in its truest form, the COVID-19 had significant impact on household access to food. The program resumed supply of meals to students in the COVID-19 aftermath, thus, subscribing to WFP's first strategic objective.

92. The program's operation in the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces which are high on the vulnerability index in terms of exposure to natural disasters as well as other human development indicators indicates its commitment to the third strategic objective. The program, plays a critical role in aiding the food security transition in the region. While the program is not designed to improve resilience of communities against any climate or other shocks, it has been creating a food security transition in the region. With schools turning out to be demand centres for nutrition rich food, it also encourages local farmers to expand the cropping basket[39] and promote local food in the region.

93. The importance of building capacities in the government for making it responsive to community needs is critical for the success of a social safety program. The program has been in continuous interactions with government officials, exposing them to workshops and carrying out exposure visits. These initiatives of the program to build capacities of the government systems reflect the WFP's fourth strategic objective.

Coherence with Other development programs

94. WFP's school feeding activity targets school-aged children in food insecure and remote areas. Working closely with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank, WFP provides technical support to the Government for the

[38] World Food Program (2019). *Country Strategic Plan*. Retrieved 19 January 2021 from https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/9e280ff2cc1846ba85108050995de293/download/?_ga=2.36867875.2047765219.1614340591-1023383141.1589883520

[39] Poudel, L.N., Haag, P.(2020). *System Approach for Better Education Results –School Feeding, Nepal*. World Food Programme *(Draft)*

School Sector Development Plan (2016-2022). In 2020, World Bank signed an additional grant to the School Sector Development Program (SSDP) to maintain access to basic education and continued learning for children amid the COVID-19 crisis[40]. Alongside this the EGR component of the FY17 current cycle complements the efforts of USAID's Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) which, since 2015, has been partnering with the Nepal Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) and other partners to develop an early grade reading program that the Government of Nepal can replicate and expand to all districts of the country in a cost-effective and sustainable manner. With focus on increasing the proportion of grade 1–3 public primary students who can read and understand grade-level text, improving national and sub-national early grade reading service delivery and increase family and community support for early grade reading, EGRP was primarily active in 16 districts: Banke, Bardiya, Bhaktapur, Dadeldhura, Dang, Dhankuta, Dolpa, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Kaski, Manang, Mustang, Parsa, Rupandehi, Saptari, and Surkhet[41].

95. The different components of the McGovern-Dole Program are also coherent with other development programs in the targeted geographic regions. The program's focus on health and hygiene through the WASH component is coherent with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded, five-year (2016 – 2021) Health and Hygiene Activity, named as Swachchhata which aims to contribute to Nepal's 2014–2018 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) goal of a healthier and well-nourished population[42]. The project uses an integrated approach with focus on improving quality of health and hygiene, in the Mid-Western Development Region (MWDR) i.e., the two mountain districts of Kalikot and Dolpa and the three hill districts, Jajarkot, Rukum, and Salyan. In line with WASH efforts in Nepal, Plan International has implemented programs to support the building of girl-friendly toilets and other WASH facilities to inspire girls to continue their education, while also encouraging and helping women to take up more leadership roles in community-based WASH committees[43]. The programs supported and implemented by these International organizations complement the various activities of the program.

96. In tandem with the program efforts towards better nutrition and health of children, USAID's Suaahara II "Good Nutrition" Program also aims to improve the nutritional status of women and children in 40 underserved rural districts of Nepal. In particular, the project addresses anaemia, reproductive health, menstrual hygiene, food diversity, social attitudes towards delayed marriage and pregnancy, and health service utilization[44]. Alongside this, the program components indirectly impact gender and social inclusion. This is also in congruence with USAID and UNICEF's "Zero Tolerance, Gender-based Violence-Free Schools" project which aims to reduce the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence and promote equitable learning outcomes for adolescent girls and boys[45].

2.3. Effectiveness

To what extent is the learning and nutrition requirements of the school going children in Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces of Nepal being addressed by the program?

97. This section delves into the key results that have been observed through the MTE survey. The section speaks about the effectiveness of the program interventions in creating an enabling ecosystem for SMP to achieve its strategic objectives.

Component: Improve Student Enrolment and Attendance

[40] US$10.85 Million additional grant to support learning and build resilient education sector in Nepal amid COVID-19 crisis. (2020). Retrieved 26 February 2021, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/09/04/us1085-million-additional-grant-to-support-learning-and-build-resilient-education-sector-in-nepal-amid-covid-19-crisis

[41] USAID's Early Grade Reading Program builds a sustainable foundation for improving children's reading fluency and comprehension in Nepal, RTI International. Retrieved 18 March 2021, from https://www.rti.org/impact/reading-their-way-better-future#:~:text=Since%20April%202015%2C%20USAID's%20Early,country%20in%20a%20cost%2Deffective

[42] Nepal Health and Hygiene Activity–Swachchhata. Retrieved 1 March 2021, from https://www.globalwaters.org/HowWeWork/Activities/nepal-health-and-hygiene-activity-swachchhata

[43] Plan International Nepal Annual Highlights 2019. (2019).

[44] FACT SHEET: SUAAHARA PROJECT II – GOOD NUTRITION Program. Retrieved 28 February 2021, from https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/fact-sheet-suaahara-project-ii-%E2%80%93-good-nutrition-program

[45] Zero Tolerance: Gender-Based Violence Free Schools | Fact Sheet | Nepal | U.S. Agency for International Development. Retrieved 1 March 2021, from https://www.usaid.gov/nepal/fact-sheets/zero-tolerance-gbv-free-schools-nepal

98. The shift in the Nepalese constitution[46] in 2015, led to education being made a fundamental right[47]. As a result of the concerted government push to enhance access and quality of education, primary enrolment in schools crossed 96%[48] in 2019. The MTE findings, also coherent with this change, indicate an improvement in student enrolment in the three provinces post introduction of SMP. It is interesting to note that the increase in enrolment has been higher among girl students over boys. Around 82% teachers feel that the enrolment of boys have increased while 93% feel enrolment of girls have improved[49]. Similarly, head teachers too feel that overall enrolment has shown better metrices for girl students than boys. Around 37% head teachers feel that enrolment for boys have significantly increased in the two years of the SMP while 52% perceive a significant increase for girls[50]. Triangulating these findings through discussion with parents [51]it is seen that three percent boys of school-going age do not attend school while less than one per cent girl students do not attend school. While these measures are small, they communicate the point that there has been a higher increase in enrolment of girl students in the public schools.

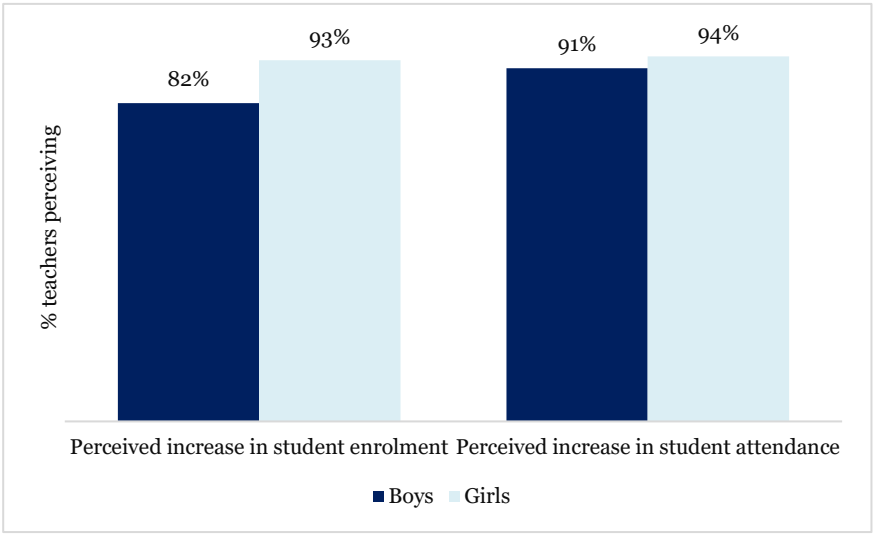

Figure 4: Teachers perceiving increase in enrolment and attendance.

99. While there is a higher increase in the enrolment numbers in the treatment schools, reportsreportsreports[52] [53]from low income and lower-middle income countries indicate significant socio-cultural factors that have resulted in higher enrolment of girls in public schools. While the primary school enrolment data indicate gender parity, disparity is witnessed in terms of the extent of expenditure that is made on the education of girl children and the quality of education that is made available to them. The participation of boys in private education and higher education remains higher when compared with girls[54]. The socio-cultural expectations on boys to shoulder financial responsibilities in future is identified as one of the factors for the higher investment in boy child education. There are studies which show that in some hill regions in Nepal, girl child enrolment is also being encouraged for the same reasons. Many parents, hoping for their daughters' financial support in old age, encourage them to stay in school[55].

100. However, educational attainment is multi-dimensional and is a function of enrolment, attendance, and achievement[56]. In Nepal, although the issue of enrolment has been addressed to a large extent by the

[46]Charles, H. (2015). Why is Nepal's new constitution controversial?. Retrieved 17 January 2021, from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34280015

[47] Constitution of Nepal – Nepal Law Commission. Retrieved 10 February 2021, from http://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/archives/category/documents/prevailing-law/constitution/constitution-of-nepal

[48] School enrollment, primary (% net) - Nepal | Data. (2020). Retrieved 5 February 2021, from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.NENR?locations=NP

[49] P value: 0.0025 (significant at 95%)

[50] P value: 0.0035 (significant at 95%)

[51] for the purpose of this research, parents whose children were enrolled in the sampled schools were contacted for the survey. But the survey also contains questions regarding other children in the household, their age and if they are enrolled in schools. The data refers to those other children who, though of school-going age, are not enrolled in school. These questions were asked to selected parents only because we could not observe the general trend in the community given data was collected remotely.

[52] Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) (ASER) 2019

[53] Ghimire, B. (2019), More daughters are enrolled in public schools while sons are sent to private ones, The Kathmandu Post. Retrieved 10 March 2021 from https://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/03/22/more-daughters-are-enrolled-in-public-schools-while-sons-are-sent-to-private-oneshttps://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/03/22/more-daughters-are-enrolled-in-public-schools-while-sons-are-sent-to-private-ones

[54]Khanal, S. (2018). Gender Discrimination in Education Expenditure in Nepal: Evidence from Living Standard Surveys. *Asian Development Review*, 155-174.

[55]LeVine, S. (2006). Getting in, Dropping out, and Staying on: Determinants of Girls' School Attendance in Nepal. In H. Ullrich, *The Impact of Education in South Asia* (pp. 11-36).

[56]Bhattarai, N., Bernasek, A., & Pena, A. A. (2020). Factors Affecting School Attendance and Implications for Student Achievement by Gender in Nepal. *Review of Political Economy*, 1-25.

constitutional provisions, attendance persists as an issue[57]. The problem is more pronounced for girl students than boys. Socio-cultural norms have been found to be a key reason for limiting girl child attendance. While the constitutional arrangements have incentivized households to ensure access of schools to the girl child, the patriarchal household dynamics are often identified as drivers for reduced female attendance[58]. Gender considerations come into play when the expected benefits and costs of schooling differ due to cultural norms surrounding female versus male work and permanency in the household. With female children often viewed as 'temporary' household members, household efforts towards ensuring adequate education for them is often limited.

101. Beyond the socio-cultural drivers, several intra-household factors determine attendance in schools. While some are gender neutral, some are gender specific. Literacy of household members, especially of the mother, is found to be a critical factor in driving attendance of children in school. The education level of household members also influences the level of appreciation for education and hence, the time children would be studying after school hours. Econometric models indicate a positive correlation between attendance and time spent in studies by the children. The gender differentiation is noticed for factors such as age and presence of siblings. Girl child attendance is seen to reduce with increase in age and with the presence of siblings, whereas these factors a positively reinforce boy child attendance.

102. Through its WASH component, WFP has rehabilitated toilets for both boys and girls so that the lack of access to toilets does not hinder their attendance. At the community and school level, the programme aims to create a comfortable environment where discussions around girl child education can be initiated. The programme also aims to facilitate female leadership amongst teaching groups in the current phase. In the long run, in alignment with the government's structure of basic schools, renewed focus on adolescent health, micro-nutrient perspective on reproductive health and strengthening of WASH facilities to address issues around adolescent sexual and reproductive health is planned.

103. WFP identifies improved attendance of students as one of the strategic objectives of the McGovern-Dole Program. The program intervention brings in several intervention components that can enhance student attendance in schools. The program has introduced interventions on early grade reading and digital literacy that involve innovative learning methods. Moreover, the FFCN incorporates a WASH component that works towards ensuring hygiene in school. Also, understanding the role parents play in influencing attendance, the program engages with them significantly at multiple levels. Parents are involved in managing school operations as well as engaged in school fairs that demonstrate student learning achievements.

104. The MTE indicates that there has been an increase in attendance of students, both male and female, after the SMP intervention. More than 91% teachers and head teachers perceive that attendance has increased for students. The perception is slightly higher for girl students with 94% teachers acknowledging an increase in attendance of girls. Although this difference is not statistically significant, parents too resonate that the attendance of their children have increased over the last two years. While it has increased in comparison to non-MGD beneficiary schools as well, the overall increase is higher for MGD beneficiary students. More than 80% percent of parents, whose children are MGD beneficiaries, point out that the attendance of their children has become more regular after the introduction of SMP. The MTE data indicates a positive correlation between the level of education of the parent as well their involvement in school committees and the regularity of the child's attendance.

105. A logistic regression output indicates that children of parents who have at least a primary school education are at least three times more likely to have increased their regularity in schools over children whose parents have had no schooling. Moreover, parents' involvement in school activities have also been noted to have had a positive bearing on the child's attendance. Parents who are involved in school activities tend to encourage their children to regularly attend school. Such children have at least **1.4 times** higher odds of being regular to school than children whose parents are not involved in any school activity[59].

[57] Dalas, D.B., & Cui, J. (2018). Education in Nepal - WENR. Retrieved 8 February 2021, from https://wenr.wes.org/2018/04/education-in-nepal

[58] World Health Organization. (2017). Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme to Address Equity, Social Determinants, Gender and Human Rights in Nepal, Report of the Pilot Project

[59] Significant at 95% CI

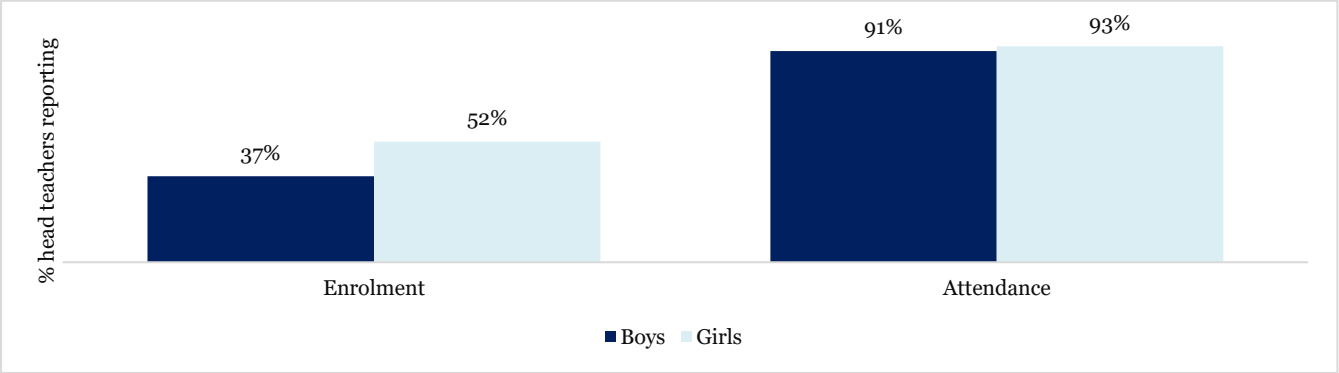

Figure 6: Student enrolment and attendance reported by head-teachers

106. Parents also perceive that the availability of food in schools under the SMP and the innovative teaching methods under the program have played a role in enhancing the level of interest and appreciation for education by children. Around 60% parents attribute the increase in attendance to school meals while 40% parents attribute the increased regularity to improved teaching methods. It must be noted that the increase in regularity is observed more for girl students than boys.

Indicator: Student attentiveness, interest, and performance

107. One of the strategic objectives of the program is improved literacy of school-aged children. This educational achievement is multi-dimensional and is a function of several tangible and intangible constructs. While enrolment and attendance are some of the tangible outcomes envisioned by the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program, it also focuses on strengthening attentiveness and interest of the students in school to ultimately influence performance. Studies identify attentiveness as a key mechanism to initiate learning[6061]. Attention is therefore the basis of thinking. Students who cannot pay attention have difficulties in following the instructions of the teacher, lose interest in the lesson quickly and discontinue their learning tasks. Attentiveness, therefore, becomes a prerequisite for cognitive, social, and emotional development especially during the formative years of children[62].

108. Attentiveness of students is a function of several factors, one of them being short-term hunger. Children experiencing hunger are more likely to have problems with memory and concentration due to lack of energy needed to carry out these functions[63]. During schooling years, nutritional deficiencies directly undermine students' cognitive capacities. Based on data from the Longitudinal Study of Child Development in Quebec, Melchior et al (2012)[64], found that children from food-insecure households were two times more likely to experience persistent symptoms of hyperactivity or inattention than children who are not food insecure[65].

109. Initiatives that have focused on providing meals to students have witnessed improved behavior, focus and performance of the students, due to improved nutrition[66]. There lies abundant evidence that associate school meal initiatives with improvement in food security, nutrition and learning outcomes. Students who receive school meals have shown improved attendance, attentiveness, behavior, and academic performance[67].

[60] Chen, C. M., & Huang, S. H. (2014). Web-based reading annotation system with an attention-based self-regulated learning mechanism for promoting reading performance. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *45*(5), 959–980. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12119

[61] Ainley, J., & Luntley, E. M. (2007). The role of attention in expert classroom practice. *J Math TeacherEducation*, *10*, 3–22. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10857-007-9026-z

[62]Cicekci, M. A., & Sadik, F. (2019). Teachers' and Students' Opinions About Students' Attention Problems During the Lesson. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 15-30.

[63]The Borgen Project. (2014, July 2). *Effects of Hunger on Education*. Retrieved from The Borgen Project: https://borgenproject.org/effects-of-hunger-on-education/

[64] Melchior M, Chastang JF, Falissard B, et al (2012). Food insecurity and children's mental health: A prospective birth cohort study. PLoS One.

[65]Ke, J., & Ford-Jones, E. L. (2015). Food insecurity and hunger: A review of the effects on children's health and behaviour. *Paediatr Child Health*, 89-91.

[66]Science Blog. (2018, January 7). *Brain Food: How Hunger Impacts Education*. Retrieved from Science Blog: https://scienceblog.com/498760/brain-food-hunger-impacts-education/

[67]Food Research and Action Centre. (2019). *School Meals are Essential for Student Health and Learning*. FRAC.

110. The MTE analysed the change in attentiveness of students. Due to challenges of remote data collection, the study could not measure the attentiveness through physical observation. Instead, perception about attentiveness was sought from the teachers. It was noted that almost 90% teachers perceive an increase in the attentiveness of both girl and boy students. In line with the other indicators, the performance of girls was noted to be higher than boy students. Nearly 20% head teachers indicate that the level of attentiveness for girls have significantly increased vis-à-vis 17% head teachers vouching for boy students.

111. Teachers even reported that not only the attentiveness but also the degree of interest among students had increased, which has had a positive effect on the students' performance. Nearly 91% teachers perceive an increase in the pass rates in the schools. Girls appear to outperform boys, with 94% teachers noting a marked improvement in the pass rate of girl students. This gets further triangulated with 90% parents of MGD beneficiary students highlighting an increase in the grades of their children. In comparison, 79% parents of students from the non-beneficiary schools have seen such an improvement in grades[68]. The grades are more pronounced for girl students, with 91% parents acknowledging an improvement in grades vis-à-vis 87% for boy students[69]. Teachers and parents' perception regarding the performance of grade 2 students can be backed by the outcome monitoring[70] conducted in 2019 which reported that students performed better in the foundational skills for grade II i.e., listening comprehension and letter sound knowledge as reflected by the increase in average score. However, the student performance during outcome monitoring reduced by four percentage points in the gold standard indicator i.e., "percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of the grade-level text".

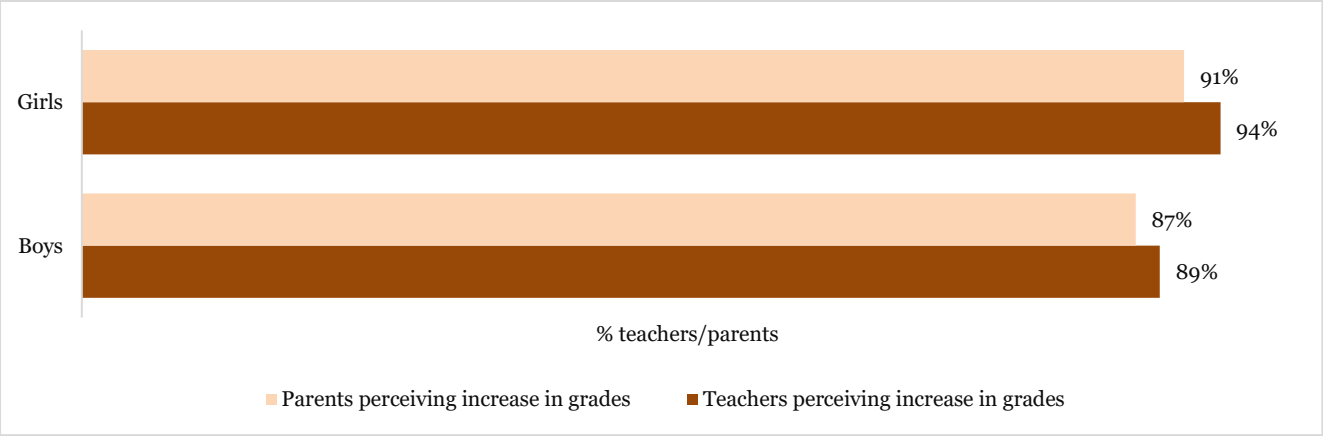

Figure 8: Perception on increase in grades

112. Parents attribute this change in the performance to a change in the overall approach of the students towards education in general. Most parents feel that over time, there has been a greater appreciation for the lessons that are being taught in school[71]. More than 90% parents informed that their children would show interest to study at home and would put at least two to five hours every day. The change in teaching methods, parents feel, have

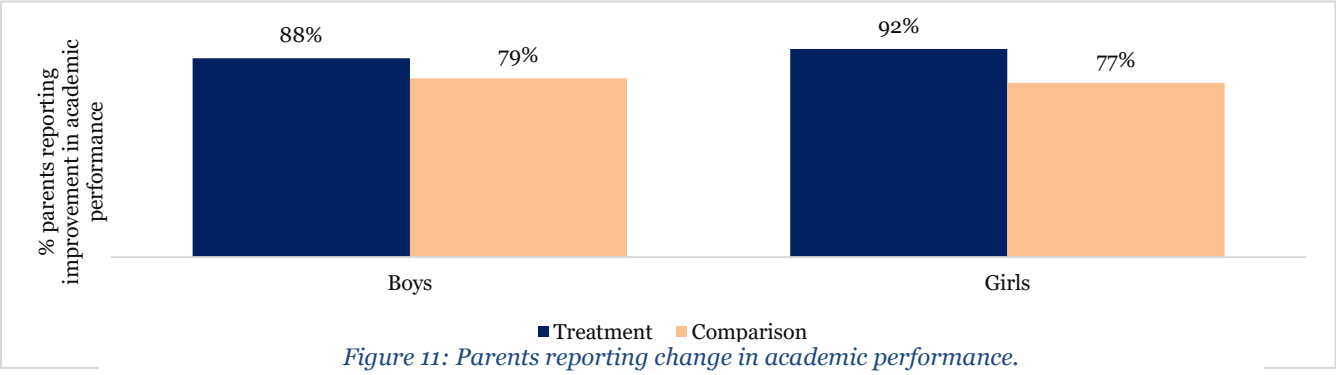

Figure 11: Parents reporting change in academic performance.

[68] P value: 0.000 (significant at 95% and 99%)
[69] P Value: 0.0518 (significant at 90%)
[70] Scott Wilson Nepal.(2019) Outcome Monitoring of United States Department of Agriculture McGovern Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Nepal, 2018 – 2021, World Food Programme.
[71] P value: 0.06, (significant at 90%-for boys); P value: 0.051, (significant at 90%-for girls)

made studying more interesting for children. Moreover, there has been a cyclical effect of the improved learning environment and the student performance. Parents feel that with improved and more interesting learning environment, students have started scoring better. This has in turn encouraged students to further invest in learning.

113. The effectiveness of program on the academic performance of students can be corroborated by the fact that head teachers perceive a significant improvement in educational outcomes, especially in learning achievement of early grade Nepali language. Around 98% headteachers perceive an increase in learning outcomes. However, there lies a difference in the perception for girl students vis-à-vis boys. Around 16% head teachers perceive that academic performance has increased significantly for boy students while more than 26% feel it has increased significantly for girl students.

114. Across all key indicators contributing to the first strategic objective, it is seen that girls, based on teachers perception, perform better than boy students. AsAs reported, there is higher increase in enrolment of girls vis-à-vis boys. One of the reasons for the same, as stated by stakeholders, could be the fact that parents tend to send girls to public schools whereas boys are sent to private schools. A deeper dive into this trend shows that there isisis a difference in the perception ofofof the ideal level of education of a girl child andand that of a boy. Around a quarter of the parents interacted with feel that it is ideal if a girl has school-level education (upto class 12/ higher secondary school). As for a boy's ideal level of education, around 808080% parents concur to the notion that a boy must have a graduate degree and above i.e., higher education after schooling is completed (Masters, post grad, etc.). It was even pointed out that more boys might be engaging in livelihood activities for the family, because of which some classes have more girls.

"The student's enrolment in schools is equal for girls and boys. But in some classes number of girls is more than boys. This may be be cause the number of girls in some villages is more or boys are sent to private schools or are engaged in working for the livelihood of the family." (EDCU, Jhajarkot)

115. These socio-cultural trends—combined with the school meals provided under the program—has contributed to key drivers of learning. While there is a difference in the uptake across gender, the overall findings indicate that there has been significant changes post program implementation. The findings further highlight the complementary role played by the supporting interventions on WASH, learning methods that have aided the effectiveness of the program on these indicators. The interviews with stakeholders threw light on the possible reasons behind the increase in enrolment and retention of girls in schools. Officials at the provincial and the district level expressed that the increase in participation as well as leadership of women has made them aware of the importance of education. Thus, they are now motivated to send their daughters to school. Empowering women in the community has caused a ripple effect which has resulted in increased number of girls attending school. Alongside this, the study results and other evidence[72] shows that investing in safe and improved WASH facilities contributes to improving girls' health, attendance at schools, and reducing dropouts. The availability of and accessibility to separate toilets for girls, training on menstrual hygiene and availability of sanitary pads are plausible reasons for reduced absenteeism and dropout of girl students.

Program interventions to enhance attendance and learning outcomes.

A. Early Grade Reading Program by World Education, Inc. (WE)

116. To strengthen the effectiveness of the SMP, the WE, a program partner, has implemented the Read-Learn-Know reading program model. This model, co-developed by the Rato Bangala Foundation, includes mobilization of teachers, parents, and communities to enhance the reading skills of students both at home and school. The program focuses on Grades I, II and III students but also benefits students in higher grades through access to reading materials and support to promote reading through *melas* (reading fairs) and parental engagement.

117. As the MTE data also corroborates, engaging parents and the community in the learning process is important both for reinforcing student-learning outside of the classroom and for helping parents understand the importance of their child's education and how they can support reading at home. The WE organize classroom meetings with parents after terminal exams to observe and understand teaching learning techniques, progress

[72] Joshi, A., & Amadi, C. (2013). Impact of water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions on improving health outcomes among school children. Journal of environmental and public health, 2013.

of the children, and teach new ways of supporting education at home. These meetings have been put in place to foster a more supportive learning environment for children by using an approach that reinforces learning both at school and at home. Reading fairs also provide a platform for students to publicly demonstrate their learnings, giving parents the opportunities to understand areas that would need their engagement. Moreover, these events also provide an opportunity for schools and teachers to highlight the approaches they are taking to teach literacy, which will provide motivation and recognition for teachers and encourage them to continue to try new and innovative teaching methods.

118. In the last two years, the program also carried out trainings for teachers and school administrators', as well as for parent-teacher associations and school management committees to enhance the effectiveness of student learning interventions. While there had been no provision of additional reading materials, the intervention focused on enhancing the effective use of the materials during teaching learning sessions. Not only was attention focused on training teachers through Reading Motivators, but WE also stressed significantly on building capacities of the Reading Motivators. The intervention also laid stress on the re-orientation of school administrators such as the head teachers and school management committees (SMCs) on engagement with parents and communities.

119. In addition, the WE played a significant role in creating an exchange platform for teachers through mobile meetings. These meetings have necessarily facilitated sharing of experiences on using EGR teaching methodologies and materials. These mobile meetings have also identified training grounds for teachers to acquaint them with information and communication technology (ICT). WE have, thus, been actively involved in not only providing the last mile support of learning techniques but also has been pivotal in developing the supply side capacities. Through these meetings and personnel in place, this initiative has been instrumental in building teachers' ICT skills, encouraging use of mobile phones for weekly planning, use of software to produce reading materials and watching educational videos for improving their teaching practices.

120. To adapt to the school closure due to COVID-19 and ensure continued learning, alternative learning mechanism i.e. Tole Sikai, was leveraged by the program. Tole Sikai or 'ward- focused education', involves the formation of small learning circles in the villages led by an older student or project Learning Mobilizer/Motivator for continued learning even while schools are closed. Tole Sikai has been implemented by partners to provide additional support to children during weekend and long vacation in EGRP districts . In the context of COVID - 19 , this was further expanded as an alternative strategy for education continuity and was expanded starting July 2020. The program makes greater use of reading motivators as well as youth volunteers for effective implementation.

B. Digital literacy (DL) intervention by Open Learning Exchange (OLE)

121. Complementing the literacy initiatives and nudging the exposure further into the technology space has been the digital literacy initiative by OLE. Operating in a subset of the entire program catchment area, the DL intervention has been building capacities of teachers in digital instruction and facilitation techniques. Beyond building the teachers' capacities, the program also focused on exposing children to technology based learning.

122. The OLE aimed to capitalize on their on-going laptop programs in selectprogram schools in the Baitadi, Bajhang, Doti, Dadeldhura, Darchula and Jajarkot districts. Most schools in these regions have been under-resourced and lacked quality learning tools leading to low learning capacities of students. The DL initiative worked towards enhancing the availability of digital content and tools to enable students access a wide range of learning materials through a learner-centered approach. Subject and grade specific learning materials that are based on Nepal's national curricula were loaded on computers which were made available at schools by the MoE and other partners.

123. To enhance the effectiveness of the intervention, OLE adopted measures to improve community engagement and accountability in the DL program. Since operations, maintenance and use are key attributes of the initiative that needed to be monitored, the OLE facilitated the establishment of a maintenance fund (~25,000 NPR per annum). This ensured that the intervention operated more effectively. The DL program also saw significant support from the local government. Working at 50% funding partnership with the local government machinery, OLE has been able to install solar panels that could aid continuous operations of the digital infrastructure without being subjected to outages of grid-based electricity supply.

124. Interactions with various stakeholders indicate an improved perception about the effectiveness of these learning innovations. Annexure IX details out some of the best examples of the effectiveness of EGRP and DL. While the EGRP had worked significantly towards addressing the processes that impede learning, the COVID-19 pandemic has acted as a significant roadblock to the intervention's vision and success. The section on the influence of COVID-19 is discussed in the following sections.

Component: Provision and distribution of food

125. There lies a number of studies that link nutritional deficiencies with adverse impact on a child's cognitive ability and development concentration and activity levels[73]. The program is designed to ensure adequate food and nutritional security through the SMP.

126. Almost all beneficiary school head teachers said that they received school meals under the SMP. Almost half (47.2%) also reported access to water supply and handwashing stations because of the SMP. The mid-day meals provided through the program intervention ensures the regular availability of nutritious food for the children. In case of project schools, almost all parents (99%) reported that their child eats a mid-day meal at school six days a week. While the availability of mid-day meal is of significance, the quality of the same is equally important. Most parents (72%), who were interviewed were satisfied with the quality of the mid-day meals, however, given the limitations of conducting a remote MTE, we could not explore the reasons for the same.

Component: WASH- Access to water and sanitation services

127. Sustainable WASH facilities in schools, households, and communities in general, are fundamental for the overall well-being and development of children. Poor water and sanitation facilities—which lead to regular bouts of diarrhea, worm infestations, and dehydration—have shown to have severe repercussions on child growth including impaired cognitive learning and learning performance[74].

128. A cohort study[75] conducted in several low-income countries reveals that children with access to improved water and toilet facilities in their first year of life had higher language scores (receptive vocabulary) at ages five and eight. While WASH interventions have proven to have an impact on child development, combined with development-specific interventions i.e, those addressing immediate determinants of nutrition and child development, they are proven to have a more sustainable and effective impact on the holistic growth of children.

129. In Nepal, one of the most water-insecure countries, sanitation and hygiene have become a priority especially since the country moved to a federal structure. The 15th National Plan of Action promises quality services and accessibility to safe and clean drinking water to all and provide sanitation services deemed necessary. GoN has launched various programs on water and sanitation through its project offices in all 77 districts and now plans to start various programs in close coordination with the provincial and local governments. It has also recognized the importance of safe drinking water on the health and education of children. The School Sector Development Plan (2016 – 2023), under health and nutrition, focusses on the need for safe drinking water facilities, sanitation facility and clean environment as an important aspect of quality education in schools.
While significant progress has been made in extending access to improve water and sanitation in Nepal, there are communities, especially those located in rural Nepal, which do not have equal access to quality WASH facilities[76]. However, the geographical heterogeneity i.e., remoteness of some districts more than the others, and inequality of access to its drinking-water supply and sanitation have often been quoted as barriers to access[77]

[73] Sorhaindo, A., & Feinstein, L. (2006). What is the relationship between child nutrition and school outcomes? [Wider Benefits of Learning Research Report No. 18]. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education, University of London.
[74] M. A. Gottfried, "Evaluating the relationship between student attendance and achievement in urban elementary and middle schools: an instrumental variables approach," The American Educational Research Journal, vol. 47, no. 2, pp. 434–465, 2010
[75] Dearden, K. A., Brennan, A. T., Behrman, J. R., Schott, W., Crookston, B. T., Humphries, D. L., ... & Fernald, L. C. (2017). Does household access to improved water and sanitation in infancy and childhood predict better vocabulary test performance in Ethiopian, Indian, Peruvian and Vietnamese cohort studies?. *BMJ open*, *7*(3).
[76]ODI; Water Aid. (2017). *How to reduce inequalities in access to WASH-Rural Water and Sanitation in Nepal.* London: Overseas Development Institute.
[77]He, WJ., Lai, YS., Karmacharya, B.M. et al., (2018). Geographical heterogeneity and inequality of access to improved drinking water supply and sanitation in Nepal. Int J Equity Health 17, 40. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-018-0754-8

130. The challenges in increasing the WASH capacity in Nepal are exacerbated by natural disasters such as arsenic contamination of ground water, earthquakes, recurrent flooding, etc. The vulnerability to and the outbreak of WASH-related diseases only becomes heightened in the face of natural disasters which lead to loss of physical infrastructure and natural ecosystems[78]. The problem becomes severe in the mid-far western regions of Nepal, an area of complex topography which is beset with a host of development issues such as socioeconomic inequality, communal conflict, and poor public infrastructure[79]. The WASH intervention under the SMP was directed towards plugging these gaps in the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces.

131. The past evaluation of the FY14 MGD grant highlighted the specific need to expand beyond handwashing as part of the WASH efforts. The end-term evaluation of FY14 recommended integration of hygiene practices. These recommendations get reflected in the implementation of the FY17 grant. With a growing consensus on the importance of integrating food hygiene components into both WASH and nutrition programs, WFP, in partnership with IDS, worked to increase the impact of SMP by improving the effectiveness of hygiene behavior change activities in schools, knowledge of health and hygienic practices and influencing the behavior of the community at large.

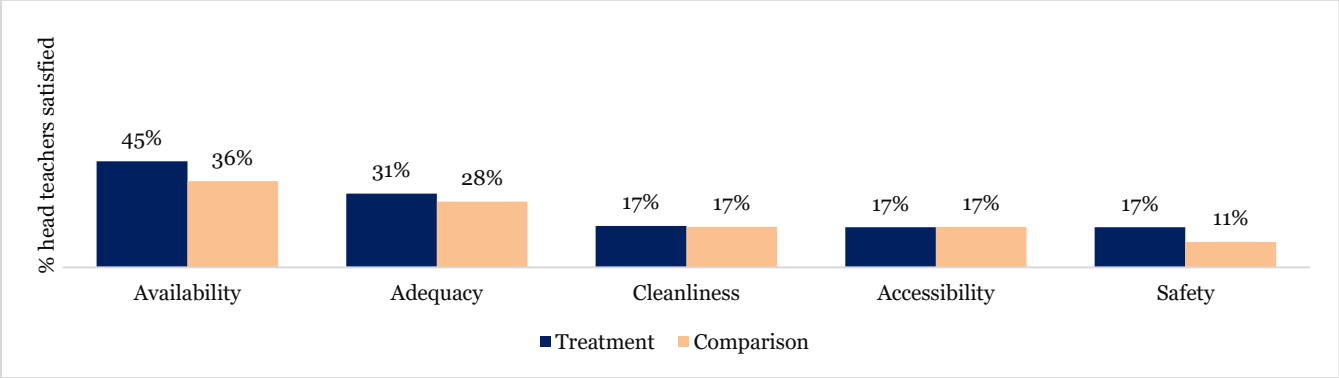

Figure 13: Headteachers reporting satisfaction level with toilets created in schools

132. The MTE points out that a higher proportion of project schools (64%) have a functional toilet with flush/pour facility as compared to non-project schools (49%). Beyond the availability of toilets, functionality of toilets is a critical determinant of program effectiveness. To inspire regular use, it is important for the toilets to be accessible and clean with adequate water supply. A significant number (45%) of head teachers were satisfied with the availability of the toilets i.e., using the same when necessary without having to wait. Fewer head teachers (around 17%) were satisfied with the accessibility, i.e., ease of reaching and using the toilets and around 17% head teachers felt that the toilets are clean, with only 31% reporting that the water facility in the toilets is adequate. So, while a significant number of schools have a functional toilet, the same are not easily accessible and neither are they considered to be clean enough to use. Similar findings were reported in the outcome and monitoring report as per which the level of cleanliness of toilets, school compound and classrooms were below average. While the differences between the treatment and comparison groups are not statistically significant, the figure above indicates the domains that stand out.

133. Over the years of implementing different programs in WASH, a strong link has been established between sanitation and the well-being of women and girls. WASH interventions, now, are also seen as an instrument to improve gender equality. In the absence of basic water and sanitation facilities, women and girls are disproportionally affected. Girls miss school because of walking distances to carry water for household use and also, the lack of adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools does not allow them to manage menstruation. Furthermore, inadequate WASH facilities are also associated with increased cases of sexual assault and gender-based violence where toilets are unavailable or unsafe[80].

134. The issue of safety becomes an important determinant in women's or girls' access to toilets or sanitation facilities. Only around 17% of head teachers in the program areas were satisfied with the safety conditions of the

[78] USAID. (2020). *Water and Development Country Plan: Nepal*. Washington D.C.: USAID
[79] Wang, C., Pan, J., Yaya, S., Yadav, R. B., & Yao, D. (2019). Geographic inequalities in accessing improved water and sanitation facilities in Nepal. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *16*(7), 1269
[80] WaterAid (2013). Making Connections: Women, Sanitation, and Health.

toilets. Here we define safety in terms of the toilet door being latched and there being adequate lighting in the toilets. The safety conditions were poorer in case of comparison schools, where only 11% of sampled head teachers reported that they were satisfied with the safety of the toilets.While the results are not statistically significant (p-value 0.13) due to the low comparison group sample size, they indicate directional change.

135. To contribute to meaningful improvement in child health, handwashing facilities become significantly important alongside the availability and accessibility to toilets. An enabling environment is important to foster hygiene behavior change, with evidence pointing to the importance of the availability of soap and water, and the presence of a designated and established handwashing space to encourage sustained handwashing practices. Nearly 91% of project schools, as reported by the headteachers, have handwashing facility whereas in case of comparison schools, only 87% have such facilities[81]. The implementation of the program component has significantly impacted the health and overall well-being of students as well as the teachers at schools where the program is being implemented. While these results were not statistically significant owing to the low sample in the comparison arm, it gives us a directional understanding of the program's performance.

"Comparatively, the health condition has improved. After the construction of toilet there is no open defecation, therefore, the health condition of teachers and students is getting better. Use of clean drinking water is helping have better health and development of habit of washing hands have caused less health issues." (Head-teacher, East Rukum)

136. Studies show that dropouts of girls increase with age and especially after menarche. In Nepal, there still lies an apprehension about normalizing menstruation. Being a largely patriarchal society, Chhaupadi is still practised in rural Nepal. According to this age-old tradition, menstruating women are forced to stay in a small hut outside the main house without access to the household toilet. According to ODF sustainability study conducted in 2016 (by UNICEF and the Government of Nepal), almost 39% of the respondents in Accham district reported denial of toilet use to the menstruating women[82].

137. Studies show that more than the discomfort associated with menstruation, adolescent girls fear the social stigma around menstruation[83,84]. With most teachers being male, girls do not feel comfortable discussing issues regarding menstruation in school. Moreover, the lack of empathy from male classmates regarding their condition also acts as a deterrent to their attendance[85]. There has been a concerted effort by the Nepalese government to curb the societal inhibitions around menstruation. The Ministry for Water Supply in Nepal has prioritized menstrual health and hygiene by developing the National Policy on Dignified Menstruation. Similarly, the School Sector Development Plan (2016-2023) has also ensured privacy, menstruation health and sanitation under the health and nutrition heading.

155. The program also identifies this as a key concern has worked towards creating an empowering atmosphere around menstruation. The creation and maintenance of toilets are testimony to the program's efforts to ensure adequate hygienic conditions in school that can encourage students to not dropout of schools due to menstrual challenges. Moreover, the program has incorporated trainings around menstruation with adolescent girls.

156. In case of project schools, 27% of head teachers in basic schools (up to grade 8) reported that menstrual training had been conducted for girls. Head teachers reported that the trainings were most helpful as the knowledge and awareness about menstruation, along with the availability of sanitary pads at schools, had reduced female student absenteeism and contributed to better menstrual hygiene practices where more girls have started using sanitary pads. Alongside this, 48% of head teachers reported that sanitary pads were adequately available at their school.

[81] P value: 0.396 (95% CI)
[82] Dhakal, S. B., Sah, N., Shrestha, S., & Ahmad, T. (2018, July). Analysis of menstrual hygiene practices in Nepal: the role of WASH in Schools programme for girls' education. In *Transformation towards sustainable and resilient WASH services: Proceedings of the 41st WEDC International Conference, Nakuru, Kenya* (pp. 9-13). cc WEDC, Loughborough University
[83] Oster, E., and R. Thornton. 2011. '*Menstruation, Sanitary Products, and School Attendance: Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation*.' American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 3 (1): 91–100.
[84] Oster, E., and R. Thornton. 2012. '*Determinants of Technology Adoption: Peer Effects in Menstrual Cup Take-Up*.' Journal of the European Economic Association 10 (6): 1263–1293.
[85] Adhikari, Bishnu Maya. 2013. *'Gender Inequality and the Problem with Girls' School Attendance in Nepal: A Qualitative Perspective of Patriarchal Nepalese Practice'*: 1-150

157. The effects of the program on the well-being and empowerment of girls, tackling gender equality issues and access to resources and raising health standards as well as measuring traditional educational indicators such as attendance is extremely relevant. As reported by head teachers, 60% program schools have separate toilet for girls while 33% have unisex toilets. It is interesting to note that despite the program intervention, around 58% of comparison schools have separate toilet for girls, while 32% have unisex toilets and 6% have common toilets for students and teachers. It was also reported that almost 7% program schools are equipped with toilets for student with disability vis-à-vis 4% of comparison schools.

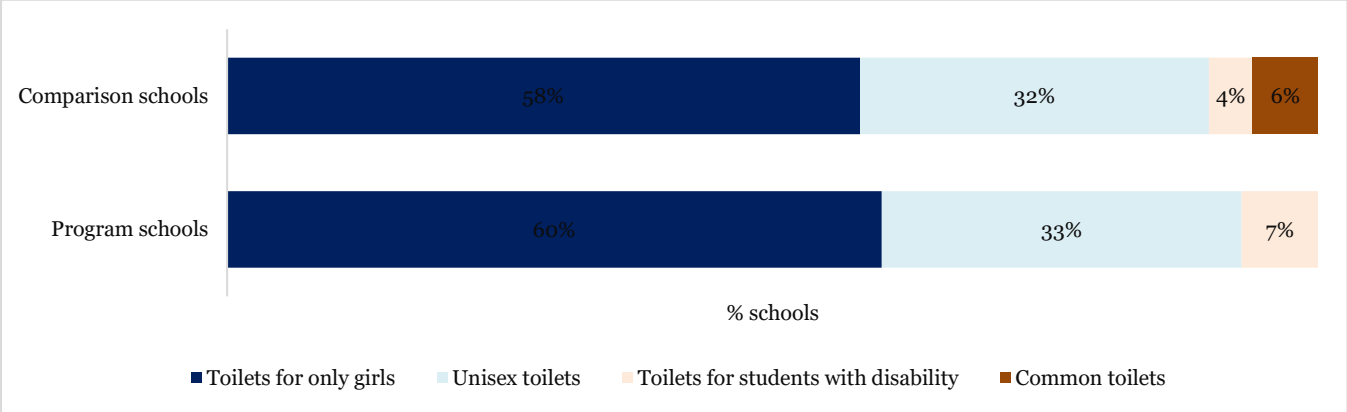

Figure 14: Types of toilets present in schools across program and comparison schools

158. Studies conducted in Nepal point out that dedicated SMP not only influence enrolment and attendance-related constraints but also have a bearing on nutritional intake of children. Statistically significant improvement in dietary diversity (by 44% points) and nutritional content (a 21%-points higher consumption of vitamin A-rich fruit and vegetables) have been observed for home-grown school feeding initiatives[86][87]. However, the key drivers of these positive outcomes include capacity building of local stakeholders, strengthened community ownership and accountability mechanisms, and local food supply chains. For effective delivery of outcomes, the program has also invested significantly on infrastructure and capacity building of its stakeholders.

Indicator: Infrastructure, food preparation and storage

159. In the absence of conducting observational study, the availability and functionality of school infrastructure comprising kitchen and library, as well as the condition of the warehouses for food storage, was reported by head teachers, teachers, cooks, and storekeepers. Most schools, in the regions where the program is being implemented, are heavily under-resourced. The lack of quality learning tools and classroom methodologies in these schools have resulted in low student learning. To fill this gap, WFP, in partnership with OLE, aims to provide students and teachers the access to free and open digital library containing books, educational videos, audiobooks, learning software and reference materials. In case of project schools, a significant number (90%) had a library corner and digital library, both of which were present in fewer numbers in (79%) comparison schools[88].

160. As per WFP's annual plan, WFP, in coordination with CEHRD and the McGovern-Dole Program, implemented a complimentary construction of new kitchens and improved cooking stoves with basic furniture for improved storage facilities and water systems with child-friendly taps. However, during the interaction with cooks working in project schools, the most common problems that surfaced were related to not having adequate supply of drinking water, timber or fuel, and utensils. Because of the inadequacy of water, they sometime walk long distances to fetch the same. The cooks also complained of lack of storage space and a proper kitchen to carry out

[86] Shrestha, Rachana & Schreinemachers, Pepijn & Nyangmi, Mamta & Sah, Manoj & Phuong, Judy & Manandhar, Shraddha & Yang, Ray-Yu. (2020). Home-grown school feeding: assessment of a pilot program in Nepal. BMC Public Health. 20. 10.1186/s12889-019-8143-9

[87] Given the COVID-19 restrictions and obstacles posed by the same, the program was not implemented in the planned HGSF districts. But since the HGSF program was much applauded by different stakeholders, the MTE found value in understanding how HGSF was implemented in previously piloted districts and in stating the positive results from the districts in which it was piloted. Case studies were also conducted in Bardiya and Mahottari.

[88] P value= 0.08 (significant at 90%)

their roles and responsibilities. Some even expressed concern over using old stoves as well as the low remuneration for the work that they are assigned to do.

161. Most storekeepers (81%) reported the availability of separate Final Delivery Point (FDP) and External Delivery Point (EDP) warehouses with basic infrastructure and safety measures like warehouses having windows and adequate ventilation and all warehouses being lockable storage spaces. The adequacy of hygienic conditions under which food is stored in the warehouses was also reported by the storekeepers. Around 84% storekeepers denied the absence of rodents while almost all (96%) denied the presence of insects in the past working month. Presence of mold and excessive humidity was reported by only 6% storekeepers. It is important to be noted that the absence of observational data and visits to warehouses limited the reliability of the information verbally collected from storekeepers. Possible conclusions have been drawn based on perceptions of the storekeepers.

Component: Capacity Building

162. WFP Nepal country office has been strengthening the capacities of the Government of Nepal (GoN) representatives to carry out various monitoring activities (input/output, process, and outcome) to enable evidence-based decision-making practices. Trainings have been organized for representatives from district offices of the McGovern-Dole Program and WFP Sub-office to improve their capacity to collect SMP process monitoring data using the android application and strengthen the use of information gathered from process monitoring to improve program performance. Routine remote coaching and refresher trainings have also been provided to the McGovern-Dole Program district staff about the process and input-output monitoring.

163. Increased decentralization, especially under federal systems, comes with higher expectations for bridging the gulf between the state, civil society, government structures and other local bodies. Thus, building the capacity of local government and functionaries at different levels should be a key agenda of central governments and other development partners to empower local governments and the communities to provide services in an effective and sustainable manner to their constituencies. Working on these lines, WFP's operations have included capacity development objectives or activities wherein their operations have supported governments and also contributed to developing capacities of partners and beneficiaries.

Teacher Training

164. Teachers are critical in influencing teaching and learning processes in schools. Various studies reveal how teacher effectiveness is the most influential school-level factor in generating positive student outcomes[89] [90], thereby making it extremely important to focus on strengthening instructional and leadership capacities of teachers. The past end-term evaluation of the MGD FY 14 grant suggested the need for trainings to enhance service delivery. Recognizing this need, WFP aimed at training teachers on the new methodologies of teaching-learning and providing regular support to teachers through hands-on training and classroom observations.

165. Over the last academic year, 44% of teachers had received training in project schools. In schools which had only WASH and SMP programs, around 15% teachers had received at least one training. On the other hand, in schools which had the EGR intervention as well, two-thirds of teachers had received trainings by World Education. Trainings specifically on teaching and learning techniques received greater attention in EGR-assisted schools, with 56% teachers having received the training while only a fifth of the teachers in other SMP schools were exposed to such trainings. As highlighted in the outcome and monitoring report[91], under the utilization of EGR tools and techniques, there were some teachers who demonstrated exceptional standards and around 94% of the teachers were competent (i.e., scored 80% or above in the 10 standards assessed) of using the new Techniques and Tools. Even in schools with the Digital Literacy intervention, technical support provided by OLE and the trainings to teachers on digital infrastructure have contributed to learning outcomes. This report goes on to highlight the influence of capacity building on key study outcomes.

[89] Marzano, Robert J. (2007). The art and science of teaching. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
[90] Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 8(1)
[91] Scott Wilson Nepal (2020). Outcome Monitoring of United States Department of Agriculture McGovern Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Nepal, 2018-2021

Training of Cooks

166. To emphasize the relationship between short-term hunger and poor learning outcomes, and the contribution of mid-day meals towards improved learning outcomes, training of cooks is considered to be an important part of the program implementation. WFP focuses on training cooks to build on their existing knowledge and skills on food preparation, handling and storage as well as the importance of proper use of water, sanitation, and hygiene practices. The training of cooks is important to ensure food safety, better nutritional outcomes as well as good hygiene practice among students.

167. In the project schools, most of the designated cooks were male (~85%), with only a few from a Dalit or any other ethnic group. On average, these cooks had an experience of eight years. The program strongly stressed on building the capabilities of the cooks. The program builds in trainings on skills of food preparation, handling, and storage, is one of the key program activities. Most cooks (69%) reported to have received an average of two trainings in the last 24 months.

168. The effectiveness of the trainings gets reflected through the practices that are followed by the cooks. Almost all cooks reported to wash the utensils before cooking, while slightly more than a quarter (27%) said that they wash the utensils before serving food. Nearly 70% of the cooks mentioned to washing the utensils immediately after meals, while around 17% kept it unwashed till the end of the day. Cleaning the kitchen before cooking was a prevalent practice, with 87% cooks following it. It was seen that two-thirds (66%) of the cooks also cleaned the kitchen after preparing food. The concern of the cooks around hygiene and safety also gets reflected by the fact that 83% of them check for presence of pests and 41% are also mindful of the expiry dates of packaged food items.

Figure 15: Cooks following best hygienic practices

The findings are further triangulated by the outcome monitoring report which reported that almost all cooks (99%) demonstrate clean personal hygiene indicators (i.e., well-trimmed nails, well-groomed beard/hair, clean clothes/hands) and almost all (99%) of the cooks followed proper food storage and serving practices.

169. Most cooks found the training useful as they added to their knowledge of health and hygiene and enhanced their appreciation of hygienic conditions during food preparation. Many were appreciative about the management acumen the trainings helped them gather on safe storage and managing commodities effectively and efficiently. The trainings were also useful in highlighting the importance of nutrition, how the nutrient content of the food can be maintained and the ways to cook nutritious food. Of the cooks interviewed, 87% take the necessary steps to prevent nutrient loss of fortified rice and salt by properly tying the sack of rice and ensuring that the salt is kept in an airtight jar.

Storekeeper Training

170. With knowledge on food preparation practices being one of the key quality assurance aspects for the SMP, WFP provides trainings not only to the school staff (teacher and head teacher, cooks) but also to the storekeepers on the same. Amongst the storekeepers, 91% reported that they were trained in safe food preparation and storage practices. Most storekeepers (93.7%) reported that they maintain record of food items and do not face any major challenges maintaining the same. However, for most, the last training was scheduled in early 2019.

171. The storekeepers, on recollection, stated that the trainings covered the topics of commodity management, storage type and utilization, health and hygiene and record keeping. All storekeepers found the training to be useful in adding to their knowledge.

172. The effectiveness of the trainings with storekeepers gets demonstrated through the practices adopted by them. The storekeepers were found to check waybills for every consignment they received. They also kept records in the form of stacks cards. Most (84%) of the storekeepers inspected the warehouse before storing food. Around 65% of the storekeepers also ensured that the food items are kept in a cool and dry place while being protected from any natural forces, whiles four-fifths of them checked for damaged food packets as well as the presence of lumps and molds in the food. Half of the storekeepers said that the food items are stored using predefined protocols Last In First Out (LIFO)/ First In First Out (FIFO)/First Expired First Out (FEFO). Apart from this, common practices were ensuring that the warehouse is ventilated, and food commodities are checked from time to time.

COVID-19 as a roadblock to effective delivery of the McGovern-Dole Program FY17

173. The economic impoverishment in Nepal is not unknown. However, the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to push people further down the poverty slope. Initial World Bank research on the effects of COVID-19 on poverty in Nepal predicts a sharp increase in poverty rates due to the reduction of income from tourism and remittances. People employed in low-income and informal jobs are expected to be hit the hardest[92]. Along with slowing world economy, it also pushed a billion children out of school and in need of alternative education[93]. The UNESCO warns for an increased level of drop-out around the world as parents may not be able to afford costs related to education or simply require children to work for addition income[94].

174. To limit the negative impact of the pandemic on the learning opportunities of children, the Education Cluster of Nepal agreed to ensure continuity of learning by "preparing and pre-positioning of resources (internet, radio, TV, and print) that can be used by children at home"[95]. Shortly after the school closures, the Nepali government introduced schooling via television for grades 6- 10 as part of its "Digital Education System"[96].

175. However, these measures had primarily been for students from grades six onwards. The impact of the pandemic on early grade students often stands underestimated. It is accepted that the SMP is not just a means to enhance attendance of students but also ensure adequate nutritional intake. The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown resulted in closure of schools for nearly eight months. The extended closure of schools meant that 2.4 million children who used to benefit from the government's School Meals Programme were not getting supplementary nutritious food—especially in the grain-deficit Sudur Paschim, Karnali and Lumbini Provinces (WFP). To address the

As expressed by an Official from IDS, *"For people working in the WASH sector, COVID has been an opportunity to upgrade and internalize handwashing and other practices in the community. Most schools were closed during COVID, but some schools continued to function/teach students in cluster or community level, where the program reached out and helped the local governments to face the COVID situation. All the social mobilizers in these areas were helping the local governments. Therefore, the COVID was a situation where it gave opportunity to the program to upgrade WASH not only in the schools but in the community as well".*

The program also incentivized the use of schools as quarantine centers to build WASH facilities, *"Most of the schools have been used as quarantine centers during the COVID period. Therefore, during this time, handwashing stations were installed in the schools with the help of the people quarantined in the schools. This was done in close coordination with the local governments."*

[92] World Bank. (2020). Nepal Must Ramp Up COVID-19 Action to Protect Its People, Revive Economy, Retrieved from https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/04/11/nepal-must-ramp-up-covid-19-action-to-protect-its-peoplerevive-economy
[93] Der Graaf, L. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on access to education in Nepal | VIN. Retrieved 8 January 2021, from https://www.volunteersinitiativenepal.org/vin-articles/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-access-to-education-in-nepal/
[94] UNESCO (2020) "COVID-19 Education Response: Preparing the reopening of schools" UNESCO, Paris
[95] United Nations Nepal. (2020). COVID-19 Nepal: Preparedness and response plan (NPRP), retrieved from https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/nepal-documents/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-nepal-preparedness-and-response-plan-(nprp)-draft-april-9.pdf?sfvrsn=808a970a_2
[96] Nepali Sansar. 23 April 2020. Nepal to Introduce 'Digital Education' Amid COVID-19 Lockdown. Retrieved 1 February 2021, from https://www.nepalisansar.com/education/nepal-to-introduce-digital-education-amid-covid-19-lockdown

situation, WFP along with the GoN, put in place take-home rations, starting June 2020, comprising fortified rice, lentils, and vegetable oil for school-going children from grades one to eight in rural Nepal.

176. Owing to the COVID situation, schools across the country were closed starting April 2020, with most schools only reopening in February 2021 for a period of 2 months. As a result, onsite school meal operations remained interrupted. To address the nutrition needs of the children and provide interim relief for beneficiary families of McGovern-Dole project, WFP, in-coordination with MoEST and the local governments introduced take-home-ration comprising of fortified rice, lentils, and vegetable oil. As an alternative to meals at school, the THR was introduced as an incentive to support nutritional requirement and enabling learning at home for food insecure districts. The THR proved to be a useful instrument to sustain the program's initiative on enhancing nutritional intake by children. However, there has been a stakeholder preference for the regular distribution at school, post reopening of schools since meal at school is acknowledged as one of the reassurances for the students to attend school. Thus, helping increase attendance, attentiveness and ultimately learning

> *"Now the local governments are given authority to reopen the schools according to the intensity of COVID cases in their locality. Thus, there are different modalities of school operation. Some schools are not opened yet. To ensure the access to food for all targeted beneficiaries, take home ration modality is continued even in schools are opening. In this situation, it has been reported from the field that the cases of students' absenteeism significantly exist. It means there is big attraction to foods rather than the learning. Now Head Teachers are requesting to FFE and WFP to revive the school based midday meal to reduce the absenteeism."* (Official at FFEP)

177. Most schools were used as COVID quarantine centres. This has raised some concerns regarding the poor maintenance and damage of WASH infrastructure, especially in schools which do not have fencing. As the schools reopen, there lies significant additional pressure to ensure adequate infrastructure by the government.

2.4. Efficiency

Is the return from the programme, vis-a-vis investments at par with other WFP initiatives in other countries as well as in Nepal?

178. This section delves into the efficiency of the SMP implementation. The adapted methodology of the MTE has limited measurement of outcomes, in its true form. This has limited the measurement of returns from the program. Hence, the MTE has not explored the benefit ratios as well as parity of the efficiency with similar interventions. Instead, the MTE focused on understanding factors that have aided as well as impeded program effectiveness as a construct for efficiency. However, this section touches upon the overall budgetary allocation and the cash outflow of the program.

Investment in capacity building

179. Under the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program, there has been a significant investment in building teachers' capacities. Teachers have been provided with additional materials on teaching methods. Moreover, 56% teachers point out that they have been exposed to trainings. Of these, nearly 90% teachers have attended trainings on teaching methods. These trainings have had a bearing on how teachers interact in classes. Head teachers feel that there has been an improvement in the manner teachers manage their classes. Nearly two thirds of the teachers have been seen to have improved their teaching methods while 56% were seen to have spent additional time on communicating the lesson contents to the students. Around a quarter of the teachers have been seen to invest additional efforts in helping the students in understanding the lessons.

180. However, as much as teachers are critical to the program effectiveness, the entire ecosystem is not very remunerative for the teachers. Most teachers are hold a temporary position for a low salary (Nepalese Rupee (NPR) 3,000-3,500 per month). Hence, there is a huge attrition of teachers for more remunerative work. This attrition disadvantages the program significantly. With a huge turnaround of teachers, the efforts put in by partners around training often end up being redundant. Moreover, with these trained teachers moving out, the learning outcomes of students are affected. The constant turnover of EGR-trained teachers in the region has also created problems in ensuring consistent teaching quality in schools. The lack of many qualified mentors to go around the schools has kept the problem persistent. The education training is only conducted at the provincial

level where a team of three people disseminate the training. It mostly leads to the partners refreshing or retraining teachers.

Timeliness: Supply of commodities for SMP

181. Timely supply of food commodities from the WFP warehouse to the school remains a challenge, given the remoteness of the schools, fewer roads which are poorly maintained and fewer members from the community who volunteer to transfer the food. The delays are exacerbated during the rainy seasons as safely transporting food commodities over long distances to remote schools becomes more challenging. The delay in supply of food commodity was echoed by EDCU officials of Doti, Bajura, Jajarkot, Rukum East, Dailekh, Bajhang, Accham and Baitadi.

182. While most storekeepers do not face any challenges in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, there are some common problems reported by them. Challenges are often faced while conducting field visits which require them to walk in the hilly areas, given the absence of public transportation and lack of roads. Other challenges include delay in food collection, communication gap with school authorities, lack of network and connectivity in the area (making communication difficult), fear of the pandemic and lack of protective gear provided while fulfilling their role.

183. As a COVID-19 impact mitigation measure, the WFP ensured supply of take home ration (THR) to its 156,000 students from July 2020. Till January 2021, supply of THR took place in 2 phases i.e. July 2020 and October 2020. The program provided rice, lentils, vegetable oil and salt per student. The WFP ensured adequate safety protocols for the distribution by mandating only one household member for the collection for a specific timeslot. Acting on the recommendations of the first phase of THR distribution, almost all respondents reported that food was distributed on a planned schedule during the second phase of distribution. However, the maintenance of COVID safety protocols, including cleanliness of schools (25%) to ensure safe environment for distribution, were reported to be on a decline[97]. As the THRs were introduced to cater to beneficiaries during school closure, 47% of the storekeepers faced problems while managing the same. The most common problem was the transportation of commodities in bulk as well as the timely distribution of the same. Without sufficient tools for measuring quantities of commodities, storekeepers found the process of distribution to be difficult, especially when it came to distributing oil. It was also difficult to distribute the food uniformly. The storekeepers also expressed their concern regarding not being given adequate safety material like masks and sanitizers, while they were required to manage food distribution.

Food to cash-based model

184. While it was agreed that WFP will be supporting the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology with the load of 36,000 school children with a midday meal until October 2018, the same was reduced to 18,000 until July 2019, whereby the load was to transition to the government's cash-based School Meals Programme[98]. There, however, lay some apprehensions pertaining how food would be distributed in the two districts. The outcome monitoring report[99] highlights poor food stock in these two districts while they were transitioning to a cash based model in 2019. It was noted that there was no food stock available in Dadeldhura whereas the average school meal days in Baitadi was very low at 3 days/week (Baitadi was still providing some meals since they still had food stocks remaining from the time when they used to receive support from WFP School Meal intervention. This is because the Government of Nepal (GoN) has transitioned Dadeldhura and Baitadi into a cash-based modality for school feeding. This, as noted, resulted in children, especially of ECD and class 3, going home for their mid-day meal and not returning to school for the rest of the day.

> *"The previous model of WFP was very good and supportive for the children because they had opportunity to access fresh food on time in the school. There was also a practice where students and teachers would bring vegetables from their home to mix in the day meal, which was effective as it created the ownership of the program amongst the beneficiaries."* Official, EDCU Dadeldhura.

[97] Take home ration School meal program- Phase 2. Remote Onsite Monitoring Brief. (2020) WFP
[98] World Food Program (2020).Annual Work Plan. McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Nutrition Program, Food Assistance Division, Office of Capacity Building and Development
[99] Scott Wilson Nepal. (2019) Outcome Monitoring of United States Department of Agriculture McGovern Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Nepal, 2018 – 2021, World Food Programme.

185. Under the cash-based model, the cost of the school meal planned is fully covered by the cash-transferred from the Government of Nepal to the schools to fund their School Meals Programme. In 2019-2020, an amount of 15 NPR a day for each student was sent to the schools to locally purchase food for their school meals activity. But the amount, as expressed by stakeholders, is not sufficient to meet the minimum calorie requirements.

> *"There were no visible problems in kind based SMP but in cash model schools are facing problem to manage the school meal and meeting the minimum calorie requirement with just NPR 15/-, per day per student, in the hills and NPR 20/- mountains."* Official, CEHRD
>
> *"Before (mid) day meal was being managed by Food Management Committee. Now parents receive the cash, and they prepare the meal for their children. We are not sure whether this model is really sustainable."* Official, EDCU.
>
> *"If the schools can implement catering model now (post transfer), will it be effective in providing(mid) day meal to the students as per the coupon provided by the school. Otherwise, the program will not be implemented properly."* Official, EDCU Dadeldhura.

Role of governance structure in influencing efficiency of the McGovern-Dole Program FY17

186. The shift in the governance system has affected the efficiency of the interventions. While it has decentralized the activities and has made decision-making easier, the EGR intervention has been adversely affected by the change. The transition to federalism in Nepal has led to the change from district education offices to education focal person at the *gaonpalika* level. Education offices were replaced by local governance units which focus on activities beyond education as well. During the first year of the project (2018), most of these positions remained vacant since the districts where EGR program is implemented were remote. The education focal persons at *gaonpalika* level were left with little bandwidth to focus on teachers' training for the EGR program. Trainings were also conducted by roster teachers who get paid to conduct trainings at various schools because of the lack of capacity to train everyone at provincial level.

187. However, the decentralization has worked in favour for other interventions such as the DL and WASH. With the advent of federalism, funding has been made available at the local level. A direct effect has been seen in the form of a partnership between the local government and OLE for installing solar panels that can power up the digital infrastructure. The revised governance structure has increased the involvement and accountability of the local government. Moreover, with an easier access to authorities, the local communities also have a greater voice in placing their demands around education and higher investments around it. The local authorities belonging to the same region has helped change the dynamics significantly.

188. Comparison of the budget allocation and cash outflow has been elaborated in the table below:

Table 5: Budget vs cash flow

McGovern-Dole Costs Summary	Approved budget (USD)	Expense till September 2020 (USD)
Transfer	21,119,766.81	14,034,739.00
Transfer Value (Commodity)	8,128,190.00	5,633,366.00
Transfer Value (Capacity Strengthening)	5,680,971.61	4,557,955.00
Transfer Costs	7,310,605.20	3,843,418.00
Implementation Costs	2,901,855.96	1,889,055.00
Direct Operating Costs (DOC)	24,021,622.77	15,923,794.00
Direct Support Costs (DSC)	3,653,891.25	3,145,027.00
Total Direct Costs	27,675,514.02	19,068,821.00
Indirect Support Cost (ISC)	1,937,285.98	1,239,473.37
Cargo Preference	-	-
Lesser US Flag (if lower than FF)	-312,800.00	
Grant Total Activity Costs	29,300,000.00	20,308,294.37

2.5. Impact

Did the programme ensure or create a direction of the achievement of wider results at the beneficiary, programme or at the policy level?

189. The GoN identifies school feeding as a key driver for improved educational outcome. The Systems Approach for Better Educational Results-School Feeding (SABER-SF) analyzed the overall school feeding policy and implementation frameworks in Nepal to find key highlights as well as gaps. While the GoN policies around school feeding show emerging trends, there lies significant ground to be covered at the level of local government. The responsibility of school education including school feeding resides largely with the local government. However, there is a gap in legislatives regulatory and implementation framework at this level. This gap limits effective implementation and hence the overall impact of the SF[100].

190. The MTE reports improved impact for the WFP funded McGovern-Dole Program which has been designed to address a number of gaps as highlighted in the SABER-SF. The SABER-SF identifies gaps in management and implementation as well as implementation capacities in the SF programs. The McGovern-Dole Program, on the other hand, has aimed at ensuring adequate implementation capacities and management of the program by ensuring necessary capacity building exercises. This section of the report highlights the impact that has been observed for the program catchment while also drawing comparison with the non-program schools within the same districts.

Indicator: Early Grade Reading

191. The MTE was limited in terms of directly assessing the students' learning outcomes. However, a perception-based assessment was conducted with the teachers about the six sub-tasks that govern the Early Grade Reading metrices. The MTE data indicates that the overall improvement in Early Grade Reading for Grade II students has been more in the project schools. Barring reading and listening comprehension, where project schools are marginally behind, the perception of improvement is significantly higher for other EGR subtasks. It must be noted that there is a positive correlation between the presence of EGR trainings in schools and the learning outcomes of students. Schools that have been exposed to EGR trainings show significant improvement on the EGR subtask metrices[101].

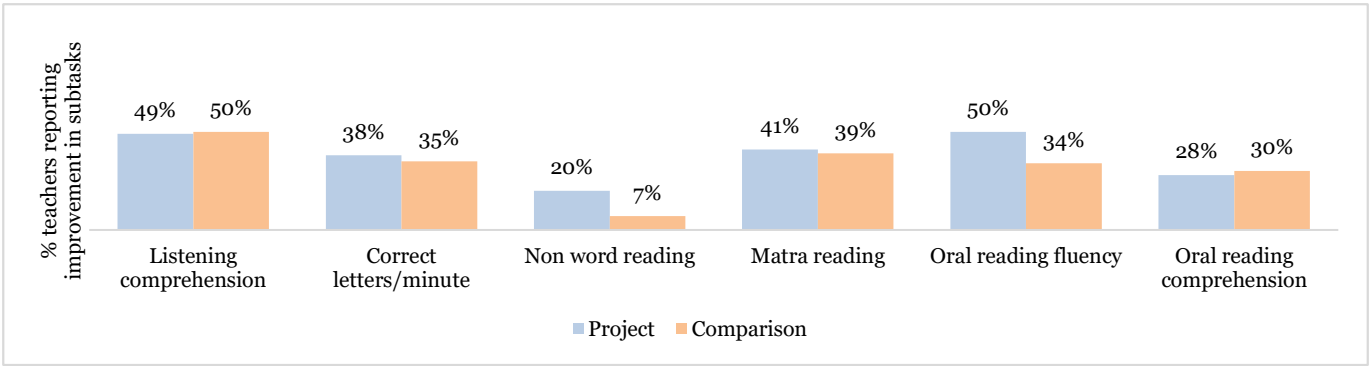

Figure 18: Improvement in EGR subtasks for Grade II students

[100] Poudel, L.N., Haag, P.(2020). *System Approach for Better Education Results –School Feeding, Nepal.* World Food Programme *(Draft)*

[101] Significant at 95% for domains: a) number of correct letters (p value: 0.004);

192. One of the key driving factors for the significant improvement has been due to the improved capacities of teachers. Interaction with program partners reflect the importance of teacher quality as a determinant of program effectiveness. Teachers were mostly observed to have been enthusiastic about the new teaching materials being provided. This shift from textbook-oriented teaching to outcome-based learning has been beneficial teachers as well as students. An improvement in the student performance around learning and reading more fluently encourages teachers and further motivates them to use improved teaching and learning materials. Most teachers who have used these new teaching methods and materials, want to keep on using them. Also, the change in the government's focus from the number of lessons covered to increased reading and understanding ability has helped the EGR to better motivate teachers.

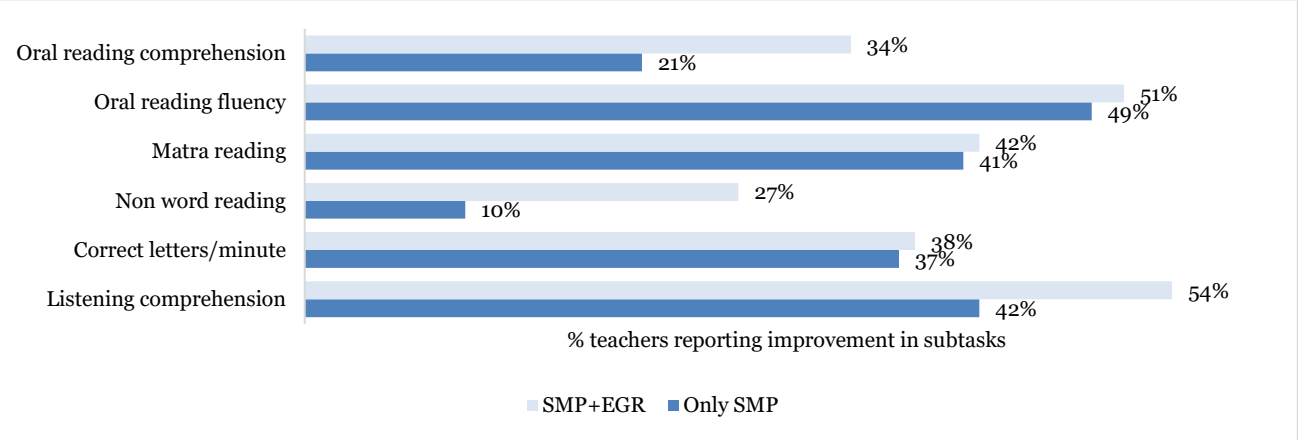

Figure 19: Comparison on EGR outcomes across only SMP and SMP+EGR schools

193. Also, with most teachers being young, the appreciation for these innovative teaching approaches have attracted them. The DL initiative relies on the capacities of the teachers for their success. While the orientation is carried out for the SMC and the head teachers, it is a responsibility of the teachers to apply digital means in their teaching. The teachers are expected to use digital lessons to teach various subjects.

194. The program had also provisioned for Reading Motivators. The reading motivators played a critical role of assessing the program progress. While they were critical in determining teacher capacities around the use of the innovative teaching materials, they also assisted the program in assessing the progress made in each school. Hence, closing a critical learning loop that helped decide future strategies and devise school specific action plans. This support function was also critical in realizing improved impact from the intervention.

195. The discussions above stand testimony to the fact that the innovative methods employed have led to improved learning outcomes and general interest in learning. The interest in learning gets demonstrated at all levels of stakeholders. While teachers identify this as a capacity building platform, students find the mechanism more interesting. This kind of setting makes learning more learner-centred and allow students interaction, feedback and learning at their own pace. Although they follow the lessons taught on the same day, still having one to one interaction helps the student to feel relaxed and puts them on the driver seat to explore, learn and get feedback at their own pace.

196. As per the outcome monitoring report 2019[102], while student performance was higher in Listening Comprehension and Letter Sound Knowledge by 44% and 2% respectively, scores in the remaining four subtasks (e.g., matra reading, non-word reading, oral reading fluency and oral reading comprehension) had decreased. In overall, students in EGR program schools scored higher in the two subtasks as compared to students in non-EGR program schools. However, it is important to note, as was highlighted in the outcome and monitoring report, that during the Oral Reading Comprehension subtask of EGRA, some students comprehended the passage and answered correctly according to their local dialect but had to be evaluated as incorrect as they did not meet the acceptable criteria set out by Education Review Office's (ERO) EGR assessment. If the EGR criteria were adjusted to accommodate the local dialect of the students, the results, on average would have been higher on the oral reading comprehension subtask[103].

Box item 1

The EGR program was implemented in the Himalaya primary school in 2073 (2017), with the aim of improving the education status amongst the early grade students. Based on the students' low pass rate and poor attendance, the school was chosen to benefit from the EGR intervention. Apart from this, lack of teaching materials, undefined curriculum and insufficiently trained teachers added to the challenges of student retention. Under the EGR programme, teachers were trained, a reading corner was provided in school and teaching materials were developed using local resources. Parents were encouraged to take part in school activities and child's learning process. Because of the EGR intervention, teachers are now using lessons plans and new teaching materials and methods based on students' needs. Extra time is also given to weaker students in the classroom. With the successful implementation of the EGR program, the school has seen an increase in active participation amongst students. The students have become more regular, disciplined and have started following classroom rules and regulations. They have also developed the habit of studying at home and finishing up the homework assigned to them. This is reflected in the better learning outcomes on all six-sub tasks of EGR, over the period of program implementation. However, the schools do not have sufficient materials to meet the requirements of all students and EGR teachers are often transferred, leaving behind very few trained teachers. To address some of these challenges, the parents and the community have been actively involved in the school's functioning, including providing financial assistance when required. The school still needs support in the form of trained teachers, availability of educational materials, arrangement of teachers' training, infrastructural support, and regular monitoring of activities by the local government.

Component: Engagement of Parents in School Committees

197. Progressing with the understanding that caregivers, i.e., parents in most cases, are a primary source to support a child's learning, school performance and general well-being, the SMP program aims at increasing community participation to achieve and sustain its strategic objectives. The previous end-term evaluation of the MGD FY14 grant recommended increasing community engagement as a strategy to improve program uptake. Over the period of four years, WFP, in its implementation of the school feeding project in Nepal, focuses on increasing awareness of the importance of education to parents and community members. In case of project schools, almost all parents who were interviewed were aware of the school feeding program.

198. The program aims at achieving increased community participation, with focus on women in the School Management Committees. However, majority of the parents (60%) reported that they were not members of any school committees. Among those who reported to be a part of the school committees, 60% were a part of the School Management Committee, 22% of the Parent Teacher Association and 13% were members of the Food Management Committee. Of the parents who are a part of the school committees, 60% find them useful. Their perception on the impact of SMP is varied. Interactions with parents show that there has been an increase in enrolment and attendance as well as retainment of their children in school post

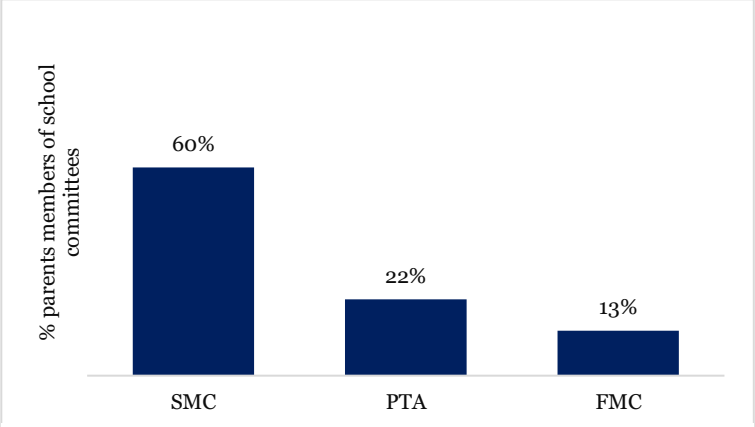

Figure 21: Committees parents are members of

[102] Outcome Monitoring of United States Department of Agriculture McGovern Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Nepal, 2018-2021

[103] Government of Nepal, (2014)., National Early Grade Reading Program 2014/15-2019/20, Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal. Retrieved from: https://www.moe.gov.np/assets/uploads/files/NEGRP_Final_Document.pdf

provision of mid-day meals. Moreover, parents reported increase in motivation levels of children to go to school as well as their own willingness and participation in the child's education to be key reasons for children regularly attending school.

199. The innovative mechanisms have also drawn appreciation from the local community. Most parents feel that these methods have helped enhance student performance. The community members, hence, show significant involvement through PTAs. Community involvement is also seen to be high for the DL initiative. To monitor progress and check regular usage of DL resources, SMCs are involved from the initiation phase. Moreover, the community is also seen to set up a maintenance fund during the later stage of the program (25,000 NPR/ year), to ensure that the program continues sustainably. In schools which lacked community support and leadership, the impact had been visibly lower. This has been primarily due to gaps in management of overheads and maintenance by the community/ local government at the school level.

200. To be informed about teachers' performance and attendance at school and promote accountability of school representatives, WFP has introduced "Namaste WFP"—a toll free beneficiary feedback system. Namaste FP is functional in seven of the 11 school meals districts. While Namaste WFP was set up to strengthen beneficiary communication, almost none of the parents who were surveyed reported to have used the toll-free helpline. Findings show that only almost 1% of the parents interviewed had used the toll-free helpline number. Rather, most parents (36.6%) had approached the SMC/FMC in case of any problems, complaints, or suggestions. Some (33.2%) also approached the teacher/ head and only a few (5%) of the parents contacted the WFP field coordinator, followed by 3.4% of the parents who complain to the local government bodies, in case of any redressal.

201. School feeding initiatives across Nepal have been able to ensure adequate community engagement. The SABER-SF identifies community involvement as one of the stronger suits of SF initiatives in the country. However, there still lies some ground to be covered in terms of on-boarding civil society organizations (CSOs) to aid the community mobilization processes. These observations also get resonated in the program catchment where community mobilization has been adequate. Mobilization by CSOs is also well-established within the program catchment. However, there appears gaps in the level of coordination between the CSOs and the local governance.

Gender and equity

202. The FY2017 intervention has stressed on interventions that could have an indirect impact on gender dimension within the target group and the society. Program components have gender-sensitive indicators such as ensuring participation and involvement of women members in the school management committees (SMC) and food management committees (FMC). As reported by the head teachers, while we can find more women members who are a part of SMCs as compared to men, it is the male members who occupy more leadership positions within the committees. The numbers are lower for individual from *dalit* communities with a membership presence of only 25%. It is also seen that 38% men enjoy a leadership position compared to 33% for women. For the individuals from *dalit* groups, the ratio reduces to 12.5%.

203. As stated by different stakeholders, especially the implementation partners, the program's engagement with the gender component has had a positive effect on the community, with increased participation of women in management committees which has indirectly impacted the enrolment and retention of girl students in the school. The program has shown to be effective to promote the participation of women in school management committees which in turn has encouraged parents to enroll their girl child in schools.

> *"Direct impact can be seen in gender matters; female participation is ensured in SMC and Day-meal management committee. Similarly, girls' enrolment, retention and learning achievement has also increased. There is a chain effect of SMP on gender empowerment in the community".* - Official, CEHRD
>
> *"Women's involvement in SMP is effective to manage day meal and encourage their daughters to go to the school. The women are in Users Committee, Food Management Committee and they also are in leading position."*- EDCU Official, Accham District.

204. Having a toilet in school, does not always imply using the same. Given that the aim of the WASH component is to also influence the behavior of children, most students (95.6%), as reported by head teachers, use the toilet in school and very few (3%) of the students use open fields to relieve themselves during school hours. Practice of open defecation was reported by a few households (8.87%) when assessment of WASH component was carried out with the parents.

205. As reported by parents, the health and hygiene practices of students seem to have increased over the project period—99% of children wash their hands with soap and water. Girls and boys are similarly aware of WASH behavior. In case of comparison schools, 99% of children use soap and water to wash their hands. Most students practiced at least one health and hygiene behavior, most notable being handwashing with soap and water, followed by regular use of toilets at home and school. Along with this, maintaining a proper waste disposal system within the school was also seen as a potential outcome of the WASH program in the schools. The observational accounts from the outcome and monitoring report also reported most students to be well-groomed, having well-trimmed nails and wearing a clean dress. The program, through its design which addresses the social taboos and rationale of program design, indirectly aims at contributing to the issues of gender parity and inclusiveness.

Policy

206. At the policy level, the FY17 cycle and the implementation of different program components, has drawn focus to the need of school meals program and the impact of the same on child nutrition and education outcome. Given the program's positive impact, the SMP has been much appreciated by various government officials and is a key strategy of the government to abate malnutrition, as formulated in the School Sector Development Plan (2016–2022) and the National School Health and Nutrition Strategy. Also, based on the learnings of HGSF program that was piloted in a few dsitricts, regional menu based on ecological zones and availbalibity of local ingredients were formulated by WFP and have recently been included in the Government's School day meal management booklet. The GoN is working closely with WFP in expanding the HGSF program. The SMP roadmap being developed by WFP based on the findings of the SABER report is being integrated into the education sector plan which will also lead to a nation-wide strengthening of the program and stronger partnerships across different but connected domains.

207. WFP, through the course of the FY17 cycle and implementation of the program, has been able to support WASH in School guidelines, for the education sector of Nepal. These guidelines have also come in handy to deal with the COVID-19 situation. Alongside this, for the first time, behaviour change communication material has been developed and the first draft of the same has been shared with the GoN. Because of the COVID-19 situation, WFP has advocated for Palika level enhancement for the WASH program and the guidelines for the same have been re-purposed with their support.

Role of COVID-19 in limiting the McGovern-Dole Program Impact

208. There is an apprehension of significant learning loss for early grade students. It is understood that the cognitive ability is sharpest for Grade I and Grade II students. With the COVID-19 limiting classroom engagement, the age group will be unfortunate to lose out on learning time. Moreover, with minimal access to education materials, the early grade students stand the risk of not retaining the education imparted to them. Moreover, distance from formal schooling is expected to have an impact on student interest towards education. The MTE data reports that children showed a declined interest in studying regularly. The overall study hours had reduced from 3.2 hours to 1.8 hours during the lockdown. The COVID-19 induced lockdown demonstrates a differential impact across gender, especially with respect to education access. Although the overall access to education had been stalled due to lockdown-induced restrictions, teachers (61%) affiliated to the program schools claimed to have supported alternative teaching methods like tole sikai/ community teaching, home visits, radio broadcasting and follow-ups, assigning homework and giving out self-learning material. However, alternative teaching mechanisms, as commented on by government officials and partners, were differently effective for girls and boys as fewer girls would attend out-of-school learning sessions as they were expected to be more involved in household chores. This could have a more pronounced adverse effect on learning outcomes for girl students.

209. These findings by MTE also resonate the findings from the UNICEF and Sharecast Initiative study. The study points out that children were the worst affected by the pandemic with 95% of them being denied access to education and 52% having stopped studying completely. While 29% children availed distance learning courses,

it was disparate with the more vulnerable families[104]. While digital learning including remote schools turned out to be alternatives, these provinces are disadvantaged to that effect. Inspite of access to digital tools through the DL initiative, most schools were converted to quarantine centers, denying students the chance to use the facilities. Moreover, many teachers had also travelled back to their hometowns, thus reducing access to education significantly.

210. Children from lower income group households were more affected. With reduced income due loss of jobs and constricted remittance flow, household faced food shortages. This scenario was graver in the Karnali region. With agriculture continuing to be the only source of livelihood for many, children were involved in such activities. The closure of school not only impacted their learning but also denied the supplemental nutrition for these groups. Worsening the nutritional status in the region. With household needs being on themselves, focus on community needs had declined. Community involvement in reinstating education services had been limited during the pandemic. While COVID-19 restrictions demanded the distance, the program faces the risk of having lost the earlier community involvement as situation move back to normalcy.

211. To address the situation, alternative learning mechanism, i..e Tole Sikai, was leveraged by the program. Tole Sikai or 'ward- focused education', comprises of small learning circles in the villages led by an older student or project Learning Mobilizer/Motivator for continued learning even while schools are closed. Tole Sikai has been implemented by partners to provide additional support to children during weekend and long vacation in EGRP districts . In the context of COVID -19 , this was further expanded as an alternative strategy for education continuity. Alternative mode of teaching learning was also supported by MoEST and Tole Sikai was expanded from the month of July 2020. A significant number of head teachers (46% project schools and 40% comparison schools) reported that Tole Sikai was being implemented in the schools, while one third of the head teachers reported absence of an alternative learning mechanisms.

212. As part of the program, materials provided for Early Grade Reading were used in small groups. Kids engaged in group studies, which included games, while following strict health and safety protocols. New activities were introduced with the objective that the parents can also adapt and share the same with other parents, from word puzzles to learning new vocabulary to creative arts for fun and expression. As per the program report, the benefits of the program were clearly visible in Bajhang where more and more children are motivated to read, learn and complete assignments on a regular basis with the support of their parents. This, as stated in the report, has been a huge relief to the parents and has played a role in curbing the anxiety kids were feeling due to school closure. The model has received a positive feedback from the local government which have requested WFP to continue with this mode of learning until children are safely back to school.

213. The interactions with different officials highlighted the ineffectiveness of the alternative learning mechanisms which required access to technology (radio, online classes etc.) and had been put in place to reduce the impact of school closure on children. The reasons cited for the ineffectiveness of these programs were largely related to the poor connectivity in the areas and lack of access to electronic devices.

2.6. Sustainability

Has the programme been able to influence policy or systems within the space of learning and nutrition in Nepal for future uptake by the system?

214. The MTE establishes the relevance and coherence of the McGovern-Dole Program with the GoN's vision of an enhanced educational ecosystem integrated with health and nutrition outcomes. While the school meal provision addresses the requirement, there lies a need to build systemic capacities around it to make it sustainable. The MTE highlights the importance of community involvement and its positive influence on programme effectiveness. As highlighted in the SABER-SF for school feeding programs, the MTE also identifies the HGSF initiatives as key means to sustainability for the SMP under the McGovern-Dole Program.

[104] Share-Initiative (2020). Tracking the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Families in Nepal. UNICEF

215. The HGSF program relinquishes greater control over the SMP to the local communities by sourcing a part of the mid-day meal locally. A study[105] conducted in 30 schools reaching nearly 4,000 children in Sindhupalchok and Bardiya districts in Nepal to assess the operations and outcomes of the program in comparison to the regular cash-based school meals program, concludes that home-grown school feeding had strengthened operations of the SMP and led to a significantly higher meal provision and quality of school meals.

> *"Even the mothers of the students are involved in the cooperatives. Each school needs 4-5 cooperatives to meet the demand. The commodities that are seasonal (vegetables etc.) are grown by the mothers and are supplied to the cooperatives who in turn sell it to the school. Small farmers and women communities benefit heavily from the program. Even marginal and poor farmers are a part of supply chain in providing vegetables etc. (which do not require too much space) in this HGSF system."* Official, PCD.

216. By creating a ready-made market for local commodities among the farmers, using the planned menu, the program encourages the consumption and production of local produce. The local government takes the accountability to choose the cooperative that can supply the commodities and slowly, as cooperatives build their capacity, the supply increases. The program also has potential to lead to active participation of more local stakeholders including small-scale farmers and women's group.

217. As per the annual plan, WFP and PCD project aimed to impact over 24 agriculture cooperatives directly and over 250 farmers indirectly through two key objectives; one to improve smallholders market participation and second to enhance the nutrition sensitivity of agricultural production. These learnings from the same, as envisioned by WFP, will help to incorporate a home-grown school feeding approach to the NSMP which is expected to improve the nutritional status of children, increase accountability of local government and the community, as well as women's participation. The program will also help in promoting the consumption of local food and vegetables.

218. The HGSF program has been much appreciated and applauded by different stakeholders for providing quality meals while also promoting local ownership of the program. As felt by most officials, the HGSF program needs to be scaled up and might be an effective and sustainable model to increase nutrition and learning outcomes of the children located in rural districts of Nepal as well as contribute to the overall good of the community at large.

> *"Pilot of HGSF has been very successful in income generation of household, community participation and production and utilization of nutritious food locally"* Program Officer, FFEP.
>
> *"Home-grown school feeding program would be the best alternative to gear up for enhancing educational and nutritional status of children"* Official, CEHRD

Handover to the Government:

219. The MTE demonstrates significant contribution of the SMP to the improved educational outcomes in the program catchment. To replicate the program design to the non-FFECCN will need a policy level uptake by the GoN. To ensure this happens, there needs to be a framework that captures strategic and implementational requirements as well as basic standards for school feeding and sectoral and multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms. There also needs to be an endorsement of a legal mandate for school feeding that could encompass students across all grades and school types.

[105] Shrestha, R.M., Schreinemachers, P., Nyangmi, M.G. et al., 2020., Home-grown school feeding: assessment of a pilot program in Nepal. BMC Public Health 20, 28 Available at: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-8143-9

220. Apart from resource availability, stakeholder capacity and increased ownership and accountability, sustainability of a program is driven by the close coordination among stakeholders where the communities and governments, at local and national level, must work in tandem and have a shared understanding to sustain and improve the outcomes. This becomes more important in case of the federal structure in Nepal wherein local governments hold significant power to effectively implement development program. Concerns were raised by different stakeholders regarding the coordination between different tiers of the government as well as clarity of their roles, for effectively implementing the program and sustaining its impact.

> *"There is a gap in shaping local government. The current approach of the program has not been able to engage local government in SMP."* Official, CEHRD
>
> *"Food delivery system has been based according to the mechanism established before federalism. There is a big gap between food delivery mechanism and the legitimate role of the local governments in education governance at local level."* Official, FFEP
>
> *There is very good harmony and linkage between WFP and FFE, MOEST at central level. Provincial level unit of FFE and WFP are also coordinated when it comes to food delivery, monitoring and reporting. But linkage with provincial ministry is lesser. There are also gaps in coordination between (implementing) partner NGOs and local FFE staffs and EDCU at district level. Similarly, NGOs work directly with schools without deep connection with the local government."* Official, FFEP

221. Given the government's education policy, programs being implemented, and increasing evidence of their commitment to improve child education and nutrition, most stakeholders are confident about the program handover to the government. There is also an agreement on the countrywide implementation of SMP, to which a significant part of the budget has been allocated. GoN also plans to initiate and scale up investments in the Home-Grown School Feeding program, which has been well received by different stakeholders. There is also a felt need, as expressed by stakeholders, for not limiting the program to basic schools but extending the implementation of SMP to secondary schools as well. However, WFP's support and technical assistance for effective, efficient, and high-quality delivery of the programs is deemed significant for scaling up and sustaining the impact of the program.

> *"It would be a rational move if WFP's expertise is translated into the nationwide School Meals Programme. Technical Assistance provided by WFP could be instrumental for the government to set in place the diversified food standards, norms, guidelines for cash based SMP."* Official, MoEST
>
> *"the government will take over the responsibility to continue the MDM in WFP supported schools but there is huge capacity gap to wisely implement the program while safeguarding the nutrition value, equity and participation. Thus, TA must be provided from WFP".* Official, CEHRD

Budget:

222. The major shortfalls of the government's budget allocation for education were reported to be in terms of provision of learning materials, infrastructure development, and capacity building of school staff. Along with the provision of school meals, the government should also gradually increase the budget allocated for education. However, the SABER-SF indicates that the GoN has worked significantly towards establishing financial capabilities within the SF space. There have been improvements in terms of overall fund management and financial reporting.

> *"There is always a shortfall in government budget in the education sector. Though basic costs for the primary education have been covered by the government which not sufficient to address the actual needs."* Official, CEHRD.
>
> *"WFP has a good harmony with the government at the central level. Only challenges are in the implementation level, i.e. local contribution in food composition, maintaining a safe and clean environment."* Official, CEHRD

223. While the study indicates towards stability of resources, there are concerns regarding the sufficiency of resources. As stated by the programme team, HGSF was observed to have met the government 15 NPR per meal budget and nutritional standards of school meals when the same was piloted in Jumla district, yet concerns were raised by officials in relation to the current fund allocation for meals per student in the transitioned districts.

> *"Designated calories for the food cannot be fulfilled from allocated budget, i.e. Rs 15 in hill and Rs 20 in mountain is not sufficient." CEHRD, Official*
>
> *"There are no visible problems in kind based SMP but in cash based model, schools are facing problems to manage school meal, adhering to required calories, in the allotted 15 NPR per child in hills and 20 NPR per child in the mountains" CEHRD, official.*

Infrastructure

224. Most of the schools have required physical infrastructure including drinking water, functional kitchen, and toilet but proper maintenance of these becomes an issue. With WFP's support in the form of infrastructure development, situations in most of the schools have improved. The problems that remain are in terms of the availability of clean and purified drinking water. This coupled with the lack of regular maintenance of infrastructural facilities also becomes an issue which makes it difficult to sustain WASH practices as well as hygienic methods of food preparation methods.

225. As schools are spaces within the community, the sustainability of infrastructure depends as much on the community as on the schools. It was also reported that the infrastructure, though developed primarily to contribute to literacy and nutrition outcomes of students, was not being used efficiently due to lack of awareness amongst the communities which affects the sustainability of the infrastructure developed under the program. Therefore, the sensitization of communities is important to make the best use of the infrastructure provided. Along with WFP's infrastructure program, there is also a need to improve coordination with the local and provincial governments.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

Relevance and coherence

226. The developmental challenges in the Karnali, Sudur Paschim and Lumbini provinces of Nepal especially around lower enrolment and attendance rates in schools, food and nutrition insecurity issues have been the drivers for WFP's efforts in these geographies through theMcGovern-Dole Program mandate. The program components were designed to address these challenges. For instance, the program's efforts towards providing fortified school meals as well as establishing a cash-based model that encourages consumption of locally available food proves highly relevant towards addressing food and nutrition insecurity issues in these provinces. Moreover, the EGR and DL interventions find relevance in addressing many of the low enrolment and attendance concerns. Not only have the interventions tried to address the problems at the level of students but also has worked towards strengthening teacher and school capacities around issues that lead to low attendance. Various studies have found that teaching methods play an important role in ensuring student interest and hence, the program interventions were found to working towards strengthening teacher capacities that could aid student attendance as well as attentiveness.

227. Not only did the program focus on intra-classroom environment but also aided improvement of school infrastructure. Several studies indicate that inadequate school infrastructure and improper sanitation facilities are significant causes of absenteeism of children in Nepal. Adolescent girl students express discomfort in attending schools due to absence of hygienic infrastructure especially during menstrual cycles. The program has attempted to create an enabling ecosystem around these issues. The partnership with IDS focuses specifically on rehabilitation of school toilets and ensured provision of water taps. These initiatives by the program also find coherence with the existing government policies in Nepal. The program complements the GoN's **NSMP** and supports the education equity discourse. The program is also in line with the WFP Nepal Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023) and identifies with all five strategic objectives of the CSP. It is also coherent with the SSDP which

also focuses on safe and hygienic school environment for children while also looking at building teacher capacities.

Effectiveness

228. The MTE reports an improvement in the enrolment levels post inception of the McGovern-Dole Program. While there no direct metrics for enrolments, all stakeholders whose perception on enrolment were sought cited that the increase was seen higher for girls over boys. With basic education made free and compulsory by the revised Nepalese constitution, the enrolment numbers were expected to rise. However, the increased enrolment for girl students brings out deeply entrenched socio-cultural constructs that guide education attainment. Parents tend to invest more on boy children than girls since there lies a socio-cultural expectation on male children to harbor financial household responsibilities in future. Anticipating that private schools provide better quality of education most household send their male children to private schools. On the other hand, with the constitutional provision of free education and accompanying free mid-day meals are drivers for households to send the female children to public schools. Thus, a higher increase in enrolment in public schools is seen for girls.

229. However, it will be unfair to attribute all changes to the prevailing socio-cultural dynamics in Nepal. The MTE indicates towards a gradual yet significant shift in approach of households towards education. Children are encouraged to attend and participate in schools. At the same time, the innovative interventions on teaching methods have made learning more interesting for students. As a result, the attendance of students was found to have increased. It was interesting to note that the education level of parents and their social participation had a bearing on the children's attendance levels. While the education level of the parents does not fall under the purview of the McGovern-Dole Program, the program can strengthen its community engagement. A more sensitized community and household members were seen to ensure that the children attend school more regularly.

230. These factors also tend to govern attentiveness of students. What has been consistently observed across all stakeholders is that perception of improvement is higher for girls than boys. Even for pass rates, nearly 94% teachers perceive a marked improvement in the pass rate of girl students vis-à-vis 88% for male students. One of the key reasons that can be attribute to this could be program's reinvigorated focus on mainstreaming women participation across all spheres of the program. For instance, increase in participation as well as leadership of women has made them aware of the importance of education. Thus, they are now motivated to send their daughters to school. Stakeholders, including government officials, suggested that empowering women in the community may have had a ripple effect resulting in increased number of girls attending school.

231. The program's sensitivity to sanitation and hygiene deterrents to school attendance has also shown effective results. With appropriate sanitation facilities being rehabilitated as well as attempting to create a more sensitized school environment around menstrual needs by carrying out menstrual health trainings as well as ensuring availability of sanitary pads at schools, the program has been able to reduce female student absenteeism.

Impact

232. The MTE was not equipped to measure outcomes and impact. However, the study attempted to understand the change in key outcomes through the perception based approach. The study finds that stakeholders associated with the program schools perceive an improvement in the reading abilities of grade II students, especially with respect to number of correct letters per minute[106], vis-à-vis the non-beneficiary schools in the same geography. Even within the program beneficiary schools, schools which had received EGR interventions showed improved learning outcomes. The key driver for this change, as most stakeholders resonate is the student motivation to attend school. However, teacher capacities prove to be actual driver for this change. The program has worked towards enhancing teacher capacities by exposing them to necessary trainings and a direct result of that gets reflected through improved student capacities.

233. Along with teacher capacities, parents' perception towards education has also been identified as a key factor that helps develop the enabling ecosystem that encourages learning. To sensitize parents about education and enhance their accountability towards education, the program has worked towards involving parents in various school committees. While the program has not seen optimal results on this effort, there have early indication of

[106] P value: 0.004, significant at 99% CI

its effectiveness. For students, whose parents were members of school committees, change in outcomes were perceived to be higher. Moreover, there have been indication of improved gender relations due to the participation. The MTE reveals that in scenario where a larger proportion of women participated in the SMCs, led to effective management of the mid-day meal, and has indirectly had a positive impact on gender relations. This has primarily been due to the fact that increased social participation has helped women find the space to voice their concerns and exercise a degree of power.

234. Going forward, the program could target gender empowerment trough enhancing participation of women from the community not only as members in the SMCs but also stressing on women in leadership roles. Past evaluations indicate weaker gender equity situations. The early effectiveness that participation of women from the community has demonstrated the effectiveness of results not only in terms of learning outcomes but also in streamlining gender equity issues. While the program might not have impacted the treatment meted out to all genders, but it has definitely pushed the needle towards a more gender conscious ecosystem within schools.

Efficiency

235. The MTE does not delve into the cost efficiencies of the MGD grant significantly. Instead, it focuses on program attributes that have aided program effectiveness. The program has invested heavily in capacity building of the stakeholders and the direct results of these investments have been commented upon by the MTE. The MTE resonates the fact that capacity building investments tend to effect program results faster than a completely downstream intervention. The actual return, however, will need to be measured during the end-term evaluation.

Sustainability

236. The MTE findings indicate towards improved community participation as a key lever to enhance accountability across levels of stakeholders. For instance, the HGSF pilot demonstrated how stakeholder accountability at multiple levels can deliver effective results. Given the positive impact of the pilot, this model shows potential to be scaled across all intervention districts making a gradual shift from the food-based support provided by the WFP. This initiative shows the mechanism for sustainability of the program. At the national level, WFP collaborated with government of Nepal to develop the national guideline school mid day meals standard and facilitation guidebook for community schools. Local Governments from 33 districts have been receiving the requisite training on this guideline with technical support from WFP and government of Nepal. The national guideline also promotes for home grown school feeding approach.

237. Collaborating with the local government and involving them to achieve program objectives has been positively received even in case of strengthening WASH in school. WFP has been advocating local government for cost sharing while developing WASH related infrastructure at school level. As a result, all infrastructures developed through WFP includes 10%-50% contribution from local government as reported by WFP. Due to cost sharing, local level government are also involved in monitoring these infrastructures which also reduces the duplication of efforts and ensures sustainability of the impact created. Similar success was reported for the DL component of the program which is implemented in partnership with OLE where the local government has been taking more responsibility to come to the school and monitor the implementation of the program component because of the investment made by them in form of solar panels (for smooth functioning of DL program) in contrast to the previous government structure where a cental authority which was much detached from ground level realities, was monitoring the schools annually. There is higher level of accountability and responsibility which rests with the community which is required to set up a maintainence fund during the later stage of the DL program (Rs. 25,000/ year), to ensure that the program runs sustainably.

238. Sustainability, however, does not depend only on the downstream accountability but also the upstream acceptability of program models. With the program design already coherent with the GoN's education policies, it is expected that handover would not be a challenge. Beyond which, it needs to be taken up by the government machinery to ensure continuation of operations. The program, over time, has introduced directed interventions to enhance outcomes. It will become necessary that government machinery are ascribed to these intervention doses to ensure sustainability of outcomes.

COVID-19 Impact

239. COVID-19 rendered the schools shut**.** This extended closure of school meant that 2.4 million children who used to benefit from the government's School Meals Program were not getting supplementary nutritious food—especially in the grain deficit Sudur Paschim, Karnali and Lumbini Provinces (WFP). The initiative by the WFP

along with the GoN, to provide take-home rations for students from grades one to eight safeguarded them from possible nutritional losses. However, the initiative could not counter the learning losses. Prolonged school closure indicates a possible decline in students' interest towards studies, lower attentiveness, and expectedly lower learning outcomes. Moreover, the COVID-19 induced lockdown is also expected to have an adverse effect on gender. While some teachers, residing locally, have facilitated home-based learning, girl students were found to be more involved in household chores. The program does introduce digital learning tools. However, with most schools being used as a quarantine centre, children in these geographies were denied the opportunity to utilize the digital tools to continue learnings. This coupled with teachers relocating hindered access to education for most children.

3.2. Good Practices:

240. *Creating Community Ownership and accountability:* The program design gives sufficient weight to involving the community in the effective implementation and sustainability of impact. Community participation has been a critical input for provisioning of school meals, maintenance, and development of infrastructure. Creating community ownership has encouraged the members to take up responsibility and be accountable for the working of the program. It has also impacted gender relations in the communities and resulted in greater participation of women in SMC/FMCs as well as the HGSF component. This has also led to increased interest and motivation among parents in their children's education, including the girl child.

241. *Holistic approach aligned with GoN's policies:* WFP's holistic approach to increase education outcome and nutrition of children capitalizes on complementary interventions to create a significant impact. The holistic education approach that supports school meals is well aligned with the emphasis of the Government of Nepal's (GoN) integration of quality education with access and equity in the new phase of the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP), 2016-2022. While the program has supported activities to improve the quality of teaching instruction by providing trainings and reading and learning materials, creating library/ digital library, it also focuses on involving parents in the child education by encouraging them to actively participate in school activities (like provisioning of school meals). The program has also focused on building the capacities of stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the program.

3.3. Recommendations

The recommendations, rationale and proposed actions against each recommendation are presented in the table below:

S. No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Proposed Action	Stakeholder	Type	Timeframe	Priority
1.	*Advocate for expansion of the McGovern-Dole Program to secondary schools to enhance inclusivity of the program.*	Currently, the coverage excludes secondary schools denying access to SMP for children from similar socio-economic backgrounds but different school category. Given that SMP been effective in enhancing enrollment and attendance rates in schools, the selective approach denies the secondary schools from such outcomes.	Government stakeholders feel, as a sustainability measure, the need to extend the coverage to ensure equitable delivery of benefits in the region. Given the fixed budget for this grant, the expansion might not be possible. , future grants can be designed to expand the coverage to secondary schools as wellimplementation of SMP at a wider level, will prove to be a sustainable strategy towards having a nationally owned and effectively run School Meals Programme.	WFP; Government stakeholders (MoEST; EDCU)	Strategic	Long Term	High
2.	*Enhance participation of local governments to ensure sustainability and increase local accountability*	The newly established municipalities (post federalization) are overall large in size and are vested with greater authority. With the new federal structure in place, the local government holds significant power and now have a greater voice in placing their demands around education and overall development of the region.	Program effectiveness was noted in cases where local government were responsiveness. From point of view of sustainability of the results, the McGovern-Dole Program should engage with local government to gradually facilitate a shift in leadership of as well meting necessary support to key program components such as the HGSF, DL and necessary management committees.	Local governance machinery	Strategic	Medium Term	High
3.	*Adapt teaching medium and supplementary materials in local language to ensure better understanding*.	Learning outcomes are reportedly best when medium of instruction is in the first language (Benson, 2004). Rapid transition to second language might risk students not attaining full mastery of either language. This was seen in Rukum East where teaching children in Nepali instead of local dialect was challenging. To address this gap, teaching and reading material was translated into the local dialect. The effort may have contributed to better EGRA results.	To ensure better outcomes, medium of instruction as well as materials should be provided in local language. While changing the reading material is difficult under the current grant, the teaching medium can incorporate local language in a post COVID scenario. The next grant can factor developing materials in local languages.	WFP; Program partners	Operational	Medium Term	High
4.	*Strengthen gender and equity dimension by encouraging a more equitable selection and election of women to*	Operationally more males are occupying key roles despite the gender mainstreaming approach. Also, among cooks, there are very few who are Dalits. Even in the SMCs, where female	The program should focus on bringing about a positive change in traditional gender roles by encouraging both, women, and community members to have more females occupy leadership roles. Schools should encourage	School stakeholders and community	Strategic	Medium term	High

S. No.	Recommendation	Rationale	Proposed Action	Stakeholder	Type	Timeframe	Priority
	school committees and the leadership position	members are more, more men occupy the leadership roles.	equal participation of both men and women for handling operational activities.				
5.	*Advocate low transfer rate of EGRA teachers with the government.*	Transfer of teachers trained on EGRA adversely affects learning outcomes in schools.	The government machinery needs apprised of the challenges that happen due to transfer of trained staff. It affects program efficiency and effectiveness and tends to delay impact. In case an EGR-trained teacher is transferred, he/she should be replaced only with an EGR-trained teacher.	Government stakeholders (MoEST; EDCU)	Strategic	Long term	High

Annex I: Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference (TOR) are for the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme Grant (NP02.02.021.SMP1) implemented by WFP Nepal Country Office. This evaluation is commissioned by World Food Programme (WFP) Nepal and will cover the period from January 2018 to Dec 2019.

These TOR were prepared by WFP Nepal Country Office based upon an initial document review and consultation with stakeholders and following a standard template. The purpose of the TOR is threefold. First it outlines how WFP will implement the MTE as approved in the Evaluation Plan for the programme by USDA; secondly, it provides key information to stakeholders about the proposed evaluation; and thirdly, it provides key information to the evaluation team and helps guide them throughout the evaluation process.

WFP has been implementing the FY17 grant as a continuation of the previous phase of the same programme (2014-2016). The current grant continues programming for four years, 2018-2021. In the FY17 cycle, WFP has continued the holistic approach to programming with activities grouped into seven major interventions:

- Distribute Food: Provide school meals
- Enrolment: Conduct parent and community awareness and training on the importance of education,
- Health: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities (constructing or rehabilitating improved water systems in schools and creating awareness of good practices)
- Literacy: Early Grade Learning Programme (providing literacy support with material and teacher-training for early grade reading and digital learning)
- Nutrition: School Meals Menu Planner Package (participation of the community and local farmers for the development of school menu which includes the use of the digital tool for school menu planning)
- Safe Food Preparation and Storage (training and awareness on safe and hygienic food preparation and storage practices)
- Support to Capacity Building (to the Ministry of Education for developing the integrated school meals strategy and national school feeding programme guidelines)

The two Strategic Objectives (SOs) of the programme are to Improve Literacy of School Aged Children (SO1) and to Increase Use of Health and Dietary Practices (SO2) as per the USDA McGovern-Dole Results Frameworks.

The key implementing partners for the programme include Food for Education Project (FFEP) and Department of Education. Similarly, World Education Inc., Open Learning Exchange Nepal, Integrated Development Society and Partnership for Child Development – collectively implement different activities (early grade reading, digital literacy, WASH and school nutrition respectively for the McGovern-Dole FY17 grant cycle with a total project budget about 29 milion

A baseline study for the food for education and child nutrition (SMPCN) activity FY 2017 cycle was done in 2018 which focused on collecting key programme indicators as a basis for assessing the current situation. The mid-term and endline evaluations for this activity are planned for (Nov 2019 – July 2020) and (Nov 2021 – July 2022) respectively.

This TOR will be finalized based on comments received on the draft version and on the agreement reached with the research firm. The evaluation shall be conducted in conformity with the TOR.

2. Reasons for the Evaluation

2.1 Rationale

The evaluation is being commissioned for the following reasons:

- The MTE is part of the contractual obligations between USDA and WFP. The MTE is part of the series of evluations required by USDA during the project life span (a baseline assessment, a mid-term evaluation and a final evaluation).

- As the programme is now at its mid-point, it is timely to assess the progress made in implementation by comparing the mid-term results with the baseline and receive guidance on the programme's implementation.
- This evaluation will also fulfil the requirement that USDA McGovern-Dole funded projects carry out a independent MTE that will critically and objectively review the progress of implementation with an eye to generating recommendations that will strengthen project implementation and inform future project design.

2.2 Objectives

WFP evaluations serve the dual and mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning.

Accountability – The evaluation will assess and report on the performance and results of the USDA McGovern-Dole supported Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme. A comparative analysis of the midline evaluation results with baseline and activity targets will help to determine the progress made by the project so far.

Learning – The evaluation will determine the reasons why certain results occurred or not, to draw lessons, derive good practices and pointers for learning. It will provide evidence-based findings to further planning and adjustment of the activity and implementation procedure for reaching the target within set time frame. These evidence based lessons will be used for operational and strategic decision-making. Findings will be actively disseminated and lessons will be incorporated into relevant lesson sharing systems.

The major evaluation results will be disaggregated by gender as well as nepali language speakers and non -nepali (ethnic language) speakers students for early grade reading components. This evidence will provide an insights on how the school meal activity is affecting women, men, girls and boys along with other disadvantaged groupsAssessing effectiveness of beneficiaries complaints and feedback mechanism (Namaste WFP) will generate learnings on the level of access of information to the beneficiaries and adherence of their feedback.

The MTE will also make recommendations on what is needed to strengthen and improve project implementation, including the technical assistance components for example improving SMP policy framework and pilots on home-grown school school feeding on the cash-based and government funded SMP, for the remaining period.

2.3. Stakeholders and users

A number of stakeholders both inside and outside of WFP have interests in the results of the evaluation and some of these will be asked to play a role in the evaluation process. The primary users of this evaluation will be:

WFP Nepal and its partners in decision-making, notably related to programme implementation and/or design, Country Strategy and partnerships.

The government is expected to take over the management and monitoring of the School Meals Programme over time, therefore, evaluation findings are of primary importance for them.

WFP HQ may use evaluations for wider organizational learning and accountability

OEV may use the evaluation findings, as appropriate, to feed into evaluation syntheses as well as for annual reporting to the Executive Board.

USDA will use evaluation findings to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions.

Other COs may also benefit from the findings, which can contribute to corporate learning on implementation of capacity development interventions.

Accountability to affected populations, is tied to WFP's commitments to include beneficiaries as key stakeholders in WFP's work. As such, WFP is committed to ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment (GEEW) in the evaluation process, with participation and consultation in the evaluation by women, men, boys and girls from different groups.

Table 1 below provides a preliminary stakeholder analysis, which should be deepened by the evaluation team as part of the Inception phase.

Table 1: Preliminary Stakeholders' analysis

Stakeholders	Interest in the evaluation and likely uses of evaluation report to this stakeholder
INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	
Country Office (CO) Nepal	Responsible for the planning and implementation of WP intevrentions at country level. It has a direct stake in the evaluation and an interest in learning from experience to inform decision-making. It is also called upon to account internally as well as to its beneficiaries and partners for performance and results of its programmes.
Regional Bureau (RB) Bangkok	Responsible for both oversight of COs and technical guidance and support, the RB management has an interest in an independent/impartial account of the operational performance as well as in learning from the evaluation findings to apply this learning to other country offices. The Regional Evaluation Officers supports CO/RB management to ensure quality, credible and useful decentralized evaluations
WFP HQ school feeding unit	WFP HQ technical units are responsible for issuing and overseeing the rollout of normative guidance on corporate programme themes, activities and modalities, as well as of overarching corporate policies and strategies. They also have an interest in the lessons that emerge from evaluations, as many may have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus.
Office of Evaluation (OEV)	OEV has a stake in ensuring that decentralized evaluations deliver quality, credible and useful evaluations respecting provisions for impartiality as well as roles and accountabilities of various decentralised evaluation stakeholders as identified in the evaluation policy.
WFP Executive Board (EB)	The WFP governing body has an interest in being informed about the effectiveness of WFP programmes. This evaluation will not be presented to the Board but its findings may feed into thematic and/or regional syntheses and corporate learning processes.
EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	
Beneficiaries	As the ultimate recipients of food assistance, beneficiaries have a stake in WFP determining whether its assistance is appropriate and effective. As such, the level of participation of school boys and girls, and their parents, teachers and community

	members from different groups disaggregated by male and female, will be determined and their respective perspectives will be sought in the evaluation.
Government of Nepal	The Government has a direct interest in knowing whether WFP activities in the country are aligned with its priorities, harmonised with the action of other partners and meet the expected results. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology will have particular interest in issues related to capacity development as the direct institutional beneficiary. The Food for Education Project (FFEP) and Department of Education are the main implementing partners. The Ministry of Health and Population's Family Welfare Division and the Ministry of Forests and Environment, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and the National Planning Commission (NPC) are WFP's collaborative partners.
UN Country team	The UNCT's harmonized action should contribute to the realisation of the government developmental objectives. It has therefore an interest in ensuring that WFP programmes are effective in contributing to the UN concerted efforts. Various agencies are also direct partners of WFP at policy and activity level.
Non-governmental organizations (WFP Nepal's cooperation partners)	WFP's cooperating partners – World Education Inc., Open Learning Exchange Nepal and Partnership for Child Development –collectively implement different activities (early grade reading, digital literacy, and school nutrition (digital menu planner) respectively for the McGovern-Dole FY17 grant cycle, at the same time, having their own interventions. They will be keen to know the findings of the evaluation; the results directly reflecting the efficacy of their work and through that, opening opportunities for continued collaboration. The results of the evaluation might therefore affect future implementation modalities, strategic orientations and partnerships.
USDA Food Assistance Division (FAD)	USDA has specific interest in ensuring that operational performance reflects USDA standards and accountability requirements, as well as an interest in learning to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions.
Local Education Development Partner Group (LEDPG)	LEDPG including United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Civil Society and others under the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) supporting the government of Nepal's education sector plan and programmes.
Others	A wide range of actors, such as local suppliers, school administrators and local communities, are involved in the provision of school meals and are expected to benefit from some of the capacity development activities.

3. Context and subject of the Evaluation

3.1 Context

Despite years of multiple development initiatives undertaken by the Government and development partners, Nepal remains one of the world's poorest and least-developed countries ranking 149 out of 189 countries on the 2018 Human Development Index. One quarter of the population (6.7 million people) lives below the national poverty line because of political instability, limited economic growth, high prices and frequent natural disasters. School enrolment rates have improved but access to adequate schools and quality instruction, which is necessary to improve literacy, remains a challenge. Malnutrition rates are high and 15 percent of the population is food-insecure. Stunting for children below age five is 36 percent, underweight is 27 percent; and, wasting is 10 percent. Access to health services, safe water and sanitation is inadequate.

As provisioned in the Constitution of Nepal, which was promulgated in 2015, the country has transformed into a federal democratic republic and is currently going through a rapid process of federalism rollout. Nepal now has seven provincial and 753 local levels (including six metropolises, 11 sub-metropolises, 276 municipalities and 460 rural municipalities). Under this federal governance system, the local levels have been provided with the authority for planning, financing, and delivery of basic education (a year of pre-primary, followed by Grades 1 through 8), secondary education (Grades 9 through 12) and non-formal education programmes. The federal structure in the governance system will bridge the gap between different layers of government, schools and the community and allow for improved accountability, better-informed curriculum development, promotion of mother tongue-based instruction and effective education service delivery.

WFP has started putting its efforts for building capacity of ministry of education, science and technology to better provide service delivery in the federal system. WFP is currently expanding its support to federal, provincial and local governments to mitigate the existing challenges related to providing education during the transition to federalism and to increase their capacity to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

Nepal has made remarkable progress in achieving a degree of gender parity in education sector. Net enrollment rates have achieved parity at all levels of schooling, reflecting the government's success in ensuring the equal participation of girls in schools. However, while improvements in enrollment rates are a positive first step, this does not imply gender parity in the literacy rate. One of the biggest problems in Nepal's education system is female education. This issue has been neglected since long. In fact, there is an extreme inequality in the literacy rate between men and women. In Nepal, 71 percent of men can read and write, whereas only 44 percent of women can. This is a inequality for women's education and is a direct link to areas of poverty in Nepal. In Nepal, societal norms dictate that women after a certain age are married which has discouraged reasonable investment to women's education.

The above situation is exacerbated in Provinces 6 and 7 where the geographic area is characterized by frequent natural disasters, severe food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty, and low education outcomes. These provinces have the lowest national net enrolment rates and the highest under-nutrition rates. Consequently, the McGovern-Dole supported FFE programme focuses on educational and nutritional outcomes of school-age children living in the hills and mountains of 11 districts in Provinces 5, 6 and 7 (in Province 7, Achham, Baitadi, Bajhang, Bajura, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Doti; and in the Province 6, West Rukum, Jajarkot and Dailekh; East Rukum of Province 5.

Specific In-country Constraints: Weak infrastructure, geographical remoteness and targeted beneficiaries' vulnerability to disasters pose challenges and may limit access to these provinces. Similarly, the Government's capacity to monitor, supervise and manage the education system, including National School Meal Programme (NSMP) is fragmented, as highlighted in the WFP-Nepal comparative study on school feeding strategies in Nepal conducted in 2015[107]. Funding and staffing at all levels (from school teachers to senior government officials) are weak. Lack of transparency, accountability and weak governance are continuing challenges that need to be addressed through strong monitoring systems. Another potential challenge is avoiding overlap of education related complementary programme interventions implemented by a large number of partners. WFP Nepal works closely with the Ministry of Education and development partners to ensure that its program interventions are not duplicated but rather complementary and supportive of the government education and school feeding objectives.

3.2 Subject of the evaluation

For the proposed MTE, the evaluation team is expected to use the same WFP decentralized evaluation approach used during the baseline to critically review and assess the progress made by the USDA McDole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme, FY 17 grant cycle since the baseline study in 2018.

[107] Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2016

The FY 17 grant cycle is implemented over the period of January 2018 to December 2021 in selected food insecure rural and urban municipalities of 11 district across Provinces 5, 6 and 7[108]. A total of 2,003 schools are covered, serving 117,872 boy and 131128 girl students. The programme takes a holistic approach to education programming through four interventions: school meals, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), early grade reading (EGR), [109]and digital learning (DL[110]). WFP further complements these activities through school infrastructure development, including building and rehabilitating kitchens, latrines, and water stations, as well as the distribution of non-food items, particularly energy-saving stoves, cooking utensils, school furniture among others. School meals and WASH activities are implemented across selected municipalities of 11 districts. EGR is implemented in all SMP schools across six selected programme districts, while the DL programme is implemented in selected EGR schools over five districts. The programme is currently implemented in 95 schools across five districts benefitting about 10,000 children from grades 2-5. The National School Meals Programme district map is attached in **Annex 1** and the map of the USDA McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme is attached in **Annex 2. The four year activity budget is roughly thirty million US dollar out of which approximately, $1million is budgeted for monitoring and evaluation.**

During the four year implementation period, the programme plans to achieve the following results: (1) Improved attendance of students; (2) Improved knowledge and skill of school administrators on new and quality techniques and tools; (3) Improved knowledge and skill of teachers on use of new and quality teaching techniques and tools; (4) Improved enrolment of students; (5) Improved ability of students who can read and understand grade level text; (6) Improved individual's knowledge and skill about child health and nutrition practices; (7) Improved individual's knowledge and skill about safe food preparation and storage practices and (8) Child health and nutrition strategies and guidelines developed and approved by government, and started implementation. The Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) detailing the indicators of the programme, including targets, is attached in **Annex 3.**

As per the transition plan of Nepal Government, Baitadi and Dadeldhura Districts have been transitioned from WFP in-kind modality to government's cash-based modality during this phase of programming, effective from July 2019. The MTE will therefore also cover the transition districts, including the 8 home-grown pilot districts. They are benefiting of direct technical assistance funded by the McGovern-Dole project. The 8 home-grown pilot districts includeDadeldhra and Baitadi, and 6 other districts implementing the home grown school feeding (HGSF) programme as per the Government of Nepal's transition plan on School Meals Programme (attached in **Annex 4).**

The stated results are to be achieved through the twelve key activities are: (1) Distribute early grade reading materials through World Education Inc.; (2) Distribute digital learning content through Open Learning Exchange Nepal; (3) Train teachers to increase knowledge and skill of teachers; (4) Train school administratiors to increase knowledge and skill of school administrators; (5) Provide school meals; (6) Build/rehabilitate instutional improved cooking stoves, toilet, kitchen, water systems; (7) Raise awareness on importance of education; (8) Train parent teachers association and school management committee; (9) Training and awareness on good health and hygiene pratices; (10) Trainings and mobilization of child WASH clubs; (11) Training on food storage, handling and preparation and nutrition; (12) Distribute non food items to schools. The programme level Result Framework of the project is attached in **Annex 5**. The outcomes in the Results Framework are used to measure the achievements of the programme. The Results Framework provides the detailed and systematic linkages of the overarching programme objectives and planned activities.

The endline evaluation of previous phase of McGovern-Dole programme (FY14 grant cycle) generated issues and recommendations for WFP's attention. For example, it recommended an enhanced focus on training of teachers on new teaching methods (phonetic teaching) along with the provision of teaching aids and recommendations for refresher training. The MTE should also therefore assess whether these

[108] In 2019-2020 school year two districts of Province 7 were handed over to the government-funded SMP (cash-based). Currently the food-based and USDA/WFP assisted SMP is implemented in 9 districts. The technical assistance component covers all the 42 districts of Nepal with SMP (9 districts USDA/WFP with food assistance, 33 districts with government funded/cash-based SMP. Within the 33 cash-based SMP districts, 8 are covered by the pilot on home-grown school feeding.

[109] EGR is the ability to read and understand a simple text is one of the most fundamental skills a student can learn. Grade 1-5 is considered as a early early drade in Nepalese context.

[110] "**Digital literacy** is the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies and the Internet"- Cornell University Austrelia

recommendations have been appropriately actioned in the current phase. The evaluation team will highlight the limitations of the evaluation into inception as well as evaluation report.The **final report of the endline evaluation** of the McGovern-Dole FY14 grant cycle is attached in **Annex 6**.

4. Evaluation Approach

4.1 Scope

The MTE will cover the USDA McGovern-Dole FY 17 cycle, including all activities and processes related to its formulation, implementation, resourcing, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting relevant to answer the evaluation questions. This evaluation, commissioned by the WFP Nepal Country Office, is expected to provide an evidence-based, independent assessment of performance of the operation so that WFP and programme partners can adjust course as necessary for the remaining programme period and inform any future programme design.

The evaluation should also assess the results of project against the established baseline values. They will be assessed against the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, impact, and sustainability as well as adequacy, transparency and timeliness.

A key requirement for the evaluation is to ensure that gender and empowerment of women (GEEW) is integrated into the whole evaluation process, and that specific data on gender is collected during the survey (e.g. data collected on, and from male and female beneficiarieis of difference conomic status of exsiting ethnicity/castes, data disaggregated by age and gender).

The evaluation will focus primarily on the following activities:

- Review of relevant documents including project documents, internal/external administrative records, collected data, monitoring plan and reports and Project-Level Results Framework;
- Field visits to WFP school feeding sites to conduct surveys, interviews and focus groups;
- Interviews with representatives and staff members of governmental implementing partners, as well as interviews with community participants impacted by the project.

The MTE will cover the period from the start of the McGovern-Dole funded operation from Januaru 2018 to the data collection of the mid-term evaluation, planned for 15th February 2020 to 15th March 2020. The evaluation will cover all acitivites implemented in the eleven target districts including districts that have been transitioned to the government's cash-based modality.

4.2 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

Evaluation Criteria: The evaluation proposed herein should use the standard evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Impact as well as Adequacy, Transparency and Timeliness. GEEW should be mainstreamed throughout these five criteria, with specific evaluation question where appropriate.

Evaluation Questions: Aligned to the evaluation criteria, the evaluation will address the following key questions, which will be further developed by the evaluation team during the inception phase. Collectively, the questions aim to highlight the existing circumstances, performance of the school feding activities during the project period and key lessons learnt, which could inform future strategic and operational decisions. The evaluation questions listed below are only an initial and indicative list of questions. The evaluation team should work further, improve and prioritise the questions in the Inception phase.

Table 6: Evaluation criteria and questions

Focus Area	Evaluation Questions
Relevance	• Were the objectives appropriate to the needs of the people with limited access to quality education and adequate food consumption at the project design stage and have they remained so over time?

	• Have the programme's interventions reached the right people at the right time, with the right type of assistance up to this point? • In the context of the changing structure of governance in Nepal (federal system), the current modalities and administrative structure would be affected. What has been the effect of these changes on each component of the school meals programme? • What progress has been made in achieving the outputs of the cross cutting indicators? • is the programme having any impact on girls' school performance? Is there equal participation by women in running the SF programme?
Effectiveness	• To what extent were the operation objectives and anticipated results met? • Have processes, systems, analysis and tools been put in place to support the operation design, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting, including the specific arrangements (e.g. third party monitoring to complement WFP field monitoring)?
Efficiency	• What are the results of the school meals operation (all components)? What are the outputs and outcomes? • At mid-term level, has theprogramme achieved the planned outputs? • What was the efficiency of the programme, in terms of transfer cost, cost per beneficiary, logistics, timeliness of delivery? • How are the different activities of the operation synergetic with other WFP operations and with what other actors are doing to contribute to WFP's overriding educational objectives in Nepal?
Impact	• What are the intended and unintended long-term effects on beneficiaries and institutional arrangement and capacities? • Are local communities (parent teachers association (PTA), farmers groups, etc.) fully involved in and contributing toward school feeding?
Sustainability	• What is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability? • What is the evaluation team's quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress achieved in national policy and performance, and in participating schools?
Adequacy	• Have the activities been performed adequately to reach the intended outputs and outcomes? • Have their scope and reach been adequate?
Transparency	• To what extent have all stakeholders been involved in the programme's activities?
Timeliness	• To what extent have the programme's activities been implemented in a timely manner? • Have the beneficiaries and other stakeholders received their benefits within the expected timeframe?

4.3 Data Availability

The following sources of information are indicative of the information that will be made available to the evaluation team during the inception phase. Additional information will be provided as needed. The sources provide quantitative and qualitative information:

- Project proposal of USDA McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme
- Report of the baseline survey
- Semi-annual and annual reports submitted to USDA
- Process and outcome monitoring reports
- WFP Country Strategic Plan

- National School Meal Programme Guideline
- Multi-sector Nutrition Plan (2018-2022)
- School Sector Development Plan (2016-2023)
- DEQAS (Decentralised Evaluation Quality Assurance System Process Guide
- USDA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy February 2019
- Food For Progress and McGovern-Dole Indicators and Definitions

- Concerning the quality of data and information, the evaluation team should:
    - assess data availability and reliability as part of the inception phase expanding on the information provided in section 4.3.
    - systematically check accuracy, consistency and validity of collected data and information and acknowledge any limitations/caveats in drawing conclusions using the data.
    - The evaluation team should review the activity log frame/results matrix and recoment any changes/adjustment in the inception phase.
- Ensure that sampling and data collection tools and methods are gender-sensitive and that the voices of women, girls, men and boys are sufficiently heard and used.

4.4 Methodology

- The methodology will be finalized by the evaluation team during the inception phase. WFP Nepal requests that the methodology of the MTE include the following:
    - Follow the same methodology used during baseline study while incorporating the feedback and lesson learned form baseline study.
    - Employ the relevant evaluation criteria above [Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Impact, Adequacy, Transparency and Timeliness].
    - Demonstrate impartiality and lack of biases by relying on a cross-section of information sources (stakeholder groups, including beneficiaries, etc.). The selection of field visit sites will also need to demonstrate impartiality.
    - Use mixed methods (quantitative, qualitative, participatory etc.) to ensure triangulation of information through a variety of means.
    - Ensure through the use of mixed methods that women, girls, men and boys from different stakeholders groups participate and that their different voices are heard and used;
    - Apply an evaluation matrix geared towards addressing the key evaluation questions taking into account the data availability challenges, the budget and timing constraints;

- Incorporate methodological lesson learned during baseline survey in the midline evaluation design as below:
    - Integration of L1 and L2 in sample design.[111]
        - Improvement in measurement of indicators that are supposed to assess skill instead of knowledges. Knowledge about skill was measured during baseline study for indicators that demanded it.[112]
    - inclusion of indicator that was missed during baseline that is number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance

[111] There are nepali (L1) and local language (their own ethnic language L2) speakers children in several schools in Nepal. The research firm will conduct the EGRA assessment in Nepali with nepali language speaks and in local language with local language speaker. The firm will segregate the result by L1Vs L2 that will allows us to analyse EGRA performance in both group of children.

[112] Indicators requiring assessment of skills include - percent of teachers and teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance, percent of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance, and percent of individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance.

- The methodology should be tailored to gather gender-responsive information and conduct gender-related analysis, indicating specifically what data collection methods are employed to seek information on GEEW issues and to ensure the inclusion of women and marginalised groups. The methodology should ensure that data collected is disaggregated by sex and age; an explanation should be provided if this is not possible. The evaluation team must have a clear and detailed plan for collecting data from women and men in gender-responsive ways. The Evaluation Team must detail their plan to integrate gender equality considersations and different perspectives in the inception report.
    - The evaluation team will take into account the recommendations of the combined evaluation while designing the midterm evaluation methodology. The team will be required to consider all GEEW issues raised by the FY 14' evaluation or FY 17' baseline study.Triangulation of data should ensure that diverse perspectives and voices of both males and females are heard and taken into account
    -
    - The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations must reflect gender analysis, and the report should provide lessons/ challenges/ recommendations for conducting gender responsive evaluation in the future.
    - The MTE must also particularly address the lesson learned and recommendations made by USDA and USAID during the combined evaluation of the FY 14&17 grant cycle. Necessary expertise and care should be utilized by the evaluation team.

4.5 Quality Assurance and Quality Assessment

- WFP's Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) defines the quality standards expected from this evaluation and sets out processes with in-built steps for Quality Assurance, Templates for evaluation products and Checklists for their review. DEQAS is closely aligned to the WFP's evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS) and is based on the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community and aims to ensure that the evaluation process and products conform to best practice.
    - DEQAS will be systematically applied to this evaluation. The WFP Evaluation Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the evaluation progresses as per the DEQAS Process Guide and for conducting a rigorous quality control of the evaluation products ahead of their finalization.
    - WFP has developed a set of Quality Assurance Checklists for its decentralized evaluations. This includes checklists for feedback on quality for each of the evaluation products. The relevant checklist will be applied at each stage, to ensure the quality of the evaluation process and outputs.
    - To enhance the quality and credibility of this evaluation, an outsourced quality support service directly managed by WFP's Office of Evaluation in Headquarter provides review of the draft inception and evaluation report (in addition to the same provided on draft TOR), and provide:
        a. systematic feedback from an evaluation perspective, on the quality of the draft inception and evaluation report.
        b. recommendations on how to improve the quality of the final inception/evaluation report.
- The Evaluation Manager will review the feedback and recommendations from QS and share with the Team Leader, who is expected to use them to finalise the inception/ evaluation report. To ensure transparency and credibility of the process in line with the UNEG norms and standards[1], a rationale should be provided for any recommendations that the team does not take into account when finalising the report.
- This quality assurance process as outline above does not interfere with the views and independence of the evaluation team, but ensures the report provides the necessary evidence in a clear and convincing way and draws its conclusions on that basis.

[1] UNEG Norm #7 states "*that transparency is an essential element that establishes trust and builds confidence, enhances stakeholder ownership and increases public accountability*"

- The Evaluation Team will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. The evaluation team should assure of the accessibility of all relevant documentation within the provisions of the directive on disclosure of information. This is available in WFP's Directive CP2010/001 on Information Disclosure.
- All final evaluation reports will be subjected to a post-hoc quality assessment by an independent entity through a process that is managed by OEV. The overall rating category of the reports will be made public alongside the evaluation reports.

5. Phases and Deliverables

- The evaluation will proceed through these key phases: 1). Planning, 2). Preparation, 3). Inception, 4). Field Data Collection, 5). Data Analysis & Reporting, 6). Dissemination and Follow-up. The evaluation schedule **(Annex 9)** provides a detailed breakdown of the proposed timeline for each phase including the deliverables.
- This is a tentative timeframe, subject to change due to any unforeseen circumstances and other external factors beyond the control of WFP or the Evaluation team. However, it should also be noted that access to remote areas will be a very important element to consider when preparing the field mission schedule. A significant time-period is required to reach and conduct data collection from the remote communities included in the proposed evaluations – at least three weeks to over a month for programme districts. The field visits shall be timed to avoid the monsoon season (June – September) when programme districts in mid-hills and mountains are inaccessible, as well as major Hindu festival periods (late September to early November) where schools and districts government offices will be closed for extended periods.
- A summary of the deliverables and deadlines for each phase is included below:
- **Preparation Phase** (October-November 2019): Renewing the contract with selected research firm based on the long-term agreement. During the preparatory phase, the country visit of the evaluation team is optional as the desk review and preparation of the initial draft inception reports can be done remotely.

  - *Deliverable - Fully executed contract*
  - *Deliverable – Terms of Reference for the Internal Evaluation Committee and the Evaluation Reference Group*

- **Inception Phase** (December 2019 -january 2020): The evaluation design is finalised during this phase. The evaluation team need to have a good grasp of the expectations for the evaluation and a clear plan for conducting it. The inception phase will include a desk review of secondary data and initial interaction with the main stakeholders, including the design of the evaluation framework and finalising and testing of data collection tools and instruments. The quality assured Inception Reports must be submitted to the CO for approval no later than two weeks before the data collection begins. During the inception mission, key members of the evaluation team (as relevant in their roles and responsibilities) is expected to visit Nepal for consultation meetings with WFP and its partners, training local enumerators and validation of the inception reports: mainly in the areas of methodology, timeline, roles and responsibilities etc. For the inception, de-briefing and results sharing workshops, the team leader and key thematic experts (education, gender, evaluation) in the least, should be present, while other members may join as appropriate.

  Deliverable –Inception Reports for FY17 mid-term evaluation (maximum length: 20 pages excluding annexes)

- The Inception Report of this study will describe the country context, provide an operational factsheet and map, and provide a stakeholder analysis. The Inception Report will also describe the evaluation methodologies and the approach taken by the evaluation team to cultivate ownership and organize debrief sessions and quality assurance systems developed for the evaluation. The Inception Reports will

include use of Evaluation Plan Matrices, and they will outline the methods that the evaluation team will collect and analyse data to answer all evaluation questions. The evaluation team analyse the baseline survey and monitoring data collected for the activity and mention the quality and adequacy of monitoring data for the project with GEEW analysis. Finally, they must include an evaluation activity plan and timeline. The evaluation designs and proposed methodologies specified in the Inception Report must reflect the evaluation plans, budgets and operational environments, and the extent to which methods lead to collection of reliable data and analysis that provide a basis for reaching valid and reliable judgments. For more details, refer to **Annex 9**: Inception Report Template.

- **Field Data Collection Phase** (mid February – mid March, 2020): The fieldwork will span three to four weeks and will include visits to project sites. This will be period of time that data was collected for the Baseline Study. There is limited flexibility for the timing of the field data collection mainly because late Marchis the window of time in between schools vacations. A debriefing session will be held upon completion of the field-work. The data should be collected using tablet computers provided WFP Nepal CO. An appropriate software can be used for analysis of the collected data.

  Deliverable - An exit debriefing presentation of preliminary findings and conclusions (power point presentation).

- **Data Analysis and Reporting Phases** (April 2020): The evaluation team will analyse the data collected during the desk review and the field work, conduct additional consultations with stakeholders, as required, and draft FY17 mid-term evaluation report. The evaluation team expected to analyse that whether or not sufficient monitoring data was collected during the implementation period on key indicators to measure progress on human rights and gender equality results.These timelines will be further developed in the Inception Phase. They will be submitted to the evaluation manager for quality assurance. Stakeholders will be invited to provide comments, which will be recorded in a matrix by the evaluation manager and provided to the evaluation team for their consideration before report finalisation. According to the USDA McGovern-Dole programme requirements, the reports must be finalized for WFP to transmit to the USDA FAD within 60 days following the evaluation fieldwork and no more than 15 days after the report has been completed. As this is a very tight timeline, it may undergo an adjustment, depending on consideration and approval by USDA. It will be necessary however, to submit to WFP Nepal the quality assured final reports for the CO's final comments and pre-approval one month before the USDA deadline. The evaluation team shall make every possible effort to meet these given timelines. However, any difficulties must be communicated to WFP Nepal CO well in advance, in order to make the necessary adjustments.

- **Mid-term evaluation report:** The mid term evaluation report will outline the evaluation purpose, scope and rationale, and the methodologies applied including the limitations that these may come with. The report must reflect the TOR and Inception Report and outline evaluation questions and the evaluation teams' answers to these alongside other findings and conclusions that the teams may have obtained. The findings should include a proper analysis and reporting on equity dimensions such as discussion girls and boys were treated respectfully. A discussion on unintended effects of the intervention on Human Rights and gender equality .The reports will also outline interim lessons learned, recommendations and proposed follow-up actions. The evaluation team will ensure the recommendations address GEEW issues and priorities for actions to improve GEEW in school meal and child nutrition activity.

- **Dissemination and Follow-up Phase (May – June 2020)**: The USDA Food and Agriculture Department (FAD) and CO management will respond to the evaluation recommendations by providing actions that will be taken to address each recommendation and estimated timelines for taking those actions. According to USDA McGovern-Dole programme requirements, the meeting should be held within 30 days of USDA receipt of the final mid-term evaluation report.

  Dissemination of the report: This report will be disseminated to stakeholder by the end of June 2020.

Notes on the deliverables: All reports will be produced in English and follow the WFP DEQAS templates. The Evaluation Team is expected to produce written work that is of very high standard, evidence-based, and free of errors. The evaluation company is ultimately responsible for the timeliness and quality of the evaluation products. If the expected standards are not met, the evaluation company will, at its own expense, make the necessary amendments to bring the final evaluation products to the required quality level.

6. Organization of the Evaluation & Ethics

6.1 Evaluation Conduct

- The Evaluation Team will conduct the evaluation under the direction of its Team Leader and in close communication with the WFP Evaluation Manager. The team will be hired following agreement with WFP on its composition.
- The Evaluation Team will not have been involved in the design or implementation of the subject of evaluation or have any other conflicts of interest. Further, they will act impartially and respect the code of conduct of the evaluation profession.
- The independent evaluation consultants or consulting companies will conduct and report on the evaluation according to WFP standards. To ensure the independence of the studies and the evaluations the role of Evaluation Manager is separate from the role of the independent evaluation team.
- The Evaluation Team has to ensure that relevant clearances are taken from applicable stakeholders (clearances from Government for evaluation conduct, ethical clearances from beneficiaries) ahead of going to the field with the surveys. WFP Nepal on its part, has an umbrella agreement with the Government of Nepal to implement programmes which also includes conducting evaluations. The evaluation team should take special consideration of the UNEG Ethical Guidelines which state that "all those engaged in designing, conducting and managing evaluation activities should aspire to conduct high quality work guided by professional standards and ethical and moral principles. The evaluation team will use an ethical protocal while interviewing parents, teachers and students.The integrity of evaluation is especially dependent on the ethical conduct of key actors in the evaluation process". Please see **Annex 10: UNEG Ethical Guidelines**
- The main functions and tasks expected from the Evaluation Manager, the independent Study and Evaluation Teams, WFP Nepal CO, the WFP Regional Bureau of Asia (OMB) and the USDA FAD are described below.
- The logistical arrangements for the evaluation - local travel (arranging vehicle travel and air ticketing) of both international evaluation team and local research agency), organizing consultation meetings (with all stakeholders including the Government) and organizing workshops etc will be undertaken by the international research agency with support from the local research agency.

6.2 Team composition and competencies

- The Evaluation Team will conduct the proposed studies and evaluations under the direction of the Evaluation Manager.
- The Evaluation Team will comprise of a team leader and and other team members as necessary to ensure a complementary mix of expertise in the technical areas covered by the evaluation as well as in conducting baseline studies: These are: **evaluation methodology, education, school health and nutrition, gender, data management and analysis and technical assistance and GON capacity development** – a minimum of five members in the team, representing these areas of expertise. All will be independent consultants and may be national or a mix of international and national consultants. The team leader will have strong evaluation skills and experience as well as leadership skills on managing the evaluation and the team. To the extent possible, the evaluation will be conducted by a gender-balanced, geographically and culturally diverse team with appropriate skills to assess gender dimensions of the subject as specified in the scope, approach and methodology sections of the ToR. At least one team member should have WFP experience.
- The Evaluation Team will work in close coordination and technical liaison with a national, in-country research firm that has thorough technical expertise and contextual knowledge of Nepal's school meals programmes. The technical capacity and skills of the national research firm is deemed essential for the conduct of the evaluation.

- The team will be multi-disciplinary and include members who together include an appropriate balance of expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:
    - Institutional capacity development (with a focus on handover process, cost-efficiency analysis, supply chain management, logistics);
    - Education particularly literacy specialist
    - School feeding/nutrition.
    - Gender expertise / good knowledge of gender and protection issues
    - Adequate experience and expert knowledge in carrying out complex evaluations and baseline surveys;
    - All team members should have strong analytical and communication skills, evaluation and baseline study experience and familiarity with the country or region;
    - All team members should have strong skills in oral and written English. In addition, given the remoteness of some field sites and their limited accessibility, all team members should be in good physical condition
    - All team members should have strong analytical and communication skills, evaluation experience and familiarity with Nepal.
- The Team leader will have technical expertise in one of the technical areas listed above as well as expertise in designing methodology and data collection tools and demonstrated experience in leading similar evaluations. S/he will also have leadership, analytical and communication skills, including a track record of excellent English writing and presentation skills.
- **Team leader's primary responsibilities**: Her/his primary responsibilities will be: i) defining the evaluation approach and methodology; ii) guiding and managing the team; iii) leading the evaluation mission and representing the evaluation team; iv) drafting and revising, as required, the inception report, the end of field work (i.e. exit) debriefing presentation and evaluation report in line with DEQAS; v) facilitate regular communication with the Evaluation Manager and local partners; lead, coordinate and facilitate consultations with local partners and communicate the decisions reached to each group of stakeholders.
- The other team members will bring together a complementary combination of the technical expertise required and have a track record of written work on similar assignments.
- Team members will: i) contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review; ii) conduct field work; iii) participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders; iv) contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products in their technical area(s).

6.3 Security Considerations

- As an 'independent supplier' of evaluation services to WFP, the evaluation company is responsible for ensuring the security of all persons contracted, including adequate arrangements for evacuation for medical or situational reasons. The consultants contracted by the evaluation company do not fall under the United Nation (UN) Department of Safety & Security (UNDSS) system for UN personnel. However, consultants hired independently are covered by the UNDSS system for UN personnel, which cover WFP staff and consultants contracted directly by WFP.
    - Independent consultants must obtain UNDSS security clearance for travelling to be obtained from designated duty station and complete the UN system's Basic and Advance Security in the Field courses in advance, print out their certificates and take them with them
- However, to avoid any security incidents, the Evaluation Manager is requested to ensure that:
    - The WFP CO registers the team members with the Security Officer on arrival in country and arranges a security briefing for them to gain an understanding of the security situation on the ground.
    - The team members observe applicable UN security rules and regulations – e.g., curfews etc.

- The planned data collection period falls in the winter season in Nepal. Although accessibility to remote areas is improved during this time, adverse weather condition especially in mountainous districts may hamper travel and work conditions. The data collection teams therefore need to be adequately prepared for such events.

6.4 Ethics

- WFP's decentralised evaluations must conform to WFP and UNEG ethical standards and norms. The contractors undertaking the evaluations are responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle (preparation and design, data collection, data analysis, reporting and dissemination). This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.
- The evaluation team is responsible for managing any potential ethical risks and issues and must put in place in consultation with the Evaluation Manager, processes and systems to identify, report and resolve any ethical issues that might arise during the implementation of the evaluation. Ethical approvals and reviews by relevant national and institutional review boards must be sought where required. The evaluation team need to identify and explain all potential evaluation risks and respective mitigation measures through the inception report.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

- **WFP Nepal Office:**

a- WFP Nepal Officce **Management (Director or Deputy Director)** will take responsibility to:

  - Assign an Evaluation Manager for the evaluation: Kanta Khanal, Programme Policy Officer (MRE unit).
  - Compose the internal evaluation committee and the evaluation reference group (see below).
  - Approve the final ToR, inception and evaluation reports.
  - Ensure the independence and impartiality of the evaluation at all stages, including establishment of an Evaluation Committee and of a Reference Group (see below).
  - Participate in discussions with the evaluation team on the evaluation design and the evaluation subject, its performance and results with the Evaluation Manager and the evaluation team
  - Organise and participate in two separate debriefings, one internal and one with external stakeholders
  - Oversee dissemination and follow-up processes, including the preparation of a Management Response to the evaluation recommendations
  - The **Evaluation Manager**: The evaluation manager is managing Nepal country office's monitoring review, evaluation and knowledge management function. She is not involved in managing school meal and child nutrition activity. She has the following responsibilities:
  - Manages the evaluation process through all phases including drafting this TOR
  - Ensures quality assurance mechanisms are operational
  - Consolidates and shares comments on draft TOR, inception and evaluation reports with the evaluation team
  - Ensures expected use of quality assurance mechanisms (checklists, quality support
  - Ensures that the team has access to all documentation and information necessary to the evaluation; facilitates the team's contacts with local stakeholders; sets up meetings, field visits; provides logistic support during the fieldwork; and arranges for interpretation, if required.
  - Organises security briefings for the evaluation team and provides any materials as required

- An **Internal Evaluation Committee (Annex-11**) has been formed as part of ensuring the independence and impartiality of the evaluation. It will achieve this by supporting the evaluation manager in making decisions through the process, reviewing draft evaluation deliverables (TOR, inception report and evaluation report) and submitting them for approval by the CD/DCD who will be the chair of the committee.

The committee is led by WFP Nepal CO Country Director, the following positions have been nominated: Head of Programme (Naoki Maegawa), Head of Nutrition Programme (Anteneh Girma), Head of School Meals Programme (Cristina Murphy), Head of Evidence, Policy and Innovation (Moctar Aboubacar), Manager of the School Meals Programme (Neera Sharma) and Evaluation Manager – Head of Monitoring, Review Evaluation and Knowledge Management Functions – (Kanta Khanal).

- **An external Evaluation Reference Group** has also been formed with representation from the key stakeholders (WFP country office and regional office M&E representatives, Head of Evidence, Policy and Innovation (Moctar Aboubacar)programme officers/focal points, and external stakeholders including representatives from key government ministries and USDA representative). The ERG members will review and comment on the draft evaluation products and act as key informants in order to further safeguard against bias and influence.

  The ERG will include among others, the Country Director of WFP Nepal CO, the Regional Evaluation Officer, WFP OEV, WFP Nepal's field office representative, and external stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, USDA and a representative of civil society agencies who is also the vice-president of the Community of Evaluators, South Asia as its members. See **Annex 11: Membership of the Evaluation Reference Group and Internal Evaluation Committee**

- **The WFP Washington Office will be responsible for:**

  Managing all communication with the USDA FAD relating to Performance Management including USDA FAD provision of comments on deliverables and organization of FAD participation in stakeholder discussions of evaluation findings and project-level follow-up.

- **The Regional Bureau:** the RB will take responsibility to:
  - Advise the Evaluation Manager and provide support to the evaluation process where appropriate.
  - Participate in discussions with the evaluation team on the evaluation design and on the evaluation subject as required.
  - Provide comments on the draft TOR, Inception and Evaluation reports
  - Support the Management Response to the evaluation and track the implementation of the recommendations.

    While the Regional Evaluation Officer Yumiko Kanemitsu will perform most of the above responsibilities, other RB relevant technical staff may comment on evaluation products as appropriate.

- **Relevant WFP Headquarters divisions** will take responsibility to:
  - Discuss WFP strategies, policies or systems in their area of responsibility and subject of evaluation.
  - Comment on the evaluation TOR, inception and evaluation reports, as required.

- **The Government of Nepal and other implementing partners** will, as well, provide support during field evaluation missions and feedback and inputs during the report-drafting phase.

- The Ministry of Education and other relevant government representatives, in collaboration with other implementing partners will assist in evaluation design (drafting the TOR); facilitate evaluation mission(s); participate fully in the evaluation process and take the lead in dissemination of the final evaluation report and all resulting follow-ups.

- **The Office of Evaluation (OEV).** OEV, through the Regional Evaluation Officer, will advise the Evaluation Manager and provide support to the evaluation process when required. It is responsible for providing access to the outsourced quality support service reviewing draft ToR, inception and evaluation reports from an evaluation perspective. It also ensures a help desk function upon request.

- **Beneficiaries and school management teams**: School management teams, children, parents and community members will be part of the consultation process for the evaluation. They will be the primary respondents of the evaluation. The evaluation team is expected to assess the efficiency of WFP Nepal's accountability mechanism "Namaste WFP" that is in operation in the school meals programme districts.

8. Communication and budget

8.1 Communication

- The language used in all communication and evaluation products will be in English.

- The Evaluation Manager will submit all final deliverables to WFP Nepal CO for pre-approval. Upon pre-approval of deliverables, the WFP Nepal CO will forward the deliverables to WFP's Washington Office with the OMB (Regional Bureau) in copy. WFP's Washington Office will transmit deliverables to the USDA FAD for comments, inputs and final approval. Upon final approval, WFP's Washington Office will transmit USDA comments and final approval to the WFP Nepal CO with the OMB Regional Bureau in copy. The Regional Bureau will maintain its normal responsibilities in a decentralized evaluation. WFP Nepal CO will release payments and inform the Evaluation Manager who will then communicate with the Evaluation Team. All communication with USDA will be transmitted via WFP's Washington Office including invitations to the FAD programme staff to participate in teleconferences to discuss CO management responses to evaluation findings and recommendations.
- To ensure a smooth and efficient process and enhance the learning from this evaluation, the evaluation team should place emphasis on transparent and open communication with key stakeholders. These will be achieved by ensuring a clear agreement on channels and frequency of communication with and between key stakeholders. Communication with the evaluation team and stakeholders should go through the evaluation manager.
- The Communication and Learning Plan and should include a GEEW responsive dissemination strategy, indicating how findings including GEEW will be disseminated and how stakeholders interested or those affected by GEEW issues will be engaged. The evaluation team are supposed to submit two pager brief evaluation report giving a summary of key findings as a communication material along with the detail report. A result dissemination workshop will be organised by the evaluation team inviting all relevant stakeholders at the federal level. The evaluation team will submit three printed copies of final evaluation reports and all raw and analysed data sets to WFP.WFP will organise dissemination workshop at the provincial level involving all representative of the provincial stakeholders. WFP will share the electronic version of the evaluation report to all concerned.

- As part of the international standards for evaluation, WFP requires that all evaluations are made publicly available. Following the approval of the final evaluation report, WFP Nepal CO will organise a workshop for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, WFP's cooperating partners and internal programme units, in order to discuss the findings and recommendations and prepare the management response plan. Another result-sharing workshop will be held for donor community, UN partners including the education development partners group and civil society group where the recommendations and follow-up actions will also be discussed with the objective of getting external feedback. These discussions will also inform the management response to the recommendations. Lastly, the printed copy of the evaluation reports will be shared with all relevant stakeholders.

8.2 Budget

- **Budget:** For the purpose of this evaluation:
  - USDA McGovern-Dole funding provides a budget to fund the various evaluations of the programme including the MTE. A long-term agreement (LTA) has been established with Sambodhi Research and Communications Pvt. Ltd., India by Washington office and is approved by OEV and USDA.
  - The research firm has provided a detailed budget for midterm evaluation as per the LTA.
  - However, the cost might if incorporating L1&L2 have a significant effect in sample size.

Annex II: Evaluation Matrix

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
Relevance				
How appropriate is the programme given the needs of the vulnerable groups Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces context of Nepal?	• Alignment of programme activities and objectives vis-à-vis needs of the target population • Change in the Programme design and activities over the Programme duration • Assess if cross-cutting indicators such as gender, protection and partnerships have been reflected in program design?	• To what extent is the programme's strategy and plan relevant to the education needs of boys and girls in the Karnali and Sudur Paschim province? Does the programme also address the food consumption issue that boys and girls face in this region? • Were the objectives appropriate to the needs of the people with limited access to quality education and inadequate food consumption at the time of project design? Has the core problem remained so over time? • How have the programme design and activities changed? What are the factors behind these changes?	• **Secondary review:** ○ Programme Documents ○ Annual plans • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• Programme stakeholder 1. WFP country office 2. the McGovern-Dole Programme managers
	• Assess the extent to which programme incorporates gender indicators in design	• To what extent is the programme designed to create any gender impact? Does the programme address the gender issues in Karnali and Sudur Paschim region?	• **Secondary review:** ○ Programme Documents ○ Annual plans • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• Programme stakeholder 1. WFP country office 2. TheTheThe McGovern-Dole Programme managers
	• Assess the coverage of Programme activities in terms of: 1. Gender equity 2. Socio-economic characteristics 3. Demographic and topographic characteristics	• To what extent have the programme's interventions reached the right beneficiaries (boys, girls, women)? Has the outreach been timely with the right type of assistance up to this mid-term period?	• **Secondary review:** ○ Programme Documents ○ Programme monitoring reports • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case Studies	• Programme stakeholder 1. WFP country office 2. TheTheThe McGovern-Dole Programme managers
Effectiveness				

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
To what extent is the learning and nutrition requirements of the school going children in Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces of Nepal being addressed by the program?	• **Assess improved literacy of school-age children** 1. Improved quality of literacy instruction 2. Improved attentiveness 3. Improved student attendance • **Assess increased use of dietary health practices** 1. Improved knowledge of health and hygiene 2. Increase knowledge of Safe Food Preparation and Storage Practices 3. Increased knowledge of nutrition 4. Increase access to clean water and sanitation services 5. Increased access to requisite food preparation and storage tools and equipment	• To what extent were the programprogram objectives and anticipated results, up to mid-term timeframe, met? [NOT RESPONDED] • Are the current achievements in accordance with the envisaged change? To what extent are the current achievements in accordance with the envisaged change? • What are the results of the school meals operation (all components)? What are the outputs and outcomes? Has the programme achieved the planned outputs at this stage? • Is the project on track to reach the set targets? What are the gaps, if any? [NOT RESPONDED]	• **Quantitative survey:** ○ Structured interviews with parents ○ Structured interviews with teachers/ head teacher ○ Structured interviews with cooks/storekeepers • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant Interviews ○ Case studies	• School principals/ head teachers • School teachers • Parents
	• Review the programme implementation and programme monitoring activity	• To what extent have the processes, systems, analysis, and tools been put in place to support the program design and implementation? How do the systems support monitoring & evaluation and reporting, including the specific arrangements (e.g. third-party monitoring to complement WFP Nepal field monitoring)?	• **Secondary review:** ○ Programme Documents ○ Programme monitoring reports • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case studies	
	• Assess if the programme has facilitated female leadership amongst teaching groups and has the same increased since the implementation of the	• To what extent is there equal participation by women in running the School Feeding programme? • Does the programme have any impact on the performance of girls? To what extent the gender-	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case studies • **Quantitative survey:**	• School teachers • Parents • Programme partners

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
	program/ baseline assessment. • Assess gender-sensitive programme design and implementation particularly in complementary activities	specific midterm effects are created by the project? • Have there been improvements in terms of girl friendly learning spaces, menstrual hygiene awareness and separate toilets for girls and boys?	○ Structured interviews with parents ○ Structured interviews with teachers/ head teacher ○ Structured interviews with cooks/storekeepers	
	• Assess whether WFP Programme objectives are in line with the revised education policy and programs of other organizations such as GoN (MoEST MoHP, MoESTP, MoWCSW, MoALD, NPC), Development Partners (UN, INGOs, NGO)	• What has been the effect of the change in governance structure in Nepal on each component of the school meals programme • What have been the policy level changes and its implications across key indicators over the Programme duration and the Programme activities? • How do the internal and external factors affect the programme's ability to create changes by mid-term? What are the changes observed till at the stage of mid-term?	• **Secondary review:** ○ National policy documents, ○ EMIS ○ FLASH reports ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programs • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• Govt. officials • Programme partners
	• Assess the impact of COVID 19 in the programme areas and communities	• How have the immediate beneficiaries, i.e. schools, teachers, students, and the community been impacted by COVID? • What is the impact of COVID on women and girls in the programme areas?	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programs • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews • Semi-structured interviews	• Teachers • School students • Parents • Community members • Local governance bodies • Programme partners
Efficiency				
Is the return from the programme, vis-a-vis investments at par with other WFP initiatives in other	• Review transfer cost, cost per beneficiary and the timelines of delivery	• What was the efficiency of the programme, in terms of transfer cost, cost per beneficiary, logistics, timeliness of delivery? [NOT RESPONDED] •	• **Secondary review**: ○ Programme Documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programs • **Qualitative survey:**	• Programme partners • WFP country office • TheTheThe McGovern-Dole Programme managers

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
countries as well as in Nepal?			○ Key informant interviews	
	• Assess the coordination and collaboration mechanisms between activities as well as their link to larger WFP operations. • Analyse the success of other similar development Programmes in the region. • Review the extent of monitoring activity of the program. • Assess the participation of Schools and communities in driving the program	• How are the different activities of the operation synergetic with other WFP operations? • What are the other actors doing to contribute to WFP's overriding educational objectives in Nepal? How much have these actors contributed to the programme?	• **Secondary review**: ○ Programme Documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programs • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• Programme partners • WFP country office • TheTheThe McGovern-Dole Programme managers
	• Planned and actual per component expenditure • Assessment of cash flow mechanism 1. Donor to Implementer 2. Per component cash flow 3. Cash flow mechanism	• Compare the proposed budget and cash flow [NOT RESPONDED] •	• **Secondary review** ○ Review of periodic budget charts • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• Programme partners • WFP CO • School Staff
	• Influence of COVID-19 on resource allocation of programprogramprogram	• How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the fund flow of the programme? Have the funding priorities changed, considering the pandemic? Do the core components of the programme still receive similar resources or has the allocation changed?	• **Secondary review** ○ Review of periodic budget charts • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case Studies	• Programme partners • WFP CO • School Staff
Impact				
Did the programme ensure or create a direction of the	• Assess the intended and unintended long-term effects on beneficiaries and institutional arrangement and capacities	• To what extent are local communities (parent-teachers associations (PTA), School Management Committee (SMC), Food Management Committee	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case Studies • **Quantitative survey:**	• Teachers • School students • Parents • Program partners • Govt. officials

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
achievement of wider results at the beneficiary, programme or at the policy level?		(FMC), Child Clubs, farmers groups, etc.) fully involved in and contributing toward school feeding? • Has the programme, intentionally or unintentionally, created a systemic shift or has been situated at a micro (beneficiary) level? • What is the level of influence on gender in Nepalese context? Has the impact been equitably distributed to girl students as well? • What are long-term impacts of school meals on economic productivity and well-being into adulthood? [NOT RESPONDED]	○ Structured interviews with parents ○ Structured interviews with teachers/ head teacher ○ Structured interviews with cooks/storekeepers	
	• Assess how cross-cutting sectors such as gender, resilience, conflict been mainstreamed in regular policy design	• Has gender been integrated into direct or indirect programmatic goals and objectives in the design? (short to medium term outcomes as well as longer-term impacts envisaged)	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programmes • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners
	• Assess: 1. Increased Capacity of Government Institutions 2. Improved Policy or Regulatory Framework 3. Increased Government Support	• What were the policy level contributions of the Program?	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programmes • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case Studies	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners
	• Influence of COVID-19 on the programme?	• To what extent has COVID affected or is expected to affect policy level contributions?	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case Studies	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
		• Are there any foreseeable influences of COVID-19 on the long-term impacts of the programme?	• Semi-structured interviews	
Sustainability				
Has the programme been able to influence policy or systems within the space of learning and nutrition in Nepal for future uptake by the system?	• Assess the challenges and lessons learnt during 1. Programme Design 2. Implementation • Assess challenges and lessons learnt while working around 1. Institutional structures 2. Funding sources 3. Beneficiaries 4. Policy level implications	• What is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability? • To what extent is the programme sustainable in the following areas: a strategy for sustainability; sound policy alignment; stable funding and budgeting; quality programme design; institutional arrangements; local production and sourcing; partnership and coordination; community participation, equity and ownership? • How have the operational and maintenance mechanisms been developed for the sustainability of this programme?	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programmes • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews • Semi-structured interviews	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners • WFP CO
	• Assess the stakeholder's views/needs on Program take over in terms of 1. Funding 2. The interest of the DPs 3. Political environment 4. Social/cultural context 5. Collaborations and partnerships	• What is the progress achieved in national policy and performance, and in participating schools? • How has the Nepal government progressed towards developing a nationally owned school feeding programme?	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programmes • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case studies	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners • WFP CO • School Staff • Parents
	• Assess the community settings and dynamics, the socio-cultural landscape of the areas where the program is implemented • Assess if the Program design is sensitive to these	• Do policy shifts incorporate any gender-specific amendments? • Have the participating schools ensured that no gender is discriminated against any extension of programme component?	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programmes • **Qualitative survey:**	• Teachers/ Head Teacher • Parents

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
	community dynamics and if they have the potential to pose challenges or support the program • Assess if such conditions can affect the sustainability of the Program and its acceptability	• To what degree the local communities (PTAs, farmers groups, etc.) of Nepal are involved in and contributing towards the school feeding? • What needs remain to achieve a full handover to Nepal government and implement the nationally-owned school feeding programme? • What are community-level systems of governance and management required for the successful implementation and sustainability of school meal programs? • To what extent the GoN institutional setup is adequately strong towards running the programme in their own?	○ Key informant interviews ○ Case studies	
	• Influence of COVID-19 on the sustainability of thethethe McGovern-Dole Program in Nepal?	• Would the GoN still prioritise institutional setup necessary for the programme after the COVID-19 aftermath?	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews • Semi-structured interviews	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners
Coherence				
Does the intervention aid or undermine other interventions by WFP or the government?	• Assess the additionality of the intervention to existing initiatives by WFP or the government	• How has the intervention added value without duplicating efforts of similar interventions? • How are the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program and its specific components complementing the already existing efforts and programs of the GoN and/or other organisations working in the region? • To what extent does the programme complement other donor-funded and Nepal government initiatives?	• **Secondary review**: ○ National policy documents ○ Reports and documents of relevant Programmes • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Semi-structured interviews	• Government Stakeholders • Programme partners
Adequacy				
Is the programme outreach	• Assess the extent to which the Programme targets	• Have the activities been performed adequately to reach the intended outputs and outcomes?	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews	• WFP CO • School Staff

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
adequate or improvement are needed to be brought with respect to targeting?	(outcomes and Impact) have been met		○ Case studies. • **Quantitative survey:** ○ Structured interviews with parents ○ Structured interviews with teachers/ head teacher ○ Structured interviews with cooks/storekeepers	• Parents
	• Assess the reach of the activities in terms of 1. Geographic coverage 2. Demographic coverage 3. Gender inclusiveness	• Have their scope and reach been adequate? • Are there specific areas of improvement in terms of gender outreach?	• **Secondary review**: ○ Programme Documents	NA
	• Influence of COVID-19	• Will the programme aim to incorporate any new measures in a post-COVID-19 scenario?	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews • Semi-structured interviews	• Government stakeholders • Programme partners
Timeliness				
To what extent has the Programme activities been implemented in a timely manner	• Assess the planned and actual timeline for implementation of each component	• To what extent have the programme's activities been implemented in a timely manner? • Have the beneficiaries, and other stakeholders received their benefits within the expected timeframe? • What measures were taken to avoid delays, given the COVID context?	• **Secondary review:** ○ Programme implementation reports ○ Programme Monitoring reports/database ○ School database • **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case studies • **Quantitative survey:** ○ Structured interviews with parents/teachers	• WFP CO • School Staff • Parents • Community members • Programme partners
Transparency				
To what extent have all stakeholders been involved in the Programme's activities?	• Assess the engagement/participation of beneficiaries/stakeholders during 1. Design phase	• Have the beneficiaries' and other stakeholders been informed about changes in activities and involved about/in the Program activities?	• **Qualitative survey:** ○ Key informant interviews ○ Case Studies	• WFP CO • School Staff • Parents • Programme partners

Key Question	*Areas of enquiry*	*Sub-Question*	*Data Collection Tools*	*Target Group*
	2. Implementation 3. Programme monitoring			
Quality assurance				
Mechanism	Means of verification		•	•
Data triangulation	• *To ensure data quality and diverse perspective to be incorporated during mid-term evaluation, triangulation will be done both during and after data collection. During the data collection, the supervisors and field coordinators will conduct spot checks and back-checks with sub-sample of the respondents. This will be done by assessing a set of factual questions such as gender of the respondent, name of the school and grade of the student. This will ensure and validate that the data collected is accurate. The data collected through surveys and qualitative interview will be triangulated with the data collected through spot checks and back check. This will be the first level of triangulation. At the second stage, triangulation will be done for the data collected through primary sources and verify the outcome/estimates with the existing information on outcomes/estimates..*			
Data availability and reliability	• *The evaluation will adopt a dual approach for the research with significant amount of review of key documents available with the program (details provided in Annex VIII) as well as through primary surveys with various stakeholders (Details in Chapter 4, Annex IV and Annex V). The evaluation will also keep in mind reliability of the different data sources. The data sources have been identified such that it provides reliable findings. For instance, learning outcomes are tested with the students while overall program functioning is triangulated through discussions with parents and school staff.*			

Annex III: Documents Reviewed

Sl.no	Source	Type of Document
1	Project Documents	Project implementation plan
		Results framework and theory of change
		Internal monitoring database
		Country program evaluation reports
		Intervention based survey/research studies
		Baseline report
		WASH School guidelines
		WFP School feeding strategy 2020-2030
		NSMP Guideline
		School Sector Development Plan
		Revised Evaluation criteria and evaluation template
		Outcome monitoring report
		USDA approved amended project document
		NEGRP core document
		Annual Progress report 2019
		GoN Transition plan on the School Meals Program
		WFP Nepal: ToR for Combined Evaluation
		Resource Allocation
		Annual Work Plan
		Nepal Results Framework
		Quick Guide and Checklist for Integrating Gender
		Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (Baseline)
		Cost-Benefit Analysis
		Maps: Operational Map Logistics Map Distribution Map WFP SMP Plan
2	Ministry of Education Database	Education management and Information System (EMIS) database
		MoEST's FLASH reports
		Reports on government school meals (cash based) program
3	Third Party Monitoring Documents/Partner Reports	Third party activity monitoring and process monitoring data
		HGSF monitoring report by PCD
		Quarterly/annual monitoring data
		Electronic systems for project reporting database (eSPR)
		EGRA Tool and Monitoring Reports
		Evaluation Report on Assessment of fortification of Mid-Day Meal Programme in Dhenkanal, Odisha.
		Decentralized Evaluation USDA Mc-GOVERN DOLE FY14-16; End-line evaluation in Lao PDR; Report of End line Evaluation October 2018

Annex IV: Stakeholders Interviewed

Sl No.	Respondents
1.	Parents of early grade students
2.	Teachers engaged in teaching early grade
3.	Head-teachers/principal
4.	School cooks and storekeeper
5.	Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Nepal
6.	Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD)
7.	Food for Education Project, Nepal
8.	Education Development and Coordination Unit
9.	Implementing partners

Annex V: Data Collection Tools

Head Teacher Structured Interview Tool

Head Teacher Structured Interview Tool

USDA McGovern Dole and WFP supported Food for Education Programme in Nepal

General Instruction: The present tool consists of 4 sections; Introduction and consent form for respondents; Interview information, School information and Sem-Structured interviews for head teachers. Please request the respondent to keep records and registers ready for the telephonic interview - for convenience.

In case of multiple responses, do not accept other options if coded don't know or refuse to answer.

Section 1: Interviewer Information (for creation of a file)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip **
HT !!	School EMIS Code		
HT !@	Code of the Interviewer		
HT !#	Name of the Interviewer		
HT !$	Start Time HH MM		Auto generated

Section 2: Identification of the School			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip **
HT @!	Name of the school		
HT @@	Name of the Village		
HT @#	Code of the Municipality/ Gaunpalika		
HT @$	Code of the District		
HT @%	Type of school 1=Project 2=Comparison		
HT @^	ASK ONLY IF CODED 1 IN HT25 Type of Implementation? 1=WASH + SMP		

	2=WASH + SMP+EGR		
PS @&	Is the school benefitting from any other light touch intervention? 1= SIDP 2= Digital learning (DL) 3= HGSF		
HT @*	What is the school type < 1= Government Pre-primary/lower basic Primary School (ECD and grade I to V 2= Government lower basic Primary School (grade I to V) 3= Government Basic School (grade 1 to VIII) 4= Government Secondary School (grade I to XII) 88=Others (specify)		
HT @(	UID of the Head teacher		**It is Auto-filled, will not show in the tab**
HT #)	Phone Number of the head teacher		

Section 3: Introduction and Consent / **v08 #M kl/ro / ;xdlt**		
1.Consent Form for Respondents / != pQ/bftfsf] ;xdlt kmf/d		
Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to assess the nutritional, dietary and hygiene habits among students and their communities. The study will be carried out across 11 districts in Nepal, and around 200 primary school. You have been selected for this purpose. In this regard, we want to interview you to understand details about the school such as; teacher's attendance, total school enrolment, details about present school committees and so on. Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason. All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study. Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so? 1 = Yes (Thank you and proceed for the interview) 0= No (Thank you and end interview) Do you have any questions for me now? Note: ANSWER QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE AND PROCEED		
Sl. No.	**Item**	
1 !	Do you confirm that you have understood the information for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily? 1= YES	

	0=NO	
2 @	Do you confirm that you understand that your participation in this study is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time without giving a reason? 1= YES 0=NO	
3 #	Do you confirm that you understand that if you decide to stop the interview all data collected will be destroyed? 1= YES 0=NO	
4 $	Do you confirm that you agree to take part in the study? 1= YES 0=NO	
5 %	Do you confirm that you understand that any information used in writing up the study findings will be used anonymously, and that you give your consent to this? 1= YES 0=NO	

Section 4: Respondent Characteristics			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
HT $!	What is your name?		
HT $@	Gender of the respondent? 1= Male 2= Female 3= Transgender 4= Prefer not to respond		
HT$#	Which grade do you teach? (Multiple Response Possible) 1= Grade 1 2=Grade 2 3=Grade 3 4=Grade 4 5=Grade 5 6=Grade 6 7=Grade 7 8=Grade 8 99= Do not teach		
HT$$	Have you received any training related to school meals and other complementary activities over the last academic year? s] 1= Yes 0=No		**If no, Skip to HT511**
HT $%	What type of training have you received? (Multiple Response Possible) 1= Safe food preparation and storage practices 2= Commodity Management 3= Supervisors, mentors, or coaches 4=Teaching methods 5= Digital learning techniques 6= Health hygiene and nutrition 7=Home grown school feeding programme		

	8= Improvement in infrastructures (SIDP) 88= Others (Specify)		

Section 5: Head Teacher Interview Schedule							
Module 1: School Feeding Program (project/intervention schools)							
Q. No	**Question**			**Response**			**Remarks/Skip**
HT511	Is the school receiving support from the School Feeding Programme/School Meal programme (WFP/Government)? 1= Yes 0=No 2= Sometimes						If no, skip to HT513
HT512	What type of support did your school receive (or currently receiving) from the School Meal programme? **Multiple Response possible** 1=Cooked meal for students 2=Take Home Ration for students 3=Digital learning materials 4=Other print materials (i.e. supplementary books for students) 5=Infrastructure support (kitchen/ maintenance of toilet/ etc.) 6=Toilet/Water supply / hand washing station 7=Training for teachers / administrators / cooks/ support staff 8= Trainings for SMC/FMC 9=Teaching materials / guidelines 88= Others (Specify)						
HT513	Does the school have a Food Management Committee (FMC)? 1= Yes 0=No						If no, skip to HT521
HT514	What is the composition of the FMC? (Leadership: Chair, Secretary, vice chair, vice secretary and treasurer.)						
		Members	Leadership Position				
	Male						
	Female						
	Total						
	Dalit						
HT515	Is the FMC active? 1= Yes 0=No						
HT516	What type of training have the FMC received? 1= safe food preparation and storage practices 2= Commodity Management 3= Supervising, mentoring or coaching skills						

	4= Health hygiene and nutrition 5=Record keeping training 6 = No training received 88= Others (Specify) 99= No trainings		
HT517	How is the, FMC involved in contributing towards school feeding programme? FMC -		

Module 2 SMC-FMC trainings/ feedback (only for project/intervention school)														
Q. No	**Question**						**Response**						**Remarks/Skip**	
HT521	What are the complaint and feedback mechanism in practice for communicating about School meals Program with WFP and its partners? Multiple response possible 1=None 2= Discussion with School management committee / Food management committee. 3=Regular meetings with School Administrators 4=Suggestion Box 5=Toll-free Helpline/ Namaste WFP 6= Interactions with thethethe McGovern-Dole Program partners (WE/OLE/IDS/PCD/ WFP Co, SO, Field staff 99=Don't know / refuse to answer 88= Others (Specify)												If coded other than 5, skip to HT523	
HT522	On a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are you with the redressal process of "Namaste WFP" (the toll-free helpline number of program)? 1 being least satisfied while 5 being most satisfied													
	Ease of use of Namaste WFP	1	2	3	4									
	Timeliness of the redressal/response	1	2	3	4									
	Quality of the redressal/response.	1	2	3	4									
SMP Outcomes (only for Project/ intervention schools)														
HT523	Do you think SMP influenced the learning outcomes of student? 1= Yes 0= No													
HT524	What has been the impact of SMP on the school students for each of the following components, in the last two academic sessions? (Award number using the following scale) 1= Significantly increased 2= Slightly increased 3= Slightly decreased 4= Significantly decreased 5= No Change	Access	INDICATORS	BOYS	GIRLS									
			Enrolment											
			Attendance											
			Dropouts											
		Participation	Attentiveness											
			Interest											

		Learning	Average learning achievement for Nepali subject (grade 3)								

Module 3: SCHOOL INFRASTUCTURE (both intervention and non-intervention schools)					
Q. No	**Question**		**Response**		**Remarks/Skip**
HT531	What is the main source of DRINKING water? 1=Piped water 2= Tube well 3= Protected dug well 4= Cart with small tank/drum 5= Tanker truck 6= Bottled water 7= Children carry water from home 8 = Spring water 88=Other (specify)				
HT532	Does the school have a Library or a place where books are stored? 1= Yes, library corner 2= Yes, e-library 3=Yes, both 4= No library				
HT533	Is there a provision of dustbins, in each of the following places, in school?				
	Classrooms	1=Yes 0=No			
	Toilets	1=Yes 0=No			
	Kitchen	1=Yes			

		0=No			
HT534	Do school staff and students use the dustbins to dispose waste?				
	School staff and teachers	1=Yes 0=No			
	Students	1=Yes 0=No			

Module 4: WASH Module (both Project/intervention and comparison/non-intervention schools)					
Q. No	**Question**		**Response**		**Remarks/Skip**
HT541	What type of toilet* does the school have? 1=Flush or pour/flush facilities connected 2=Latrine without flush 3=Latrine out of order 4= No laterine 88= Others (specify 99= Do not know				
HT542	Who all in the school, have access to the toilets in school?				
	Only boys	1=Yes 0=No			
	Only girls	1=Yes 0=No			
	Only teachers	1=Yes 0=No			
	People with disability	1=Yes 0=No			
HT543	Does the school have handwashing / tippy tap facility?				

	1=Yes 0=No												
HT544	During school hours, where do children typically go for relieving themselves? 1=Toilet in school only 2= Toilet at home 2=Open fields/ grounds 3=Both toilet and fields												
HT545	On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is least satisfied and 5 is most satisfied, what is your perception of the school toilets in terms of: *-Availability: can use when necessary without having to wait.* *-Accessibility: easy to reach, easy to use, including for.* *-Cleanliness: facility is kept clean* *-Adequacy of water: there is adequate water in the toilet.* *-Safety: door can be latched, adequate lighting.*												
	Availability	1	2	3	4	5							
	Accessibility	1	2	3	4	5							
	Cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5							
	Adequacy of water	1	2	3	4	5							
	Safety	1	2	3	4	5							

WASH HABITS (Only for project)

Q. No	Question	Response	Remarks/Skip
HT548	Have there been any trainings on menstrual hygiene for girls conducted in your school? (only for basic schools) 1= Yes 0=No 99=Not applicable		If coded 0, skip to HT5410A

HT5410	In what ways did these trainings benefit the girls? 1=Fewer girl absenteeism 2=Lesser reported health problems 3=Increased practise of using sanitary pads 4=Observed changes in community behaviour 88=Others(specify)		
HT5410A	Are menstrual pads/sanitary napkins adequately available at school? 1= Yes 0= No 99=Do not know		
HT5411	According to you, what are the changes you have observed in the hygiene knowledge and practices of the students since the implementation of WASH? 1=Regular use of latrine at home. 2= Regular use of latrine at school. 3= Hand washing with soap after using latrine, before eating food. 4= Clean drinking water from a safe source (e.g. tube well, or treated water collected from river/lake) 5= Maintain a waste disposal system (Water drainage, garbage pits, waste basket/dust bins) 6= Keep the School building and compounds clean 7= Maintaining hygienic environment while eating food 8=Use and disposal of sanitary pads by adolescent girls during menstruation 88=Other (Specify) 99=Don't Know		
HT5412	What changes have you observed in school dropouts and absenteeism since the implementation of WASH program? MULTIPLE CHOICE 1= Less male student dropouts		

	2= Less male student absenteeism due to sickness 3= Less girl student absenteeism due to sickness 4= Less girl student dropouts 99= No change		

Module 5: EGRA module (only for EGRA schools)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
HT551	Have all early grade teachers (teaching Nepali language up to grade 3) been trained on EGR? 1=Yes 0=No		If response =0, Skip to HT553
HT552	How many EGR trained teachers are teaching Nepali language class?		
HT553	In what ways have the teachers demonstrated improved skills after the training? 1=Enhanced teaching methods 2=Increase in knowledge on lesson planning and management 3= explaining new material to students 4= use of reading resources 5= monitoring student performance 6= assisting students in class 7=Better coordination/engagement with students 8=Better record keeping and follow-up on lessons 9= Better record keeping and follow-up on student assessment		

	88 Others (Specify) 99=No improvement		
Both intervention and non-intervention schools			
HT554	What, according to you, are the difficulties children face in learning? MULTIPLE CHOICE 1=children speak different mother tongue 2=Willingness to learn 3=Class environment 4=Limited amenities (school infrastructure and stationery) 5=Manner of teaching/ limited capacity of teachers 6= Other household necessities 7= None 98= Others 99=not sure		
HT555	How many trained early grade teachers (teaching Nepali language to classes 1-3) are there in your school?		

Module 6: Assessing impact of COVID-19 (both intervention and non-intervention)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
HT561	Is the school using any alternate teaching method during the extended closure due to COVID-19? 1= radio 2= television 3= online resources 4= self-learning material 5= tole sikai		If no, skip to HT564

	6= no alternate teaching method used 7= others (specify)		
HT562	How many students have access to these alternate teaching methods? 1= less than 25% 2= between 25-50% 3= between 50-75% 4= between 75-100%		
HT563	Is the school mobilizing teachers to support student learning during school closure? If yes, specify how?		
HT564	Have you contacted the students/parents post closure of the school due to COVID?		
HT565	How regularly have you contacted the students/parents post closure of the school due to COVID? 1= Weekly. 2= Monthly 3= Fortnightly 4=Quarterly 4= Never.		
HT566	What were the reasons for the communication/contact between you and Students/parents?		
HT567	How do you think COVID-19 will affect student enrolment once school reopens? 1=Total student enrolment will decrease. 2=Only girl student enrolment will decrease 3= Only boy student enrolment will decrease 4= No effect. 99= not sure		If CODED 4, skip to HT 569
HT568	Why do you think there may be a decline in enrolment due to COVID?		

HT569	What do you think will be the effect of COVID-19 on student literacy outcomes (reading/writing capability)? 1=reading/writing capability will decrease significantly due to lack of school exposure. 2=reading/writing capability will remain the same 3=reading/writing capability will increase 4=Others 99= not sure		
HT5610	What do you think, will be the changes in Students' sanitation and hygiene practices (at home), because of the extended school closure due to COVID-19?		
HT5611	How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your motivation to return to school and work?		
HT5612	Are there any suggestions you would want to give on improving the literacy rate, enrolment in the municipality/gaonpalika?		
Program related open ended questions.			
HT5613	Do you foresee any budgetary concerns in carrying out the program as you did before the lockdown?		
HT5614	In your opinions, can all components of the program be carried out as before, once the school reopens?		
HT5615	What challenges do you foresee in carrying out the program with the reopening of schools?		
HT5616	What to do think will be the effect of COVID-19 on the progress made by the programme, in the last two years?		
HT5617	In lieu of the pandemic, what assistance do you need from WFP and DoEST/CEHRD in order to normalise the functioning of schools again?		
HT5618	Intervention schools: Are there any suggestions you would want to give to improve the functioning of the programme (Probe: specific for each component i.e. EGR training, SMP, WASH etc.)? If yes, what are those?		

Thank you for your time and providing. In addition, we would also be interviewing teachers.

End of Interview

End Time: __ __: __ __

Teacher Structured Survey Tool
(Only for teachers teaching Nepali language to early grade (standard 1-3))
USDA McGovern Dole Food for Education Programme in Nepal- Evaluation

General Instruction: . The present tool consists of 4 sections; Introduction and consent form for respondents; Interview information, School information and Semi-Structured interviews for teachers. Please request the respondent to keep records and registers ready, if possible, for the telephonic interview for convenience.

;

In case of multiple responses, do not accept other options if coded don't know or refuse to answer.

Section 1: Interviewer Information (for creation of a file)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
TS11	School Code		
TS12	Code of the Interviewer		
TS13	Name of the Interviewer		
TS14	Start Time HH MM		Auto generated

Section 2: Identification of the School			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
TS21	Code of the school		
TS22	Name of the school		
TS23	Name of the Village		
TS24	Code of the Municipality/ Gaunpalika		
TS25	Code of the District		
TS26	Type of school 1=Project 2=Comparison		
TS27	ASK ONLY IF CODED 1 IN TS28 Type of Implementation? 1=WASH + SMP		

	2=WASH + SMP+EGR		
TS27A	Is the school benefitting from any other light touch intervention? 1= SIDP 2= Digital learning (DL) 3= HGSF		
TS28	UID of the teacher		**It is Auto-filled, will not show in the tab** :jo+ pTklQ

Section 3: Introduction and Consent /

1. Consent Form for Respondents /

Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to assess the nutritional, dietary and hygiene habits among students and their communities. The study will be carried out across 10 districts in Nepal, and around 200 primary school. You have been selected for this purpose. In this regard, we want to interview you to understand details about the school such as; teacher's attendance, total school enrolment, details about present school committees and so on.

Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.

All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.

Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and proceed for the interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)
Do you have any questions for me now?
Note: *ANSWER QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE AND PROCEE*

Sl. No. **k|Zg**	**Item** /		
1	Do you confirm that you have understood the information for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily? 1= YES 0=NO		
2	Do you confirm that you understand that your participation in this study is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time without giving a reason? 1= YES 0=NO		

3	Do you confirm that you understand that if you decide to stop the interview all data collected will be destroyed? 1= YES 0=NO		
4	Do you confirm that you agree to take part in the study? 1= YES 0=NO		
5	Do you confirm that you understand that any information used in writing up the study findings will be used anonymously, and that you give your consent to this? 1= YES 0=NO		

Section 4: Structured Interviews		
Module 1: Respondent Characteristics		
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**
TS411	What is your name?	
TS412	Gender of the respondent? 1= Male 2= Female 3= Transgender 4= Prefer not to respond	

Module 2: Literacy Support and Trainings (only for project/intervention schools)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
TS421	What type of support did you receive (or currently receiving) being a Nepali language teacher, from the School Meal programme? **Multiple Response Possible** 1=Digital learning materials 2=Textbook/reading materials on teaching methods 3=Other print materials (i.e. supplementary books for students) 4= Training 88= Others (specify)		If coded other than 5, skip to TS423A
TS422	What type of training have you received in the last academic year? Multiple Response Possible 1=Teaching / Learning techniques (EGR training) 2= Use of digital mechanisms for teaching 3=Safe food preparation and storage practices 4= Commodity Management 5= Health hygiene and nutrition 88= Others (Specify)		
TS423	How have the trainings contributed towards your skills and knowledge base? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE POSSIBLE) 1= Increased level of understanding of the subject		

	2= Enhanced teaching methods 3=Better organization and management of work 4=Better communication with parents 5=Better communication with students 6=Helped prepare teaching plans 7=Use of continuous assessment chart 8= Provide better support student learning skills and personalized learning 9= Better record keeping and follow-up on lessons 10= Better access to technological equipment 11= More effective use of teaching materials provided. 12= No change 88=others		
	How often do you use the teaching learning resources provided by the program? 1=Frequently (almost every day) 2=Often (2-3 times/week) 3=Sometimes (once per week) 4=Rarely (bi-monthly/monthly) 5=Never		
TS423A	Have you been able to share/transfer your skills to other teachers/staff members? 1= Yes 0=No		If coded 0, skip to TS425
TS424	What has been the key challenges of sharing/transferring your skills to other staff members?		
TS**425**	How often do students use the supplementary books and the library facility provided to them by the program? 1=Frequently (almost every day) 2=Often (2-3 times/week) 3=Sometimes (once per week) 4=Rarely (bi-monthly/monthly) 5=Never		If coded 1, skip to TS431
TS426	What are the reasons for the less frequent use of supplementary books and the library facility provided to the students?		

Module 3: Support to Students (only for intervention/Project schools)						
Q. No	**Question**		**Response**		**Remarks/Skip**	
TS431	What has been the impact of school meal program, on each of the following components of student				Boys	Girls
			Enrolment rate			
			Attendance rate			
			Absenteeism due to illness			
			Attentiveness of students			

	performance, in the last two years? 1: Increased 2: Decreased 3: Remained the same		Pass rate			

Module 4: Early grade Student performance information (only for teachers teaching Nepali language to grade 2) (both Project and comparison schools)						
Q. No	**Question**		**Response**			**Remarks/ Skip**
TS441	On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, what, according to you, has been the impact in each of the following components of learning outcomes for the past batch of class II students?		listening comprehension		1 2 3 4 5	
			Number of correct letters per minutes		1 2 3 4 5	
			Non word reading		1 2 3 4 5	
			Matra reading		1 2 3 4 5	
			Oral reading fluency		1 2 3 4 5	
			Oral reading comprehension		1 2 3 4 5	
			Overall performance:		1 2 3 4 5	
TS442	In your opinion, how has the overall academic performance of the students in grade 2 changed over the past two years? 1: Improved 2: Degraded 3: No changes				Boys/ Girls	
			Reading and understanding early grade text			
			Academic outcomes (pass percentage/grades)			
TS443	What do you do to engage parents to improve the learning outcomes of students? Multiple Response Possible 1=Rewarding certificates to students to take to home 2=Sending letters to parents explaining about children's reading performance 3= Conduct Parent Teacher Meeting 88=others (specify)					
TS444	Do you have a teachers guide to take to class? 1= Yes 0=No					
TS445	Do you carry your own teacher's guide when you go to take a class? 1= Yes 0=No					

TS446	How often you go to the class with a lesson plan in hand? 1=Often 2=Sometimes 3=Never		If coded 0, Go to TS447
TS447	Is the most recent lesson plan entry signed by the Head Teacher? 1= Yes 0=No		
TS448	What proportion of students in your classroom have the required textbook/s for the class during the last academic year? 1=None 2=1-25% 3=25-50 % 4=50-75 % 5=75-100% 99 =Don't know		
TS449	Is there a library or provision of books (library corner) for students in the school? 1= Yes 0= No		If coded 0 go to TS4410
TS4410	How has the availability of supplementary books and library corner impacted the students? 1= increased student footfall in the library 2= increased interest of students in reading and borrowing books. 3= better reading ability. 4= increased motivation to study. 5= no change 99= do not know		
TS4411	What, according to you, are the difficulties children face in learning? MULTIPLE CHOICE 1=Language barrier 2=Willingness to learn3=Class environment 4=Limited amenities 5=Manner of teaching/ limited capacity of teachers6= Other household necessities7= None 88= Others (if others specify) 99=not sure		

Module 5: Program related open ended questions & Assessing impact of COVID-19 (both intervention and non-intervention)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**

TS451	How has the status of primary education changed in the area over the last two years? *(probe: willingness of local communities to educate their children, perception on girl education, community participation, enrolment of students, female student literacy rate, effect of school meals)*		
TS451A	What has been the impact of the pandemic period on your overall motivation to return to school and teach?		
TS452	Are you supporting any alternate teaching method during the extended closure of schools due to COVID-19? 1=Yes 0=No		If coded 0, skip to TS454
TS453	If yes, how?		
TS454	What do you think will be the effect of extended school closure due to COVID-19 on students' learning achievements? *(probe: impact on reading/writing capability, interest and motivation to study, accessibility to alternate teaching methods, WASH habits)*		
TS455	What do you think will be the effect of extended school closure due to COVID-19 on students' psycho social status?		
TS456	How do you think COVID-19 will affect student enrolment rate once school reopens?		
TS457	In your opinion, will COVID-19 affect girl's education in the region? Please explain how?		
TS458	**Intervention schools**: Are there any suggestions you would want to give to improve the functioning of the programme (Probe: specific for each component i.e. EGR training, SMP etc.)? If yes, what are those?		
TS459	Are there any suggestions you would want to give on improving the literacy, enrolment and attendance in these areas?		

Thank you for your time and providing.

End of Interview
End Time: __ __: __ __

Parent Structured Survey Tool
USDA McGovern Dole and WFP supported Food for Education Programme in Nepal

In case of multiple responses, do not accept other options if coded don't know or refuse to answer.

Section 1: Interviewer Information (for creation of a file)			
Q. No	**Question**		**Remarks/Skip**
PS!!	School Code		
PS!@	Code of the Interviewer		
PS!#	Name of the Interviewer		
PS!$	Start Time / HH MM		Auto generated

Section 2: Identification of the Household					
Q. No	**Question**				**Remarks/Skip**
PS@!	Code of the school				
PS@@	Name of the school				
PS@#	Name of the Village				
PS@$	Code of the Municipality/ Gaunpalika				
PS@%	Code of the District				
PS@%-s_	Name	Grade			
	Children attending school				
PS@^	Type of area 1=Project 2=Comparison				
PS@&	ASK ONLY IF CODED 1 IN PS29 Type of Implementation? 1=WASH + SMP 2=WASH +SMP+EGR				AUTOFILL
PS@*	UID of the Parents				It is Auto-filled, will not show in the tab

S. No. **k|Zg ;+Vof**	Item **k|Zg**	**pQ/**
!	Do you confirm that you have understood the information for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily?	1= YES 0=NO
@	Do you confirm that you understand that your participation in this study is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time without giving a reason?	1= YES 0=NO

#	Do you confirm that you understand that if you decide to stop the interview, all data collected will be destroyed?	1= YES 0=NO
$	Do you confirm that you agree to take part in the study?	1= YES 0=NO
%	Do you confirm that you understand that any information used in writing up the study findings will be used anonymously, and that you give your consent to this?	1= YES 0=NO

Section 3: Household Characteristics v08 #M 3/w'/L ljj/0fx?			
Q. No	**Question**		**Remarks/Skip**
PS31	Gender of the respondent? 1= Male 2= Female 3= Transgender 4=Prefer not to respond		
PS32	What is your caste? 1=Brahim, Chhettri, Thakuri, Sanyasi Caste 2=Dalit 3=Ethnic Group 88=Others (Specify)		
PS33	What is your educational qualification? 0= no-schooling 1=Signature Only 2= upto Grade 5 3=upto Grade 8 4= upto Grade 10 5= Graduate 6= Master or equivalent or even more 99 = Don't know		
PS34	What is main source of your household income? 1=Agriculture labour 2=Daily wage labour 3=Skilled labour (and specify) 4=Own agriculture 5=Fishing/aquaculture 6=Livestock/poultry 7= migrant labour 8=Own business 10=Service 88=Other (Specify)		
PS35	Number of family member in your household? _---------- No. of People		
PS36	How many school age (5-18 yrs.) children are there in your households? 1= Male 2= Female		

PS37	How many of these children go to school? (Before COVID) 1= Male: 2= Female		

Section 4: Parents Interview Schedule			
Module 1: school Going Children Characteristics (Please choose one school going child randomly from the rooster).			
Q. No	Question	Response	

*PS41 to PS 44 are before-after questions. Please answer on Pre- (closure of schools) and post- (closure of schools) basis.

			Before Closure of school		After closure of school		
PS41	On an average, how many days in a week did/does the child eat breakfast or morning meal?		1= Everyday 2=Once/twice in a week 3=More than twice a week. 4=Never		1=Everyday 2=Once/twice in a week 3=More than twice a week. 4=Never		
PS42	On an average, how many school days in a week did/does the child eat lunch or mid-day snacks (after returning from school)?		1= Everyday 2=Once/twice in a week 3=More than twice a week. 4=Never		1= Everyday 2=Once/twice in a week 3=More than twice a week. 4=Never		
PS43	On an average, how many school days in a week does the child eat mid-day meal at school? (ONLY PRE-CLOSURE)		1= Everyday 2=Once/twice in a week 3=More than twice a week. 4=Never				Only for intervention schools
PS44	Did/does your child show interest to study at home?		1=Yes 0=No 99=Don't Know		1=Yes 0=No 99=Don't Know		
PS45	How often did/does the child study at home?		1= Everyday 2=Once in a week 3=More than once in a week 4=Never		1= Everyday 2=Once in a week 3=More than once in a week 4=Never		
PS46	On an average, how long did/does the child study at home in a day?		1= 1-2 hours 2=2-5 hours 3=More than 5 hours 4=Never		1= 1-2 hours 2=2-5 hours 3=More than 5 hours 4=Never		

Only for intervention schools			
PS47	Has the absence of mid-day meal, affected the overall food intake of the child? 1=Yes (if yes please specify how) 2=No		If coded 0, Skip to PS421

PS48	If yes, how has the change in food intake due to absence of mid-day meals, affected the child's heath?		

Module 2: School Attendance and performance (Pre-Pandemic)			
Q. No	**Question**		**Remarks/Skip**
PS421	Have you observed any change in your child's attendance level in school over the last two years? 1= Yes, more regular now 2= Yes, reduced attendance 3= No change		
PS422	What are the reasons for the change in the child's school attendance?		
PS423	How Satisfied were you with the quality of education provided at the school, when it was operational? (Rate on a scale of 1-5) 1= Highly satisfied 2=Moderately satisfied 3= Moderately dissatisfied 4= Highly dissatisfied 5= Can't say	**INDICATORs ;"rs** / **SCALE :s]n** regularity of class: 1 2 3 4 5 homework with follow-up: 1 2 3 4 5 engagement of children in extra-curricular activities: 1 2 3 4 5 use of teaching materials: 1 2 3 4 5	
PS424	How satisfied were you with the amenities at school that are provided to students, when it was operational? 1= Highly satisfied 2=Moderately satisfied 3= Moderately dissatisfied 4= Highly dissatisfied 5= Can't say	**INDICATORs** / SCALE :s]n Mid-day meals: 1 2 3 4 5 Textbooks and reading materials: 1 2 3 4 5 School toilets and sanitation facilities: 1 2 3 4 5 Deworming and medical facilities: 1 2 3 4 5	Only for intervention schools.
PS425	Did the school have grade level assessments of the student's academic performance? 1=Yes 0=No 99=Do not Know		
PS426	How has your child's performance changed in the last two years? 1=Grades have improved 2=No change 3=Grades have reduced		If coded 2, skip to PS428
PS427	What is the reason for the change in performance?		
PS428	How have you been supporting your child for better performance?		

Module 3: Effect of COVID-19 (during-pandemic)			
Q. No	Question	Response	Remarks/Skip
PS431	Have your school teacher/head teacher contact you/(NAME of the child) to inform you about the alternative school teaching arrangements (like on-line teaching, radio based teaching, television based teaching, or community teaching) after the closure of schools because of COVID-19? 1=Yes 0=No		If response is other than 1, go to PS433

	98=Don't know		
PS432	If yes, is the child engaged in alternative school arrangements? 1=Yes 2=No		
PS433	Will the child be attending the school once it reopens? 1=Yes 0=No 99=Don't know		If coded 1, go to PS441
PS434	Why will child not attend the school after it reopens?		

Module 4: Knowledge and Awareness on Education/Diet/Health/Hygiene					
Q. No	Question		Response		Remarks/ Skip
PS441	What do you think are the main benefits of your child going to school?				
PS442	What according to you is the ideal education level for girls in your community? 1= upto class 5 (Primary school) 2= upto class 8 (basic school) 3=upto class 10 (Secondary school) 4= upto class 12(Higher secondary school) 5= Graduation and above (Higher education) 6= Don't know				
PS443	What according to you is the ideal education level for boys in your community? 1= upto class 5 (Primary school) 2= upto class 8 (basic school) 3=upto class 10 (Secondary school) 4= upto class 12(Higher secondary school) 5= Graduation and above (Higher education) 6= Do not know				
PS444	What does your child use to wash your hands? 1 = Only Water 2 = Water and Soap 3 = Mud and water 4= Ash and water 88= Others (Specify) 99= Do not know				
PS445	When does your child wash your hands? 1= before eating food 2= after eating food 3= after returning home from outside 4= after touching the ground 5= after cleaning the house 6= after going to toilet/ relieving yourself 7= after cleaning child faeces 8= before preparing food				
PS446	Do any of your household members of your household practice open defecation? 1= Yes 2= No				
PS447	Do you know about school feeding programme? 1=Yes 0=No 98=do not know				Only for intervention schools
PS448	If Yes, what are the benefits of the school feeding program to the following stakeholders?			Children / Family	Only for intervention schools
			Response 1:		

			Response 2:			
			Response 3:			
PS449	What do you do when you have any problems, complaints, or suggestions regarding the School Meals Program? 1= Inform SMC (School management Committee) 2= Inform FMC (Food management committee) 3= Inform RP 4= Inform FFEP 5= Inform EDCU 6= Inform distribution centre staff 7= Call Namaste WFP/ Toll-free helpline 8= Contact WFP Field Coordinator 9 = Complain to local government officials 10= Inform teacher/head teacher 11= Do Nothing 88= Others (specify)					Only for intervention schools. If coded other than 7, skip to PS4416
PS4410	Have you ever used Namaste WFP, to register any complain or feedback with WFP and other program partners? 1=Yes 0=No 98=Do not know					If no, go to PS451
PS4411	On a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are you with the redressal process of "Namaste WFP" (the toll-free helpline number of thethethe McGovern-Dole Program)? 1 being least satisfied while 5 being most satisfied	tkfO{ gd:t] WFP	Ease of use of Namaste WFP	1 2 3 4 5		
			Timeliness of the redressal/response	1 2 3 4 5		
			Quality of the redressal/response.	1 2 3 4 5		

Module 5: Social participation of parents (both intervention and non-intervention schools)			
Q. No	Question	Response	Remarks/Skip
PS451	Are you a member of any school committee? 1=Yes 0=No		If coded 0, skip to PS461
PS452	If yes, which committees are you a member of? 1 = Parent's Teacher's Association (PTA) 2 = School Management Committee 3 =Food management committee (FMC) 4 = School water, sanitation and hygiene committee 88 = Others (Specify)		
PS453	How useful do you find these committees? 1= Very useful 2= Not very useful 3= Not useful at all 4= Not sure		

Module 6: Parents perception on child education (gender disaggregated) (Both intervention and non-intervention)			
Q. No	Question	Response	Remarks/Skip
PS461	What are the activities that your male child has been engaging in since the extended closure of schools? 1= Income- generating activity (paid labour)		Skip if no male child

	2= Helping the family in income-generating activity 3= Household work 4= unpaid labour 5= studying 88= others (please specify) 99=if no male child		
PS462	What are the activities that your female child has been engaging in since the extended closure of schools? 1= Income- generating activity (paid labour) 2= Helping the family in income-generating activity 3= Household work 4= unpaid labour 5= studying 88= others (please specify) 99=if no female child		Skip if no female child
PS463	What are your suggestions to improve the quality of education?		

Thank you for your time

End of Interview
End Time: __ __: __ __

Structured Interview Tool for Cooks
USDA McGovern Dole Food for Education Programme in Nepal- Evaluation

General Instruction: The present tool consists of 3 sections; Introduction and consent form, semi-structured interview with cook, food preparation and storage

Section 1: Interviewer Information (for creation of a file)			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Skip**
CS11	Code of the Interviewer		
CS12	Name of the Interviewer		
CS13	Start Time HH MM		Auto generated

Section 2: Identification of the School			
Q. No	**Question**	**Response**	**Remarks/Skip**
CS21	Code of the school (Government)		
CS22	Name of the school		
CS23	Name of the Gaunpalika/ Municipality		
CS23A	Ward Number		
CS23B	Name of village		
CS24	Code of the Gaunpalika/ Municipality		
CS25	Code of the District		
CS26	Type of Implementation? 1=WASH + SMP 2=WASH +SMP+EGR		

CS27	UID of the Cook		**It is Auto-filled, will not show in the tab**

Section 3: Introduction and Consent

1. Consent Form for cooks

Hello, my name is _____. We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to assess the nutritional, dietary and hygiene habits among students in grade 3, 5, 6 and 8. The study will be carried out across 225 primary schools in Nepal, and the primary school in your area has been selected for this purpose.

In this regard, we want to interview you to understand the how you prepare food for mid-day meal program. Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.

All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.

Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and proceed for the interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)
Do you have any questions for me now?
Note: *ANSWER QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE AND PROCEED*

1 = Yes (Thank you and proceed for the interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)
Do you have any questions for me now?
Note: *ANSWER QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE AND PROCEED*

Sl. No.	Item	Check
!	Do you confirm that you have understood the information for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily?	1= YES 0=NO
@	Do you confirm that you understand that your participation in this study is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time without giving a reason?	1= YES 0=NO
#	Do you confirm that you understand that if you decide to stop the interview, all data collected will be destroyed?	1= YES 0=NO
$	Do you confirm that you agree to take part in the study?	1= YES 0=NO
%	Do you confirm that you understand that any information used in writing up the study findings will be used anonymously, and that you give your consent to this?	1= YES 0=NO

Section 4: Cook Interview Schedule			
Module 1: Cook Characteristics			
Q. No	**Question/ Response**	**k|Zg÷pQ/**	**Skip**
CS411	Name of the cook		
CS412	Sex of the cook 1= Male 2= Female 3= Transgender 4=Prefer not to answer		
CS413	Age of the cook		In completed years
CS414	What is your caste? 1=Brahim, Chhettri, Thakuri, Sanyasi Caste 2=Dalit 3=Ethnic Group 88=Others (Specify)		(not to be asked to the respondent- determined from surname)
CS415	How long have you been working as a cook in this school? _____Years__ __ Months-----days		

Module 2: Training			
Q. No	**Question/ Response**		**Skip**
CS421	Have you received any training in the last academic year? 1=Yes 0=No		If no Skip to CS431
CS422	How many times have you received training? __ __ times		
CS423	What all topics were discussed during the training? Multiple response possible 1= Commodity management 2= Record keeping 3=Storage type and utilization 4= Health and hygiene 5=Food preparation and items required 6= Checking food items before cooking 7= Measuring food before cooking 8= ensuring personal health and hygiene 9= Ensuring cleanliness of food commodities before cooking. 10= Checking of cooked food 11= Prevention of nutrient loss 12= Storage equipment 88=others (specify))		
CS424	In your opinion, was the training useful?		
CS425	Why was it useful/not useful?		

Module 3: Kitchen safety and availability of equipment/resources			
Q. No	**Question/ Response**		**Skip**
CS431	Does your school have a separate kitchen?		If yes Skip to CS433

	1 = Yes 0= No						
CS432	If no separate kitchen, where do you prepare food? 1= Inside school premise 2= Outside school premise 3=At own home 88=Others (specify)						
CS433	Does the kitchen have the following amenities?						
	Windows	1: Yes	2: No				
	chimneys	1: Yes	2: No				
	Improved cook stoves	1: Yes	2: No				
CS434	When do you wash the utensils (cooking pots, lids, scoops, knives, plates etc.) with clean water and soap? 1 =Before food preparation 2 = After food preparation. 3= before serving food. 4= After eating food. 4 = At the end of the day. 88 = Others (specify)						
CS435	How often to do you clean the kitchen? (SQ) 1 =Before food preparation 2 = After food preparation 3= At the end of the day. 4= At the end of the week 88 = Others (specify)						

Module 4: Food Preparation			
Q. No	**Question/ Response**		**Skip**
CS441	How do you get the number of students present on the day? 1= doing a manual headcount of students during school 2= checking the attendance register for the day 3= confirming with the Head teacher or the teacher in charge 98= Do not count 99= others (please specify)		
CS442	How do you measure the quantity of various food items (rice, lentil, oil, spices) on the basis of student and staff head count? 1= using pre-defined units of measurements. 2= use roughly estimated measurements. 3= others (please specify)		

CS443	What do you check for, in the food item, to determine if it is fit for cooking or not? 1= Expiry date 2= Packaging 3= Color of the food 4= Presence of pests 5= Color of the package 0= Do not check 98=Others (specify)		
CS444	Do you clean the food items before cooking? 1= Always. 2= Clean depending on the food item. 3= Occasionally 3= Do not clean.		
CS445	How do you ensure that food is clean before cooking? 1=Rinse it in water and cook 2=Remove unwanted food matters then cook 3= Use clean containers to collect it from the store 4=remove foreign matters and then wash it with clean water thoroughly before cooking 5= others(specify)		
CS446	Do you check the food after cooking? 1= yes 2= No		If coded 0, Skip to CS448
CS447	How do you check the food after cooking? 1= Taste the food 2= Look for the presence of foreign particles. 3= Smell the food 4= others (please specify)		
CS448	How do you store cooked food prior to serving the pupils? (SQ) 1=Store cooked food in covered cooking pots in a clean, safe place before serving the pupils 2=Store cooked food in open containers inside the kitchen 3=Store cooked food outside the kitchen without covers		
CS449	On what basis do you serve the cooked food to the students? = Equal distribution of food for all students. 2= Different quantities according to grade of the students. 3= Different quantities according to Gender of the students. 4= Different quantities according to the need of the students. 5= Based on experience (please specify) 98= others (please specify)		

CS4410	Are there measures in place to prevent food from contamination from pests and rodents? (SQ) Name them:						
	1 = Yes	Response 1:		!= 5			
		Response 2:					
		Response 3:					
	0= No						
	99= Do not know						
CS4411	Do you ensure prevention of nutrient loss of fortified food, if yes how? 1=Yes 2=No						
CS4411A	How do you ensure the nutrient loss of fortified food? Rice: Salt:						
CS4412	What are the occasions you have to wash your hand (SQ) 1=Before handling food and often during food preparation 2=After using the latrine 3= After finishing food preparation 4= No idea 98=Other (specify)						
CS4413	How do you wash your hands? (SQ) 1= Only with Water 2= Water with Soap 3=Water with Mud 4=Water with Ash 5=Never 98= Other (Specify)						
CS4414	Do students wash their hands before the meal? 1=Yes 0= No 99= Don't know						
CS4415	Is there any wastage of food in your school? 1 = Yes 0= No 99= Do not know						
CS4416	What are the common problems you encounter while fulfilling your role?						
Module 5: Incentives and effects of COVID-19 / COVID -19							
Q. No	**Question/ Response**						**Skip**
CS451	Are you still receiving salary since the closure of schools due to COVID-19? 1= Yes 2= No 3= Partially 4= Do not know						

CS452	How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your income source?		
CS453	How has the COVID pandemic impacted your motivation to return to school and work?		

Storekeeper Structured Interview Tool
USDA McGovern Dole Food for Education Programme in Nepal- Evaluation

General Instruction: The present tool consists of 3 sections; Introduction and consent form, semi-structured interview with storekeeper, supply and storage mechanism. In case of multiple responses, do not accept other options if coded don't know or refuse to answer.

Section 1: Interviewer Information (for creation of a file)			
Q. No	**Question**		**Remarks/Skip**
SK !!	Warehouse Code		
SK !@	Code of the Interviewer		
SK !#	Name of the Interviewer		
SK !$	Start Time HH MM		Auto generated **:jtM pTkGg**
Section 2: Identification of the School			
Q. No	**Question**		**Remarks/Skip**
SK @!	Code of the FDP/EDP/Warehouse		
SK @@	Name of the Village		
SK @#	Code of the Municipality/ Gaunpalika		

SK @$	Code of the District		
SK @%	UID of the Storekeeper		**Auto-fill**
SK @^	Name of the school		
SK @&	Category of School 1. Intervention 2. Non-intervention		
SK @*	School code		

Section 3: Introduction and Consent

Consent Form for Storekeepers

Hello, my name is _____. We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to assess the nutritional, dietary and hygiene habits among students in grade 3, 5, 6 and 8. The study will be carried out in around 200 primary schools in Nepal, and the primary school in your area has been selected for this purpose.

In this regard, we want to interview you to understand the supply and storage of food supply for mid-day meal program. Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.

All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any questions. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.

Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to interview. Do we have your permission to do so?
1 = Yes (Thank you and proceed for the interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)

Do you have any questions for me now? s] tkfO{ xfdLnfO{ s]xL k|Zgx? ;f]Wg rfxg' x'G5 <
Note: *ANSWER QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE AND PROCEED*

k|Zg ;+Vof	Item/ k|Zgx?	r]s ug'{ xf];\
!	Do you confirm that you have understood the information for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily?	1= YES 0=NO
@	Do you confirm that you understand that your participation in this study is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time without giving a reason?	1= YES 0=NO
#	Do you confirm that you understand that if you decide to stop the interview, all data collected will be destroyed?	1= YES 0=NO
$	Do you confirm that you agree to take part in the study?	1= YES 0=NO

%	Do you confirm that you understand that any information used in writing up the study findings will be used anonymously, and that you give your consent to this?	1= YES 0=NO

Section 3: Storekeeper Interview Schedule			
Module 1: Storekeeper Characteristics			
Q. No	**Question / Response**		**Remarks/Skip**
SK #!!	Name of the storekeeper		
SK #!@	Sex of the storekeeper 1=Male 2=Female 3=Transgender 4= prefer not to respond		

Module 2: FDP/EDP Storekeeping			
Q. No	**Question / Response**		**Remarks/Skip**
SK #@!	Does the FDP/EDP have a separate storeroom or warehouse? 1 = Yes 0= No		If no, go to SK328
SK #@@	Is the food storeroom/warehouse lockable? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@#	Does the storeroom have windows and ventilators for ventilation? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@$	Was there any evidence of the presence of rodents in the store during the last working month? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@%	Is there any evidence of presence of insects (weevil and others)? 1 = Yes 0= No		

SK #@^	Is there any evidence of mold and excess of humidity? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@&	Is there any evidence of spillage or leakage? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@*	Is the food stored off the ground 1 = Yes 0= No		If no, go to SK3210
SK #@(	If yes, does the FDP/EDP use pallets for commodities' storage? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@!)	Does the FDP/EDP have a pest/insects' management plan? 1 = Yes 0= No		
SK #@!!	Does the FDP/EDP carry out pest/insects control measures? 1 = Yes 0= No		

Module 3: Training on storekeeping

QNo	Question / Response		Remarks/Skip l6Kk0fLx?
SK ##!	Are you trained in safe food preparation and storage practices? 1 = Yes 0= No		If no, go to SK336
SK ##@	When was the last time when you received the training? __ __ months ago		
SK ###	What were the topics discussed during the training? 1= Commodity management 2= Record keeping 3=Storage type and utilization 4= Health and hygiene 5=Food preparation and items required 6= Food measurement 7= Storage equipment 88=others (specify)		**Multiple responses possible** Ps eGbf al9 pQ/ ;Dej
SK ##$	In your opinion, was the training useful?		
SK ##%	Why was it/ was it not useful? Please explain		
SK ##^	Do you maintain proper record of the food items? 1 = Yes 0= No		If no, go to SK341

SK ##&	What challenges do you face in record-keeping at the Final distribution points		

Module 4: Warehouse Management

Q. No	Question / Response		Remarks/Skip l6Kk0fLx?
SK #$!	What steps are taken by you as soon as the food commodities arrive at the FDP/EDP? 1= Check Waybills 2= Unload the Food commodities 3= carry to the warehouse 4= Stack food commodities correctly 5= Record stack card 88= others (specify) 99= do not know		(Do Not Prompt) (Multiple options possible) pQ/ geGg], Ps eGbf al9 pQ/ ;Dej
SK #$@	What precautions do you take while carrying food and storing it in the warehouse? 1= Check the warehouse before storing food bags. 2= Protect food commodities from rain 3= Not using hooks to pull/move food bags. 4= Handling food bags with care (Avoid stepping, throwing 5= Store in a cool and dry place 88= others (specify) 99= do not know 6 = No specific actions taken		
SK #$#	What are the steps taken by you to ensure that the food items are of good quality and fit for storing in the warehouse? 1= Check for lumps/damp/mould 2= Check for pests 3= Check for smell 4= check for damaged food packets 5 = No specific actions taken 88= others (specify) 99= do not know		
SK #$$	What steps do you take before storing the food in the warehouse? 1= Clean the warehouse 2= Check for pests 3= Check for smell		

Q. No	Question / Response		Remarks/Skip l6Kk0fLx?
	4= Check for lumps/damp/mould 5= Remove weevils 6= Store according to LIFO/FIFO/FEFO as applicable 7 = No specific actions taken 88= others (specify) 99= do not know		
SK #$%	Once the food is stored in the warehouse, what precautionary steps do you take to ensure its safety? 1= Check for holes and leakages in the food bags/packets 2= Check for holes and leakages in the warehouse roof and walls 3= Use pallets to keep food stacks. 4= Use tarpaulins to cover the food stacks 5= Protect from condensation drips 6= Allow ventilation in the warehouse 7= Inspect the stacks from time to time 88= others(specify) 99= do not know		
SK #$^	What steps do you take before dispatching the food items? 1= Inspect the truck 2= Check for lumps/damp/mould 3= Check for pests 4= Check for smell 5= Check for damaged food packets 88= Others (specify) 99= do not know		
SK #$&	What precautionary steps do you take to ensure food items are loaded safely in the transportation vehicle? 1= Protect food commodities from rain 2= Not using hooks to pull/move food bags. 3= Handling food bags with care (Avoid stepping, throwing) 88= Others (specify) 99= do not know		

Q. No	Question / Response		Remarks/Skip l6Kk0fLx?
SK #$*	How do you keep a record of the food items **dispatched**? 1= issue waybills 2= record stack cards 3= maintain manual records 4= maintain digital records 88= Others (specify) 99= do not know		

Module 5: Perceptions on Food Delivery			
Q. No	**Question / Response**		**Remarks/Skip l6Kk0fLx?**
SK #%!	Did you face any problem while managing take home rations?		If no, go to SK353
SK #%@	If yes, please elaborate.		
SK #%#	What are the common problems you encounter while fulfilling your role?		
SK #%$	How has the COVID pandemic impacted your motivation to work?		

End of Interview

End Time: __ __: __ __

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for EDCU district offices

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) will be held with the officials of government of Nepal, mainly from the Ministry of Education science and technology, the CEHRD and the EDCU in the districts where the WFP (World Food Program) is implemented. The KIIs will be conducted over telephone and will take about 45-60 minutes. The KIIs aim to capture the GoN' response to the School Meals Program and its various components. Their perspective, understanding and the impact of the program on the overall state of education, nutrition, health and sanitation of the Province 6 &7 regions of Nepal. These KIIs will help us draw a complete picture of the program and how it has brought changes structurally under the leadership of the government.

Themes to be explored through KIIs are:

- *Structural changes brought about by the School Meals Program*
- *Government support and involvement/role in the program*
- *Perspective and response on the impact of the program*
- *Challenges faced while working with different partners/organizations*
- *Suggestions and way forward for program sustainability and scale-up*

Instructions for the Interviewer:

Please make sure that the participant has consented to audio recording before turning on the recording function. Audio recording may not take place if the participant has not given consent for recording.

Please allow your participant to speak and listen carefully. Make sure they know that their opinions are very important to you and the project. If you think the discussion is losing focus, use your moderation skills to get back to the issue. The questions are not written to limit the discussion, but rather to keep it on track. There are no right or wrong answers. Though efforts should be made to follow the guide, skilled interviewers can change the sequence of the questions based on the flow of the discussion. However, each of the topics need to be covered during the discussion. The probes given are examples of the information we are interested in, but you can word them as you feel as appropriate. You are requested to use these pointers as a guide to start of a full-fledged discussion.
In the beginning, discuss the overall research program and how the current discussion will contribute to understanding how the program fared and can be sustained. Remind them that the discussion is completely confidential in nature – no names or references will identify the respondents during the study.

Introduction and consent:
Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to understand the changes brought about by the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program in the education and nutrition status of children and the impact of COVID on the same.
Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.
All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.
Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and end interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)

1. ***Understanding of the structural changes brought about by the SMP***
    - Can you please tell me what in your opinion is the status of primary education in this district and in Karnali and Sudur Paschim region? *(Probe: general overview of attendance and enrolment, how is it distributed across genders, what are the key reasons for dropouts and poor attendance, community influence on education, girls' role in the family, community perception on girls' education, changes in the last few years in terms of school infrastructure, WASH facilities , provision of midday meal, enrolment of students, student performance and literacy)*

2. ***Understanding the Program design, roles and responsibilities***
    - *Can you please tell me how USDA McGDprogram supports the government's school meals program? (Probe: has been a partner with WFP since when, what activities are carried out at the centre and at the district level (primary roles and secondary roles, if any), coordination between them, linkages between cash and food-based transfers, longer term plan on the coverage and modalities)*
    - *How have the programme design and activities changed over the last two years? (Probe: factors behind these changes, benefits/disadvantages of the changes, response of the beneficiaries towards these changes, suggestions for further changes/adjustments)*

- *What is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability?(for transitioned districts only) (probe: strategy for sustainability/exit strategy; policy alignment towards school feeding program food and cash modality; institutional arrangements; provision of local production and sourcing; equity and ownership within various stakeholders ; established community-level systems of governance required for the successful implementation, targets envisaged for full handover of school feeding programme to the govt)*

3. Understanding the perspective of the program and activities

- *What, in your view, were the activities that have worked and were they in line with the GoN strategy, plan and the needs of the schools in the community and which ones could have been improved? (Probe: quality of the meals, WASH component, school infrastructure, digital literacy; EGRP, SMMP &HGSF (if applicable) how were the community/school needs assessed, what are the responses of the schools and the local communities in the district)*
- *In your opinion, to what extent has the project affected the gender specific (intended and unintended) objectives? - (probe: equal participation by women in implementing the School Feeding programme, impact on the performance of girls, improvements in terms of girl friendly learning spaces, menstrual hygiene awareness and separate toilets for girls and boys)*
- *In your opinion has the teaching quality and involvement of the teachers improved over the last few years?(Probe: training to teachers, topics covered, any changes in teaching methods, (have the WASH facilities(maintaining toilets), provision of school meals/take home ration etc. influenced the interest/motivation levels of teachers))*
- *Can you tell us if there is any direct and the indirect impact of this program on the local community? (Probe: community perception/receptivity, more footfall in schools, students' enrolment and attendance, change in mindsets of community towards education especially in case of girls, increased mobility of girls, voluntary community involvement and responsibility in any aspect of the program).*

4. Understanding the challenges faced during implementing the activities

- *How has been the experience of working with WFP on the school meals program? Were there any challenges that you faced during implementation? (Probe: with WFP and other partner organisations, CEHRD, MoEST, other stakeholders, community challenges, any programmatic level difficulty, presence of internal and external factors that affect the program's ability to create a change (if any))*
- *Have there been any other constraints that were faced by you that you want to flag off? (community constraints, cultural barriers, behavioural barriers, school infrastructure, terrain, remoteness, limited transportation facility, limited health facilities, safety and security of the staff, working with different partners, any other)*

5. COVID-19 mitigation and way forward

- *What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the community in the district? Who according to you, out of the following, are the worst affected by the pandemic: students, teachers, head teachers, parents, cook and storekeeper)? (Probe: impact of School closure on children, Economic impact on households, changes in household employment patterns, health and nutrition status)*
- *What has been the impact of the pandemic on the program and the impact that it had created? (probe: impact on different components of the program, changes in funding*

priorities, timeliness in delivery of services, effect on long term goals of the programs, suggestions to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on program implementation)

- *What has been the impact of the extended closure of schools due to COVID-19, on students' Learning and development? (probe: change in curriculum, impact on student performance, engagement with the program)*
- *What are the alternate teaching arrangements during the extended school closure, have been introduced at the district level for students? (probe: alternate teaching arrangements, the accessibility of these alternate methods by the students, effectiveness of the new teaching methods, challenges faced (if any))*

6. *Suggestions and way forward*

- *Are there any suggestions you would want to give?*
  a. *On the program (Probe: specific for each component)*
  b. *On improving the literacy rate, enrolment in these areas (**For non-intervention schools**)*
- *Did you face any budgetary concerns while implementing the program in the district?*
- *What are your plans for the way forward and the next phase of the program? (Probe: Areas of priority for the GoN in the next phase, reasons for the changes, what is the difference that can be made by WFP and other program partners)*
- *What in your view is the position of readiness of the program for government to take it forward? (Probe: government support and promptness, future approach/capacity?)*

Notes for the Interviewer

Just as it is important to begin a discussion with respondents, it is equally important to close the interview. Close the interview by thanking the respondent respectfully and asking if there are any questions that she/he would like to ask you. Answer the questions honestly without promising at all. Reiterate the purpose of the discussion and the confidential nature of the exercise. Thank the respondent for her/his time and cooperation.

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for Project Implementors

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) will be held with officials from WFP and other project implementors. Each KII will be conducted telephonically and will take about 30-45 minutes. The KIIs aim to capture the project implementors' response on the School Meals Program and its various components. Their perspective, understanding and the impact of the program on the overall state of education, nutrition, health, and sanitation of the province 5, 6 and 7 of Nepal. Also, their efforts to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on project results will be noted using the KIIs. Their views on the way forward towards achieving a government owned school feeding program will also be captured using the KIIs. These KIIs will help us draw a complete picture of the program and how it has brought changes structurally through the involvement of the government.

Themes to be explored through KIIs are:

- *Structural/institutional changes brought about by the School Meals Program*
- *Government support and involvement/role in the program*
- Complementarity and coherence amongst all actors
- *Perspective and response on the impact of the programme*
- Synergy among the development partners and NGOs
- *Challenges faced while working with different partners/organizations*
- *Suggestions and way forward for program sustainability and scale-up*

Instructions for the Interviewer:

The following things should be kept in mind while conducting the KIIs:

Please make sure that the participant has consented to audio recording before turning on the audio recorder. Audio recording should not take place if the participant has not given consent for recording.

Please allow your participant to speak and listen carefully. Make sure they know that their opinions are very important to you and the project. If you think the discussion is losing focus, use your moderation skills to get back to the issue. The questions are not written to limit the discussion, but rather to keep it on track. There are no right or wrong answers. Though efforts should be made to follow the guide, skilled interviewers can change the sequence of the questions based on the flow of the discussion. However, each of the topics need to be covered during the discussion. The probes given are examples of the information we are interested in, but you can word them as you feel is appropriate. You are requested to use these pointers as a guide to start of a full-fledged discussion.

In the beginning, discuss the overall research program and how the current discussion will contribute to understanding how the program fared and can be sustained. Remind them that the discussion is completely confidential in nature – no names or references will identify the respondents during the study.

Introduction and consent:

Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to understand the changes brought about by the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program in the education and nutrition status of children and the impact of COVID on the same.

Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.

All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any questions. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.

Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and end interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)

7. Understanding of the structural changes brought about by the SMP

- *Can you please tell me, what is your opinion about the status of basic education in the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim region (province 5,6 and 7) and how, if it has changed over the past two years? (Probe: general overview of attendance and enrolment, if boys and girls both attend school, reasons why some do not attend school, community influence on education, girls' role in the family, external and internal migration of boys, community perception on girls' education, changes in the last two years in terms of school infrastructure, WASH, provision of midday meal)*

8. Understanding the Program design, roles and responsibilities

- *Can you please tell me how the USDA McGD program supports the government's national school meals program? (Probe: duration of the partnership between WFP and GoN, experience of working with GoN, learning from project used for policy advocacy or programme by* GON,*what activities are carried out by WFP and other project implementors, complementarity and coherence amongst program partners, primary role and secondary roles (if any), coordination between them, distribution of food (food based transfers), technical assistance and funding -(cash based transfers))*
- *How have the programme design and activities changed over the last two years? (Probe: factors that triggered these changes, benefits/disadvantages of the changes, response of the stakeholders/beneficiaries towards these changes, suggestions for further changes)*
- *What has been the effect of the change in governance structure in Nepal on each component of the McGovern-Dole Program? (probe: policy level changes and its implications across key program activities over the Programme duration, response of the stakeholders/ beneficiaries towards these changes, suggestions for further changes, Capacity of Government Institutions, Policy or Regulatory Framework, Government Support)*

9. Understanding of and perspective of the program and activities

- *What in your view were the activities that have worked well and were they in line with the needs of the beneficiaries in the region and which ones could have been improved? (Probe: school meal, WASH component, school infrastructure, early grade reading program (EGRP), digital literacy, (if any), how were the community/school needs assessed, response from the school and the community, modality preference and reality of community members)*
- *In your opinion, how has the program helped address gender specific (intended and unintended) objectives? - (probe: equal participation by women in implementation of the School Feeding programme, improvements in enrolment and attendance rate for girls, impact on the performance of girls, improvements in terms of girl friendly learning spaces, menstrual hygiene awareness and separate toilets for girls and boys)*

10. Perspective on various/specific components of the program

- ***Only for WE & OLE:*** *In your opinion has the teaching quality and involvement of the teachers improved over the last few years?(Probe: training to teachers, changes in teaching methods, change in participation, effect on motivation of teachers, achievement of the planned literacy outputs and outcomes (targets) at this stage(2018-2020), outputs and outcomes (targets) to be achieved in the final term of the project (2020-2022))*
- ***Only for IDS:*** *In your opinion, how have the WASH habits and practices of school going children in the community changed over the last few years? (probe: availability of toilets and water connection at schools, use of toilets at schools, practising hand wash, increase in female student enrolment in classes 6-8, reduced absenteeism due to medical reasons)*
- *Can you tell us if there is any direct and the indirect impact of this program on the local community? (Probe: community perception/receptivity, more footfall in schools, change in mindsets of community towards education especially in case of girls, voluntary community involvement and responsibility in the program through SMCs FMCs and PTAs.).*
- *To what extent have the local communities been engaged in the program design and implementation? (probe: equity and ownership amongst various beneficiaries, community engagement, role of local governance bodies, accountability by community members).*

11. Understanding the challenges faced during implementing the activities

- *What has been your experience of working with GoN MoEST, CEHRD and FFEP on the McGovern-Dole Program? Were there any challenges that you faced during implementation? (Probe: with MoEST, CEHRD, other project implementors, community challenges, programmatic level difficulty, internal and external factors that affect the program's ability to create a change)*
- *Have there been any other constraints that were faced by you that you want to flag off? (community constraints, cultural barriers, behavioural barriers, school infrastructure, terrain, any other, working with different partners, any other)*

12. COVID-19 mitigation and way forward

- *What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the community/ in the area? Who according to you are the worst affected by the pandemic? (Probe: impact of School closure on children, Economic impact on households, changes in household employment patterns, impact on literacy and food security)*
- *What is the impact of COVID on women and girls in the region? (probe: changes in living standard , health, livelihoods, willingness to return to school, engagement with PTA, FMC and SMC, changes in community perceptions on girl's education, changes in nutritional levels, accessibility to clean water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, program adaptations made es to help the women and girls in the region (if any))*
- *What has been the impact of the pandemic on the program and the impact that it had created? (probe:* ***alternative plans or mitigations strategies implemented to limit the effect of pandemic,*** *impact on different components of the program, changes in funding priorities, timeliness in delivery of services, effect on long term goals of the programs, suggestions to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on program implementation,* ***impact on the achievement of the thethethe McGovern-Dole Program outcome****)*

13. Suggestions and way forward

- *Are there any suggestions you would want to give on the following?*
  - *c. On the program component (Probe: specific for each component)*
  - *d. On improving the literacy outcome, enrolment and attendance in these areas (****For non-intervention schools****)*

- *What are you plans for the way forward and the next phase of the program? (Probe: plans for the next phase, change in priority areas (if any), reasons for the changes, what is the difference that can be made, resources requirement)*
- *What in your view is the position of readiness of the program for government to take it forward? (Probe: government support and promptness, future approach)*

Notes for the Interviewer:

Just as it is important to begin a discussion with respondents, it is equally important to close the interview. Close the interview by thanking the respondent respectfully and asking if there are any questions that she would like to ask you. Answer the questions honestly without promising too much or too little. Reiterate the purpose of the discussion and the confidential nature of the exercise. Thank the respondent for her time and cooperation.

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for GoN (MoEST, CEHRD, thethethe McGovern-Dole Program)

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) will be held with the officials of government of Nepal, mainly from the Ministry of Education science and technology, the CEHRD and the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program in the districts where the WFP (World Food Program) is implemented. The KIIs will be conducted over telephone and will take about 20 minutes. The KIIs aim to capture the GoN' response to the School Meals Program and its various components. Their perspective, understanding and the impact of the program on the overall state of education, nutrition, health and sanitation of the Karnali and Sudur Paschim regions of Nepal. These KIIs will help us draw a complete picture of the program and how it has brought changes structurally under the leadership of the government.

Themes to be explored through KIIs are:

- Structural changes brought about by the School Meals Program (WASH, EGR, DL)
- Government support and involvement/role in the program.
- Perspective and response on the impact of the program.
- Challenges faced while working with different partners/organizations.
- Suggestions and way forward for program sustainability and scale-up.

Instructions for the Interviewer:

Please make sure that the participant has consented to audio recording before turning on the recording function. Audio recording may not take place if the participant has not given consent for recording.

Please allow your participant to speak and listen carefully. Make sure they know that their opinions are very important to you and the project. If you think the discussion is losing focus, use your moderation skills to get back to the issue. The questions are not written to limit the discussion, but rather to keep it on track. There are no right or wrong answers. Though efforts should be made to follow the guide, skilled interviewers can change the sequence of the questions based on the flow of the discussion. However, each of the topics need to be covered during the discussion. The probes given are examples of the information we are interested in, but you can word them as you feel as appropriate. You are requested to use these pointers as a guide to start of a full-fledged discussion.

In the beginning, discuss the overall research program and how the current discussion will contribute to understanding how the program fared and can be sustained. Remind them that the discussion is completely confidential in nature – no names or references will identify the respondents during the study.

Introduction and consent:

Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to understand the changes brought about by the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program in the education and nutrition status of children and the impact of COVID on the same.

Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.

All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.

Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and end interview)

0= No (Thank you and end interview)

A. Understanding of the structural changes brought about by the SMP

1. We would like to understand your perspective on the status of primary education at the national level. Is the situation different for Province 5, 6 & 7 region? How? What are the key problems in education standards in this region? ***[Probe points: General overview of attendance and enrolment in schools; How is it varied across gender?]***

2. What is your perspective on the type of infrastructure present in the basic grade schools in Province 5, 6 & 7? Do you feel that the infrastructure provided to schools is adequate or needs to be improved? If so, what are the gaps that you feel are there? ***[Probe points: What are the sanitation measures (WASH) being provided and if those are sufficient?]***

3. How do you think has the situation changed over the last two years? Why do you feel there has been a change and what has led to it?

B. Understanding of the program and its activities

4. What is your understanding on the Government of Nepal's School Meal Programme? It will also be helpful if you could share your perspective on the USDA McGovern Dole programme? Do you feel that there was need for the USDA McGovern intervention? How do you feel it supports the GoN's initiative on SMP? ***[Probe points: What are individual features? What are the synergies and linkages between them? What are the mechanisms of provision of school meals? How are the provisions linked?]***

- To what extent does the programme complement other donor-funded initiatives and Nepal government programs? ***(Probe: presence of similar interventions in the region, how has the program added value without duplicating the efforts of similar interventions)***

5. What is your take on the outreach of the programme? Do you feel the programme has been adequately able to reach out to the correct beneficiaries? In case there are gaps, can you please highlight them and suggest possible means to address them? ***(Probe: Demographic, geographic and gender outreach of the program; Gaps in the target outreach; suggestions for increasing outreach)***

6. Do you feel the programme has been effective in its endeavour? How has it influenced the education and nutrition conditions in the region?

Education

- How do you think the programme has affected the educational status in the region? What aspect of the programme, do you feel, has been most successful in affecting the educational status?
- Do you feel that the impact has been equitable across genders?
- Do you feel there has been a change in the teaching standards and mechanisms in this region? What is the programme's contribution to it? ***(Probe: changes in the topics being covered, interest and motivation of teachers, teachers' capabilities to take up modern methods of teaching, use of Digital resources, use of alternate teaching methods during extended closure of schools due to COVID-19)***

Nutrition

- Do you feel that the programme has contributed to the knowledge about health and hygiene in the region? What aspects do you feel are different now? ***(probe: prevalence of malnutrition in the region amongst school going children, impact on absenteeism due to sickness/medical reasons)***

- How has the food preparation; storage and distribution changed now? (***Probe: cooking practices; use of clean utensils; use of proper equipment)***

Infrastructure

- How do you think the programme has contributed to the infrastructure in schools? ***(Probe: Availability of clean drinking water, classrooms, kitchen, storeroom in the schools, infrastructure requirements of the school, lack of infrastructure (if any))***

Gender based impact

- In your opinion, to what extent has the project affected the gender specific (intended and unintended) objectives? ***(Probe: equal participation by women in implementation the School Feeding programme, impact on the performance of girls)***

7. What do you think is the contribution of the programme in shaping up the role of local institutions? Do you feel the local institutions have created any influence on the approach of local communities towards education and nutrition? ***(Probe: presence of SMC/FMC/PTA in schools, role of Gaonpalika/Village municipality in implementation of the program, benefits to local communities)***

C. Understanding of the program impact on the ecosystem

8. What, in your view, were the activities that have worked and were they in line with the GoN strategy, plan and the needs of the schools in the community and which ones could have been improved? ***[Probe: quality of the meal, WASH component, school infrastructure, digital literacy; EGRP, SMMP & HGSF how were the community/school needs assessed, what are the response of the school and the community?]***
9. What is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability? ***[Probe: strategy for sustainability/exit strategy; policy alignment towards school feeding program food and cash modality, targets envisaged for full takeover of school feeding programme by the govt]***

D. Challenges that they faced during implementing the activities

10. How has been the experience of working with WFP on the school meals program? Were there any challenges that you faced during implementation? ***(Probe: with WFP and other program partners, EDCU at districts, other stakeholders, community challenges, programmatic level difficulty, internal and external factors that affect the program's ability to create a change)***

E. COVID-19 mitigation and way forward

11. What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the community in the intervention regions? How has the pandemic affected the education status in the region? Who (students, or school staff) are the worst affected by the pandemic? How has the pandemic affected students' learning and development? Are there policy initiatives to encourage alternative learning arrangements? ***[Probe: impact of School closure on children, Economic impact on households; changes in household employment patterns]***
12. In your opinion, would the GoN still prioritise institutional setup necessary for the programme handover and sustainability after the COVID-19 aftermath? ***[Probe: assistance needed after the COVID-19 aftermath to progress towards a government owned school feeding program, do you think WFP need to work differently after COVID19? If yes how and on what areas?]***

F. Suggestions and way forward

13. What would be your suggestion to: Are there any suggestions you would want to give
    - *On strengthening the program delivery* ***[Probe: The priority areas that Government is planning to focus on for the next phase, priority areas for WFP to work on in the end term (2020-22) of the program]***
    - *Did you face any budgetary concerns while implementing the program in the region?*
    - *On improving the literacy rate, enrolment in the region. How should the non-intervention schools gear up for enhancing education and nutrition status?*
14. Are there any new aspects that the NSMP would want to imbibe in its current form? What in your view is the position of readiness of the program for government to take it forward? ***[Probe: government support and promptness, future approach/capacity]***

Notes for the Interviewer

Just as it is important to begin a discussion with respondents, it is equally important to close the interview. Close the interview by thanking the respondent respectfully and asking if there are any questions that she/he would like to ask you. Answer the questions honestly without promising at all. Reiterate the purpose of the discussion and the confidential nature of the exercise. Thank the respondent for her/his time and cooperation.

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for thethethe McGovern-Dole Program officials

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) will be held with the officials of theprogram in the districts where the WFP (World Food Program) is implemented. The KIIs will be conducted over telephone and will take about 20 minutes. The KIIs aim to capture the response of officials to the School Meals Program and its various components. Their perspective, understanding and the impact of the program on the overall state of education, nutrition, health and sanitation in Province 5, 6 & 7of Nepal. These KIIs will help us draw a complete picture of the program and how it has brought changes structurally under the leadership of the government.

Instructions for the Interviewer:
Please make sure that the participant has consented to audio recording before turning on the recording function. Audio recording may not take place if the participant has not given consent for recording.
Please allow your participant to speak and listen carefully. Make sure they know that their opinions are very important to you and the project. If you think the discussion is losing focus, use your moderation skills to get back to the issue. The questions are not written to limit the discussion, but rather to keep it on track. There are no right or wrong answers. Though efforts should be made to follow the guide, skilled interviewers can change the sequence of the questions based on the flow of the discussion. However, each of the topics need to be covered during the discussion. The probes given are examples of the information we are interested in, but you can word them as you feel as appropriate. You are requested to use these pointers as a guide to start of a full-fledged discussion.

In the beginning, discuss the overall research program and how the current discussion will contribute to understanding how the program fared and can be sustained. Remind them that the discussion is completely confidential in nature – no names or references will identify the respondents during the study.

Introduction and consent:
Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal.
Our study aims to understand the changes brought about by the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program in the education and nutrition status of children and the impact of COVID on the same.
Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.
All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study.
Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and end interview)
0= No (Thank you and end interview)

G. Understanding of the overall context of education in the region

2. We would like to understand your perspective on the status of primary education in Nepal as a whole. Is the situation different for Province5, 6 & 7? How? What are the key problems in education standards in this region?

[Probe points: General status of literacy outcomes, attendance and enrolment in schools; How is it varied across gender?]

3. What is your perspective on the type of infrastructure present in the schools in the aforementioned region? Do you feel that the infrastructure available is adequate or needs to be improved? If so, what are the gaps that you feel are there?

[Probe points: What are the sanitation facilities (WASH) available and if those are sufficient? adequacy of class rooms, students teachers ratio, learning resources to students and teaching resources]

4. How do you think has the situation changed over the last two years? Why do you feel there has been a change and what has led to it?

H. Understanding of the program and its activities

5. What is your understanding on the Government of Nepal's National School Meal Programme? How do you feel the *thethethe McGovern-Dole Program* supports the GoN's initiative on NSMP?

[Probe points: What are individual features? What are the synergies and linkages between them? What are the mechanisms of provision of school meals? How are the provisions linked?]

15. What is your take on the outreach of the programme? Do you feel the programme has been adequately able to reach out to the correct beneficiaries? In case there are gaps, can you please highlight them and suggest possible means to address them?

16. Do you feel the programme has been effective in its endeavour? How has it influenced the Literacy outcomes , regular attendance, attentiveness, enrolment and use of health and dietary practices in the region?

Education

- How do you think the programme has affected the educational status in the region? What aspect of the programme, do you feel, has been most successful in affecting the educational status?
- Do you feel that the positive changes brought by the project has been equitable across genders?
- Do you feel there has been a change in the teaching standards and mechanisms in this region? What is the programme's contribution to it? ***(Probe: Is there a change in the topics being covered? Status of enabling environment for teaching learning activities, Are teachers more interested in teaching? Do teachers have the capacities to take up modern methods of teaching?)***

Health and hygiene practices

- How has the programme contributed to the knowledge about health and hygiene practices of school students in the region? What aspects do you feel are different now?

- How has the food preparation; storage and distribution changed now? (***Probe: cooking practices; use of clean utensils; use of proper equipment)***

Infrastructure

- How do you think the programme has contributed to the infrastructure in schools ***(Probe: Availability of clean drinking water; kitchen, hand washing stations etc.)***

Gender

- In your opinion, to what extent has the project affected the gender specific (intended and unintended) objectives? ***(Probe: equal participation by women in implementation the program, performance of girls, attendance of girls)***

17. What do you think is the contribution of the programme in shaping up the role of local institutions? Do you feel the local institutions created have had any influence on the approach local communities have on education and nutrition?

18. What has been the effect of the change in governance structure in Nepal on each component of the McGovern-Dole Program?

[Probe: policy level changes and its implications across program activities over the Programme duration, response of the stakeholders/beneficiaries towards these changes, suggestions for further changes, Capacity of Government Institutions particularly local government, Policy or Regulatory Framework, Government Support]

I. Understanding of the program impact on the ecosystem

19. What, in your view, were the activities that have worked well and were they in line with the GoN strategy, plan and the needs of the schools in the community and which ones could have been improved? Do you feel the programme has been effective in creating the intended impact? What, according to you, has been the programme's biggest achievement? Where do you feel the programme has lagged?

[Probe: quality of the meal, WASH component, school infrastructure, digital literacy; EGRP. how were the community/school needs assessed, what are the response of the school and the community?]

20. What is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability?

[Probe: strategy for sustainability/exit strategy; policy alignment towards school feeding program food and cash modality]

J. Challenges that they faced during implementing the activities

21. How has been the experience of working with the MoEST on the school meals program? Were there any challenges that you faced during implementation? (Probe: with implementation partners, GoN, CEHRD, other stakeholders, community challenges, programmatic level difficulty, internal and external factors that affect the program's ability to create a change)

22. Did you face any challenge that specifically is contextual to Province 5, 6 &7?

K. COVID-19 mitigation and way forward

23. What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the community in Province 5, 6 &7? How has the pandemic affected the education status in the region? Who (students, or school staff) are the worst

affected by the pandemic? How has the pandemic affected students' learning and development? Are there policy initiatives to encourage alternative learning arrangements?

[Probe: impact of School closure on children, Economic impact on households; changes in household employment patterns]

24. In your opinion, would the GoN still prioritise institutional setup necessary for the programme handover and sustainability after the COVID-19 aftermath?

[Probe: assistance needed after the COVID-19 aftermath to progress towards a government owned school feeding program, do you think WFP need to work differently after COVID19? If yes how and on what areas?]

L. Suggestions and way forward

25. What would be your suggestion to: Are there any suggestions you would want to give

e. *On strengthening the program delivery* ***[Probe: What are the priority areas that WFP needs to focus on?]***

f. On improving the literacy rate, enrolment in the region. How should the non-intervention schools gear up for enhancing education and nutrition status?

26. Do you feel the current funding allocation to the programme is justified or do you feel there needs to be budget reallocation? How do you think the reallocation should happen?

27. What in your view is the position of readiness of the program for government to take it forward?

[Probe: government support and promptness, future approach/capacity?]

- *How have the programme design and activities changed over the last two years? (Probe: factors behind these changes, benefits/disadvantages of the changes, response of the beneficiaries towards these changes, suggestions for further changes/adjustment)*
- *What has been the effect of the change in governance structure in Nepal on each component of the school meals programme? (probe: policy level changes and its implications across key indicators over the Programme duration, response of the beneficiaries towards these changes, suggestions for further changes, Increased Capacity of Government Institutions, Improved Policy or Regulatory Framework, Increased Government Support),*
- *What is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability? (probe: strategy for sustainability/exit strategy; policy alignment towards school feeding program food and cash modality; government has expanded up cash modality across the country, are you aware about it, how can we better integrate and effectively implement it, availability of stable funding and budgeting; institutional arrangements; provision of local production and sourcing; equity and ownership within various stakeholders ; established community-level systems of governance required for the successful implementation, targets envisaged for full handover of school feeding programme to the govt.) priority areas for WFP to focus for the preparation of hand over*

14. Understanding and perspective of the program and activities

- *What, in your view, were the activities that have worked and were they in line with the GoN strategy, plan and the needs of the schools in the community and which ones could have been improved? (Probe: quality of the meal, WASH component, school infrastructure,*

digital literacy; EGRP. how were the community/school needs assessed, what are the response of the school and the community)

- *In your opinion, to what extent has the project affected the gender specific (intended and unintended) objectives? - (probe: equal participation by women in implementation the School Feeding programme, impact on the performance of girls, improvements in terms of girl friendly learning spaces, menstrual hygiene awareness and separate toilets for girls and boys)*
- *To what extent does the programme complement other donor-funded initiatives and Nepal government programs? (probe: presence of similar interventions in the region, how has the program added value without duplicating the efforts of similar interventions)*
- *In your opinion has the teaching quality and involvement of the teachers improved over the last few years?(Probe: training to teachers, topics covered, any changes in teaching methods, have maintaining toilets, WASH facilities etc has influenced the interest levels of teachers, any increase in enrolment and attendance-)*
- *Can you tell us if there is any direct and the indirect impact of this program on the local community? (Probe: community perception/receptivity, more footfall in schools, change in mindsets of community towards education especially in case of girls, increased mobility of girls, voluntary community involvement and responsibility in any aspect of the program, ----)).*

15. Challenges that they faced during implementing the activities

- *How has been the experience of working with WFP on the school meals program? Were there any challenges that you faced during implementation? (Probe: with WFP, GoN, CEHRD, other stakeholders, community challenges, programmatic level difficulty, internal and external factors that affect the program's ability to create a change)*
- *Have there been any other constraints that were faced by you that you want to flag off? (remoteness of the region, limited transportation facilities, community constraints, cultural barriers, behavioural barriers, school infrastructure, terrain, any other, working with different partners, any other)*

16. COVID-19 mitigation and way forward

- *What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the community/ in the area? Who (students, teachers parents cook and storekeeper) according to you are the worst affected by the pandemic? (Probe: impact of School closure on children, Economic impact on households changes in household employment patterns health outcomes)-*
- *What has been the impact of the pandemic on the program and the impact that it had created? (probe: impact on different components of the program, changes in funding priorities, timeliness in delivery of services, effect on long term goals of the programs, suggestions to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on program implementation)*
- What has been the impact of COVID-19 on students learning and development? Are there any alternate arrangements that have been made for them? How effective do you think the arrangements are?
- *In your opinion, Would the GoN still prioritise institutional setup necessary for the programme handover and sustainability after the COVID-19 aftermath? (probe: assistance needed after the COVID-19 aftermath to progress towards a government owned school feeding program, do you think WFP need to work differently after COVID19? If yes how and on what areas?)*

17. Suggestions and way forward

- *Are there any suggestions you would want to give*
  g. On the program (Probe: specific for each component)
  *h. On improving the literacy rate, enrolment in these areas (**For non-intervention schools**)*
- *What are your plans for the way forward and the next phase of the program? (Probe: changes in the next phase, reasons for the changes, what is the difference that can be made., priorities for GoN)*
- *What in your view is the position of readiness of the program for government to take it forward? (Probe: government support and promptness, future approach/capacity?)*

Notes for the Interviewer:

Just as it is important to begin a discussion with respondents, it is equally important to close the interview. Close the interview by thanking the respondent respectfully and asking if there are any questions that she/he would like to ask you. Answer the questions honestly without promising at all. Reiterate the purpose of the discussion and the confidential nature of the exercise. Thank the respondent for her/his time and cooperation.

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide for Education Development Directorate under the Ministry of Social Development (provincial level)

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) will be held with the officials of Education Development Directorate under the Ministry of Social Development in the provinces where the WFP (World Food Program) is being implemented. The KIIs will be conducted over telephone or in-person (where possible) and will take about 20 minutes. The KIIs aim to capture the response of the officials to the School Meals Program and its various components. Their perspective, understanding and the impact of the program on the overall state of education, nutrition, health and sanitation of the Lumbini, Karnali and Sudur Paschim regions of Nepal. These KIIs will help us draw a complete picture of the program and how it has brought changes structurally under the leadership of the government.

Themes to be explored through KIIs are:

- Structural changes brought about by the School Meals Program (WASH, EGR, DL)
- Government support and involvement/role in the program.
- Perspective and response on the impact of the program.
- Challenges faced while working with different partners/organizations.
- Suggestions and way forward for program sustainability and scale-up.

Instructions for the Interviewer:

Please make sure that the participant has consented to audio recording before turning on the recording function. Audio recording may not take place if the participant has not given consent for recording.

Please allow your participant to speak and listen carefully. Make sure they know that their opinions are very important to you and the project. If you think the discussion is losing focus, use your moderation skills to get back to the issue. The questions are not written to limit the discussion, but rather to keep it on track. There are no right or wrong answers. Though efforts should be made to follow the guide, skilled interviewers can change the sequence of the questions based on the flow of the discussion. However, each of the topics need to be covered during the discussion. The probes given are examples of the information we are interested in, but you can word them as you feel as appropriate. You are requested to use these pointers as a guide to start of a full-fledged discussion.

In the beginning, discuss the overall research program and how the current discussion will contribute to understanding how the program fared and can be sustained. Remind them that the discussion is completely confidential in nature – no names or references will identify the respondents during the study.

Introduction and consent:

Hello, my name is _____ We represent a group of researchers studying the Food for Education program in your region in collaboration with World Food Programme, Nepal. Our study aims to understand the changes brought about by the McGovernMcGovernMcGovern-Dole Program in the education and nutrition status of children and the impact of COVID on the same. Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and is entirely voluntary. You and other participants in the study will only be identified by a study number, not by name. Withdrawal with no adverse consequences is possible at any time without having to give a reason.

All the answers that you provide will be kept private — only researchers will have access to this information. You may choose not to participate in the interview and can stop the interview at any time or ask me to clarify any question. There is no financial reimbursement for taking part in the study. Once again, any information provided by you shall be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. We request you to provide your consent to conduct the interview. Do we have your permission to do so?

1 = Yes (Thank you and end interview)

0= No (Thank you and end interview)

M. Understanding of the structural changes brought about by the SMP

1. We would like to understand your perspective on the status of primary education at the provincial level. How is the situation in this province different from the two other provinces, where the program is being implemented? Are there any differences between the different districts of the Province? Can you please elaborate on the difference? What are the key problems in education standards in this province? ***[Probe points: General overview of attendance and enrolment in schools; How is it varied across gender?]***

2. What is your perspective on the type of infrastructure present in the basic grade schools in the province? Do you feel that the infrastructure provided to schools is adequate or needs to be improved? If so, what are the gaps that you feel are present? ***[Probe points: What are the sanitation measures (WASH) being provided and if those are sufficient?]***

3. How do you think the situation has changed over the last two years? Why do you feel there has been a change and what has led to it? (Probe points: change towards the federal system and its impact towards the program)

N. Understanding of the program and its activities

4. What is your understanding on the Government of Nepal's School Meal Programme? Do you see any difference in the manner it is rolled out in this province vis-à-vis other provinces? How do the districts fare in terms of the rollout? What differences do you see and why? What challenges did you face in executing the School Meals Program (SMP) in your province?

5. It will also be helpful if you could share your perspective on the USDA McGovern Dole programme? Do you feel that there was need for the USDA McGovern Dole intervention? How do you feel it supports the GoN's initiative on SMP? ***[Probe points: What are individual***

features? What are the synergies and linkages between them? What are the mechanisms of provision of school meals? How are the provisions linked?]

- To what extent does the programme complement other donor-funded initiatives and Nepal government programs? ***[Probe: presence of similar interventions in the region/province, how has the program added value without duplicating the efforts of similar interventions]***

28. What is your take on the outreach of the programme? Do you feel the programme has adequately reached out to the correct beneficiaries? In case there are gaps, can you please highlight them and suggest possible means to address them? ***[Probe: Demographic, geographic and gender outreach of the program in the province; Gaps in the target outreach; suggestions for increasing outreach***]

29. Do you feel the programme has been effective in its endeavour? How has it influenced the education and nutrition conditions in the province?

Education

- How do you think the programme has affected the educational status in the province? What aspect of the programme, do you feel, has been most successful in affecting the educational status?
- Do you feel that the impact has been equitable across genders?
- Do you feel there has been a change in the teaching standards and mechanisms in this /province? What is the programme's contribution to it? ***[Probe: changes in the topics being covered, interest and motivation of teachers, teachers' capabilities to take up modern methods of teaching, use of Digital resources, use of alternate teaching methods during extended closure of schools due to COVID-19]***

Nutrition

- Do you feel that the programme has contributed to the knowledge about health and hygiene in the province? What aspects do you feel are different now? ***[probe: prevalence of malnutrition in the region amongst school going children, impact on absenteeism due to sickness/medical reasons]***
- How has the food preparation; storage and distribution changed now? [***Probe: cooking practices; use of clean utensils; use of proper equipment]***

Infrastructure

- How do you think the programme has contributed to the infrastructure in schools? ***[Probe: Availability of clean drinking water, classrooms, kitchen, storeroom in the schools, infrastructure requirements of the school, lack of infrastructure (if any)]***

Gender based impact

- In your opinion, to what extent has the project affected the gender specific (intended and unintended) objectives within the province? ***[Probe: equal participation by women in implementation the School Feeding programme in the province, impact on the performance of girls]***

30. What do you think is the contribution of the programme in shaping up the role of the local institutions? What role do you feel the local institutions would have on the execution of the SMP

in future? Do you feel that the local institutions have created any influence on the approach of local communities towards education and nutrition? ***[Probe: presence of SMC/FMC/PTA in schools, role of Gaonpalika/Village municipality in implementation of the program, benefits to local communities in the province]***

O. Understanding of the program impact on the ecosystem

31. What, in your view, were the activities that have worked and were they in line with the GoN strategy, plan and the needs of the schools in the community and which ones could have been improved? ***[Probe: quality of the meal, WASH component, school infrastructure, digital literacy; EGRP, SMMP & HGSF how were the community/school needs assessed, what are the response of the school and the community?]***

32. W
hat is the status of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability? ***[Probe: strategy for sustainability/exit strategy; policy alignment towards school feeding program food and cash modality, targets envisaged for full takeover of school feeding programme by the govt]***

33. According to you, is there a difference in the impact of the program in this province as compared to the other two provinces? How and why do you think the impact has been different? ***[Probe: participation of local bodies, different challenges as per province in implementation, cultural/ geographical barriers, demographic composition of the province, etc.]***

P. COVID-19 mitigation and way forward

34. What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the community in this province? How has the pandemic affected the education status in the province? Who (students, or school staff) are the worst affected by the pandemic? How has the pandemic affected students' learning and development? Are there policy initiatives to encourage alternative learning arrangements? ***[Probe: impact of School closure on children, Economic impact on households in the province; changes in household employment patterns]***

35. In your opinion, would the GoN still prioritise institutional setup necessary for the programme handover and sustainability after the COVID-19 aftermath? ***[Probe: assistance needed after the COVID-19 aftermath to progress towards a government owned school feeding program, do you think WFP need to work differently after COVID19? If yes how and on what areas?]***

Q. Suggestions and way forward

36. What would be your suggestion to: Are there any suggestions you would want to give
    - *On strengthening the program delivery* ***[Probe: The priority areas that Government is planning to focus on for the next phase, priority areas for WFP to work on in the end term (2020-22) of the program]***
    - *Did you face any budgetary concerns while implementing the program in the province?*
    - *On improving the literacy rate, enrolment in the province. How should the non-intervention schools in this province gear up for enhancing education and nutrition status?*

37. What in your view is the position of readiness of the program for government to take it forward? ***[Probe: government support and promptness, future approach/capacity]***

Notes for the Interviewer

Just as it is important to begin a discussion with respondents, it is equally important to close the interview. Close the interview by thanking the respondent respectfully and asking if there are any questions that she/he would like to ask you. Answer the questions honestly without promising at all. Reiterate the purpose of the discussion and the confidential nature of the exercise. Thank the respondent for her/his time and cooperation.

CASE STUDY GUIDELINES

INTERVENTION: Digital Learning (E-Paati) program

S.N.	Questions	Answers
1	What are the types of teaching medium used in the school?	
1.1	Since when has the digital learning intervention been rolled out in your school?	
2	Do you have any idea, how your school was selected for the intervention?	
2.1	How were you engaged in the process?	
3	What are the supports provided through digital learning intervention? (Probes: training 1. Digital Learning training, 2. Digital Learning content 3. Digital Library 4. Class room refurbishment 5. Furniture 6. Technical support 7. Computers 8. Others	
3.1	Has your school received equipment in sufficient quantity?	
3.1.1	How sufficient are these supports to the school?	
4	Have teachers from this schools are trained in using digital learning materials?	
4.1	Did you also receive the training	
4.1.1	? If yes, What were discussed in those trainings?	

4.2	How many trainings were conducted?	
4.3	Do you think the training on Laptop (E-paathi) capacitated your school adequately to implement the Laptop (E-paathi) program?	
4.4	If so, what aspects of the training do you feel helped you to conduct and fulfill your responsibilities well?	
4.5	What do you feel about the motivation and capacity of the teachers with respect to uptake of technology?	
4.6	DO you feel any difference in the manner teachers have responded to the programme based on age and gender?	
5	How is the school implementing the digital learning interventions?	
5.1	Please describe in detail (eg when do you use it and how do you use it?).	
5.2	What do you feel is the preferred teaching medium for teachers?	
5.3	Which resources are mostly used by teachers?	
6	How has it affected teaching quality?	
6.1	Has the Laptop (E-paathi) program affected your teaching learning practices? *Probe for:* Positive (Job chart and classroom rules) and negative answers?	
6.1.1	Positive Affect	

6.1.2	Negative Affect	
7	How have students been exposed to the DL intervention?	
7.1	How frequently do students use the digital means?	
7.2	How do you rate its usefulness to your school?	
7.3	What have been the key benefits from the DL intervention?	
8	In your experience, has the DL program made any effect on the children's learning?	
8.1	Do you see any difference in the performance of students because of the DL programme?	
8.2	What have been the added advantage for students who are exposed to the DL programme? Please elaborate. Probe for: positive (exam performance), and negative answers.	
9	What is the motivation of students in learning using e-paathi as compared to textbook learning?	
9.1	How has it influenced learning capacities/ interest of students?	
9.2	What is the level of participation of boy and girl students?	
9.3	Is there a difference between the manner they have taken up the technology?	

10	What do you feel about the capacity of the students in your school with respect to uptake of technology?	
10.1	How have they performed with respect to use of the digital means?	
10.2	What challenges have students faced with respect to using technology?	
11	Has there been any changes in the enrolment/attendance rate of the student following introduction of Laptop (E-paathi) program?	
11.1	Are the observed changes attributable to this program? How?	
12	Have you faced any problems/challenges/issues with Laptop (E-paathi) program ? (Availability of separate room for establishing lab (school infrastructure), colliding schedules with other subjects etc).	
12.1	If there are no problems, why?	
12.2	Is any support to solve such problems?	
12.2.1	How are they handled? How do you fix/repair such problems?	
12.2.2	Any support from Local governance structure/wards?	
12.2.3	Is it adequate?	
12.2.4	Does the school have to use its own resources for fixing such problems?	

13	What are the other contextual challenges that your school has faced while executing the intervention? *probe: access to electricity, internet connectivity, mobile network, ease of use of technology, quality of digital resources, technical barriers (if any))*	
14	Has this program received any support (technical, financial, materialistic, human resources, others) from program partner, SMC/PTA, local government?	
14.1	If yes, please elaborate.	
14.2	Are they adequate?	
14.2.1	If yes, How?	
14.3	Do you have any suggestions for them?	
15	Will the school be able to continue the program on its own without active support from DL program?	
15.1	If yes, How?	
15.2	What support it might need to do so?	
15.3	How you plan to arrange it?	
15.4	Do you think that it is the area which should be prioritized by the government?	
15.4.1	If yes, How?	

15.3	What do you suggest?	
16	Do you see applicability of the laptop and digital learning resources to teaching even after the program ends?	
16.1	If so, how?	
16.2	What can be done to ensure the sustainability of the use of these resources?	
16.3	What is your plan to transfer skills to other teachers ?	

INTERVENTION: **Early Grade Reading (EGR) Program**

S.N.	Questions	Answer
1	Since when did your school have an intervention on Early Grade Reading?	
1.1	Do you have any idea, how your school was selected for the intervention?	
1.2	How were you engaged in the process?	
2	What are being done as part of the intervention? Can you please elaborate?	
3	What were the key challenges with respect to EGR in your school before the intervention was rolled out? Why do you think these challenges existed?	
3.1	In your opinion which of the challenges does exist till date?	
4	What were the teaching methods followed before the intervention was rolled out for early grade students?	
4.1	What type teaching material were used before the EGR intervention?	
5	What are the supports provided through EGR intervention? (Probes: training (types of training, length of training, its content, things covered and not covered), teaching material, reading materials etc.).	
6	Have teachers from this school been trained in using the improved teaching materials?	
6.1	Did you also receive the training?	
6.1.1	If yes, how many trainings were conducted?	
6.1.2	What were discussed in those trainings?	
6.2	Do you think the training on improved learning materials (games, stories, levelled readers, charts, etc.) capacitated your school adequately to implement the new teaching materials?	
7	If so, what aspects of the training do you feel helped you to conduct and fulfill your responsibilities well?	
7.1	What do you feel about the motivation and capacity of the teachers with respect to uptake of new teaching practices?	
7.2	Do you feel any difference in the manner teachers have responded to the programme based on age and gender?	
8	How is the school implementing the EGR interventions? Please describe in detail (e.g. when do you use it and how do you use it?).	
8.1	Which resources are mostly used by teachers?	
9	How has it affected teaching quality?	

9.1	Has the EGR program affected your teaching learning practices? *Probe for:* Positive (Job chart and classroom rules) and negative answers?	
10	In your experience, has the EGR program made any effect on the children's learning?	
10.1	Do you see any difference in the reading performance of students because of the EGR programme?	
10.2	What has been the added advantage for students who are exposed to the EGR programme? Please elaborate. Probe for: positive (exam performance), and negative answers.	
11	Have there been any changes in the enrolment/attendance rate of the student following introduction of EGR programme?	
11.1	Are the observed changes attributable to this program? How?	
12	Have you faced any problems/challenges/issues with EGR program? (Teachers not motivated to use the materials; lack of support from Reading Motivators).	
12.1	How are they handled?	
12.1.1	If there are no problems, why?	
12.2	How do you fix such problems?	
12.2.1	Any support to solve such problems?	
12.2.2	Any support from Local governance structure/wards?	
12.2.3	Is it adequate?	
13	What role has the community (parents/SMC) played in ensuring success of the EGR program?	
13.1	How have the reading melas helped?	
13.2	What role in future do you see the parents playing in ensuring success of such interventions and enhancing reading level of students?	
14	Has this program received any support (technical, financial, materialistic, human resources, others) from program partner, SMC/PTA, local government?If yes, please elaborate.	
14.1	Are they adequate? How?	
14.2	Do you have any suggestions for them?	
15	Will the school be able to continue the program on its own without active support from EGR program? How?	
15.1	What support it might need to do so?	
15.2	How you plan to arrange it?	

15.3	Do you think that it is the area which should be prioritized by the government?	
15.3.1	If yes, How?	
15.3.2	What do you suggest?	

INTERVENTION: Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) Program

S.N.	Questions	Answers
1.	How is the school meal programme executed in your school? Since when has the HGSF programme been implemented in your school? Have you received any training or orientation to implement the HGSF approach? Do you think the training was adequate to capacitate you for implementing HGSF.***Probe further for how and why for both positive and negative answers.***	
2.	Can you tell us about its features? Can you explain how it synergises with the existing SMP? Is there a role played by the local governance in the execution of HGSF? How is the HGSF operationalised in your school and who are the stakeholders?	
3.	Can you please explain in detail how the HFSF is implemented in your school? What are the food items that are sourced under SMP? What proportion and what item are sourced under HGSF?	
4.	What do you think are the key benefits of HGSF in your school?(probes: its roles in facilitating access to education, improving the nutritional status of students, promote use of diverse, fresh, and locally available food items, benefits for small holder farmers and communities?	
5.	How is the engagement of parents, local government, communities, and other actors in home grown school feeding program? Please elaborate	
6.	What are the key challenges experienced while implementing the HGSF?	
7.	What aspects do you feel needs to be improved for the HGSF? Do you have any specific suggestions, experiences or lessons learned to be shared in relation to HGSF?	
8.	Would you like to share any experience/lesson learnt?	
9.	Any suggestion for us?	

INTERVENTION: School Infrastructure Development (SIDP) Program

S.N.	Questions	Answers
1	What are the types of infrastructure (boards/ water taps etc.) present in your school?	
1.1	What is the handwashing medium present?	
1.2	What type of cooking infrastructure is present in your school?	
1.3	Do the kitchens have adequate ventilation?	
2	Since when has SIDP/WFP support on infrastructure been operational in your school?	
2.1	How has SIDP contributed to the school infrastructure?	
2.2	What all infrastructures have been added through the SIDP?	
3	How do you think these have benefitted the school?	
3.1	What are the key changes that you see has happened after the SIDP (Probe: use of toilets; hand washing etc.)?	
4	How do you feel the SIDP has influenced hygiene conditions within the school?	
4.1	How has hygiene practices by students, teachers, cooks, storekeepers etc. changed due to SIDP?	
4.2	How have water-use and hand washing practices changed due to SIDP?	
5	How have the kitchen ambience changed due to the SIDP?	
5.1	Are there mechanisms in place now to reduce smoke emissions?	
5.2	Are there improved cookstoves being used	
5.2.1	If so, how do you think that has benefitted the school?	
6	Do you see any health outcomes due to SIDP?	
7	What are the challenges you have faced while executing the SIDP?	
7.1	Have you experienced any difficulty in sourcing infrastructure or getting people to adopt the infrastructure?	
7.1.1	If so, please elaborate	
8	Who is responsible for the maintenance of the infrastructure?	
8.1	How frequently is it maintained?	
8.2	Does the school receive any additional funding for maintenance?	
8.3	Is the extent of maintenance same as before SIDP?	

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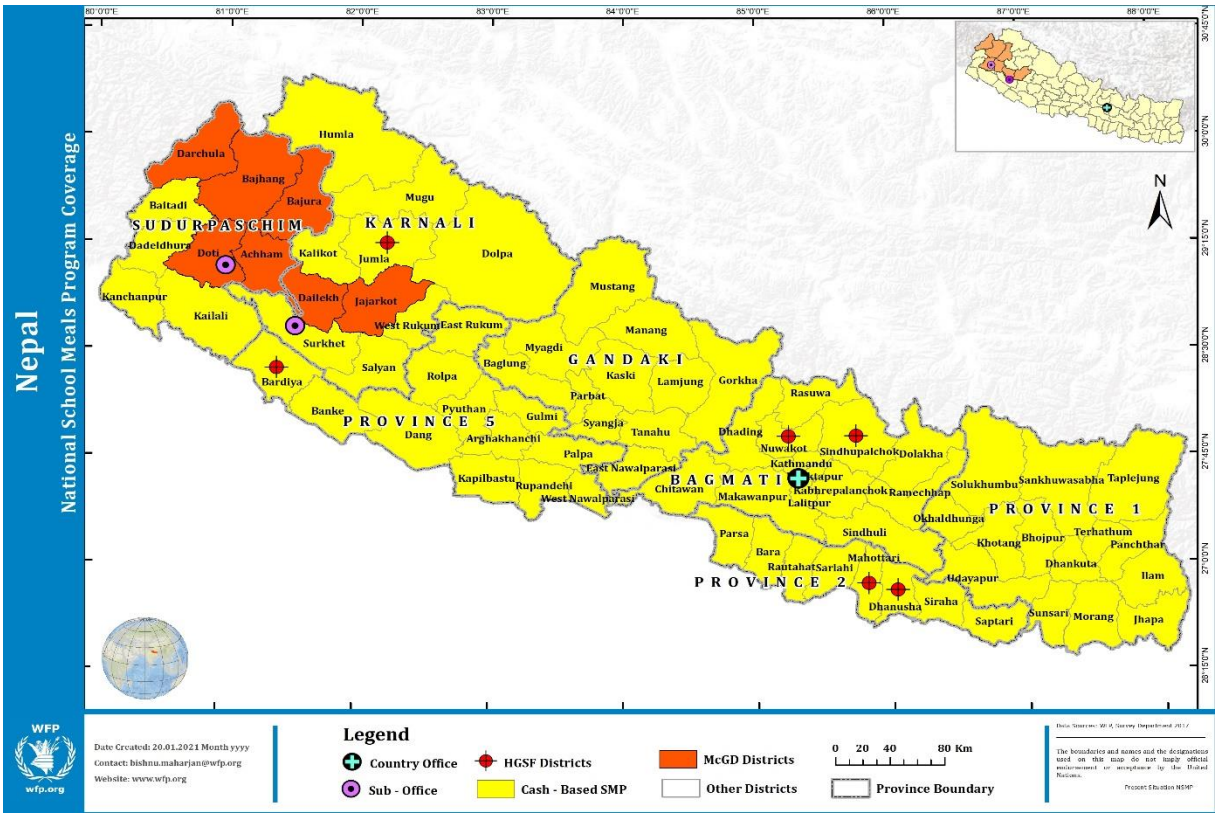
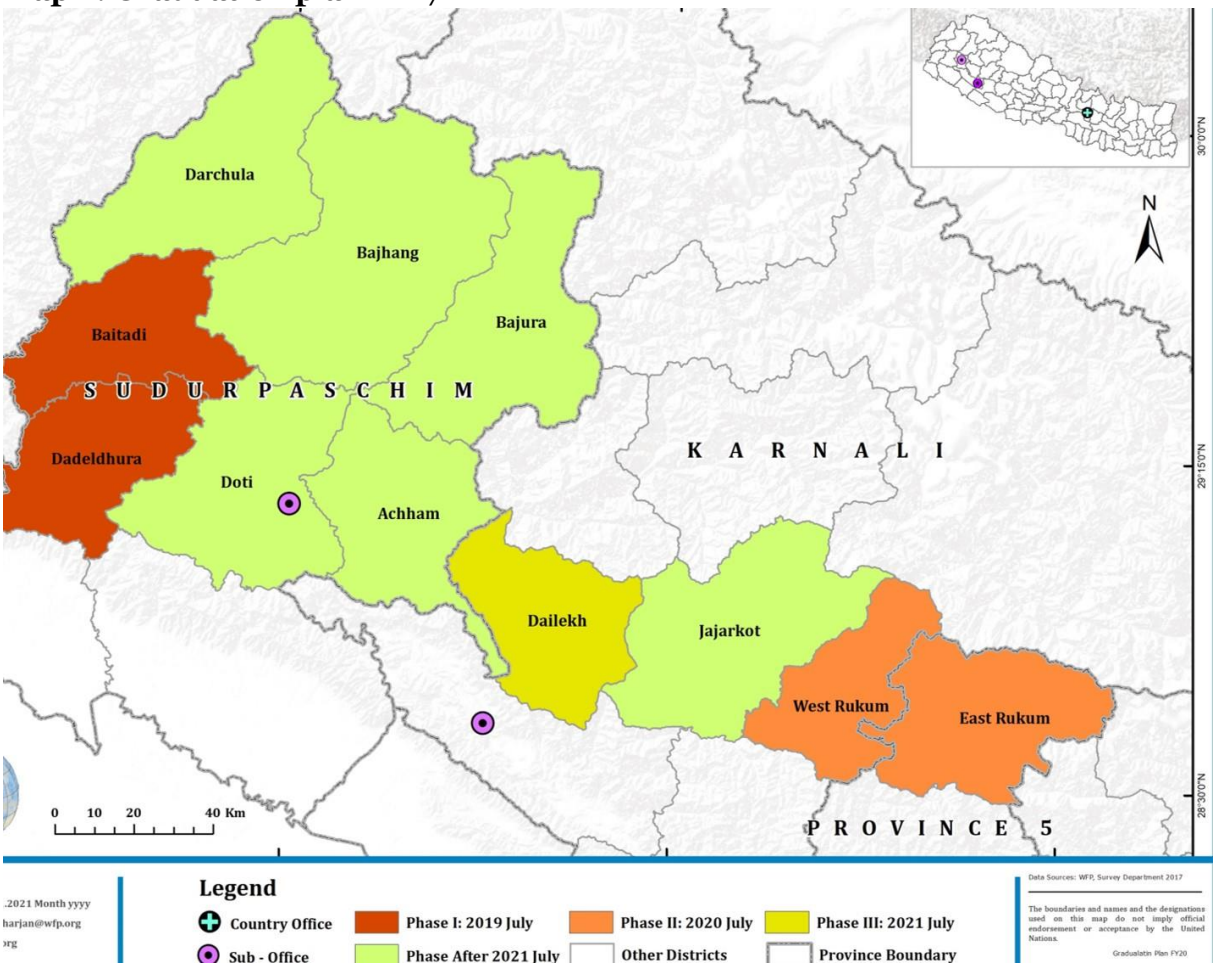
Annex VII: Maps

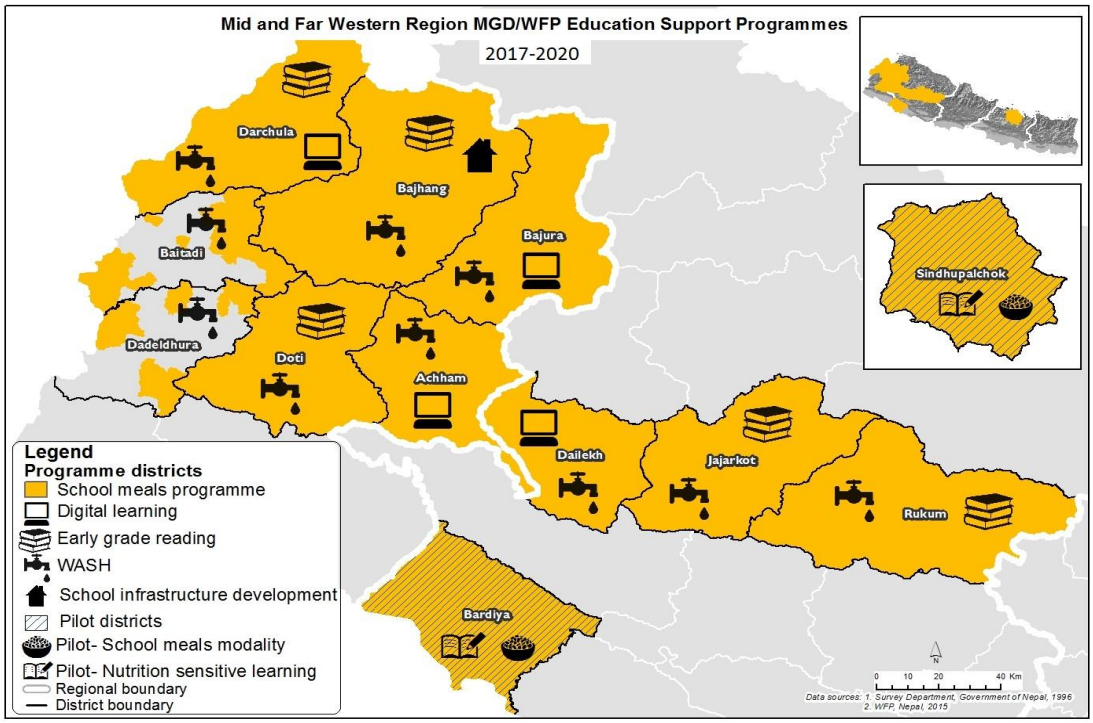
Map 1: Updated Food based and Cash based School meals programme



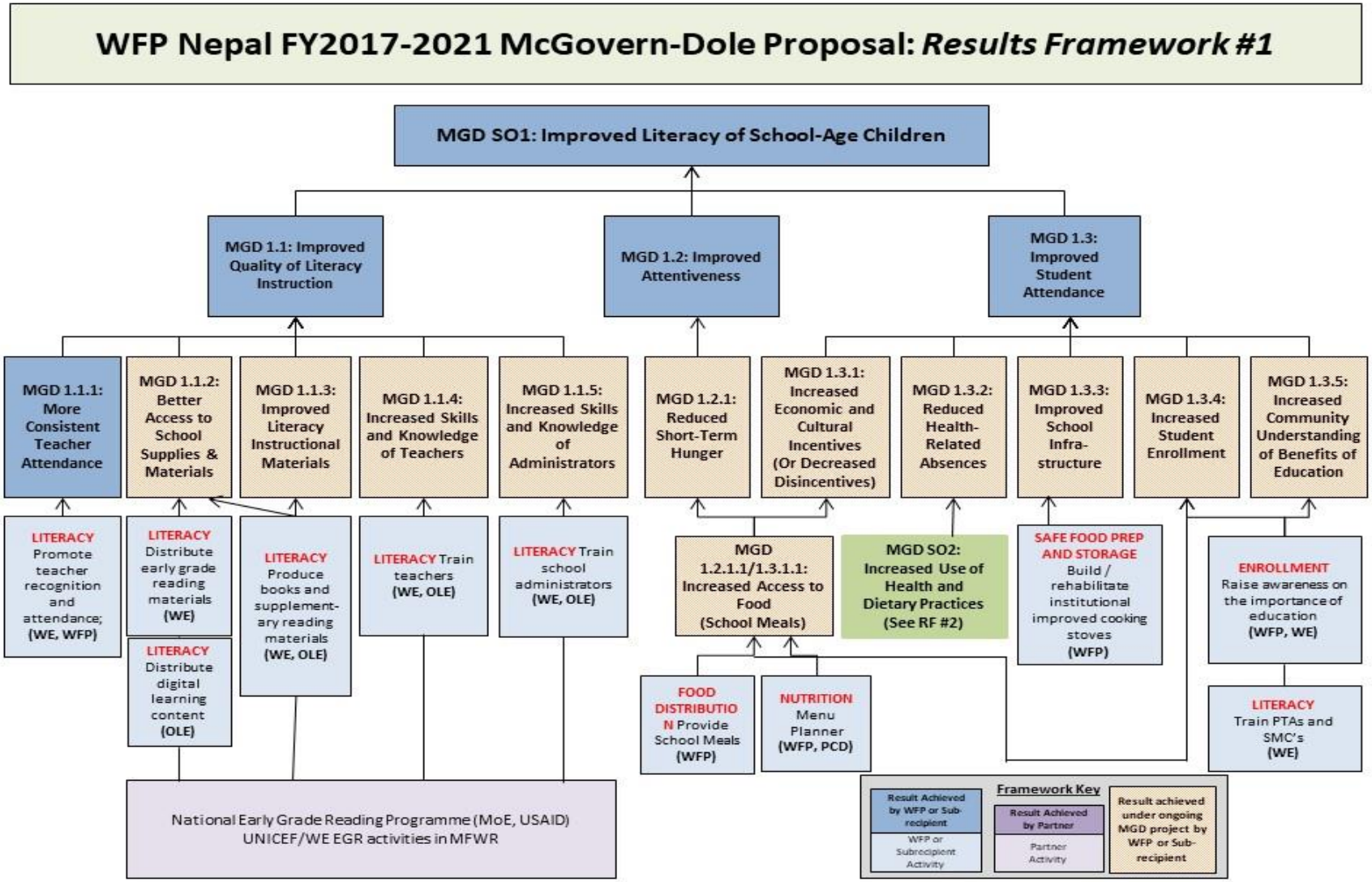
Map 2: Graduation plan FY17



Map 3: Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces MGD/WFP Education Support Programmes



Annex VIII: Results Framework



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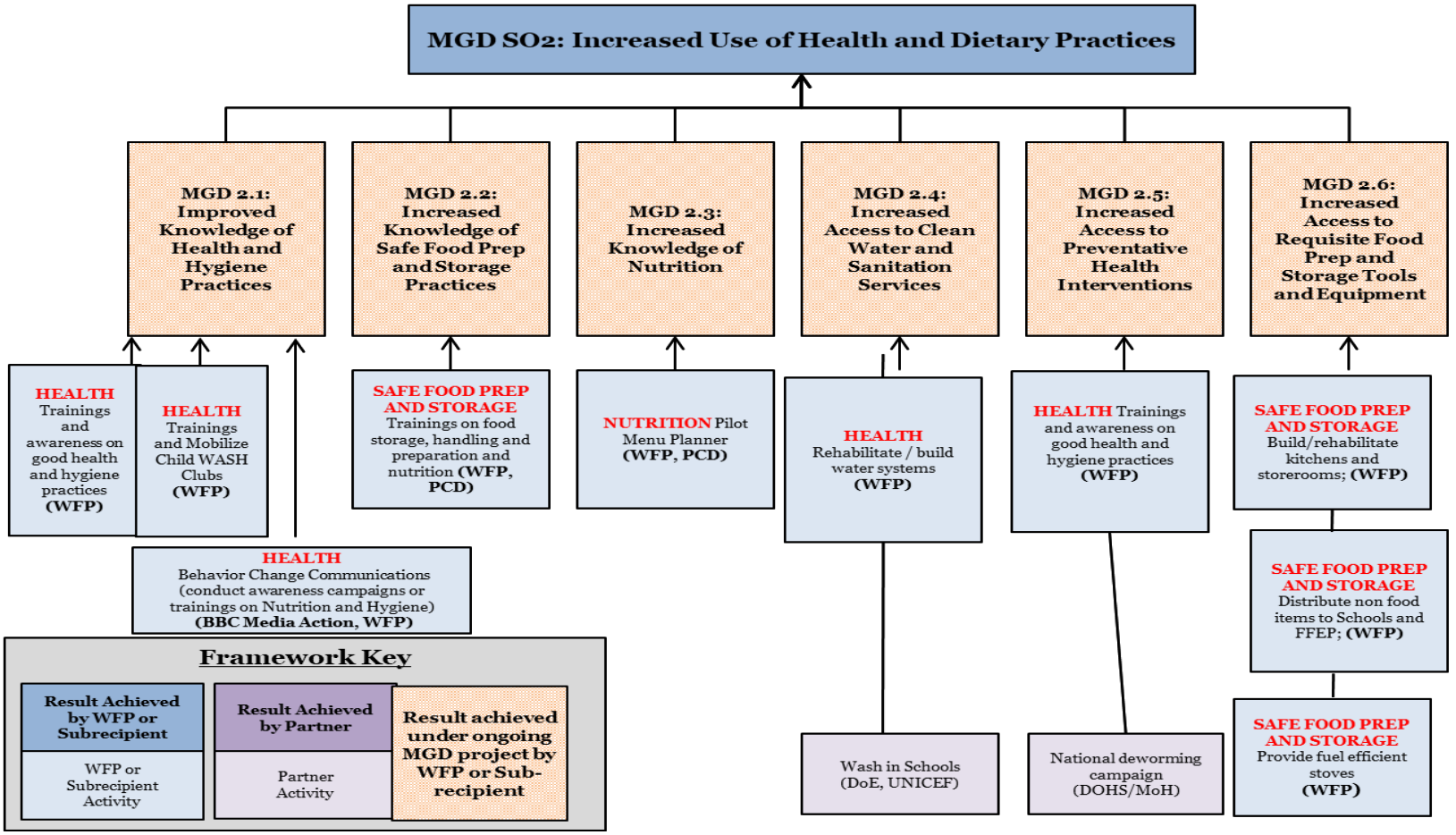

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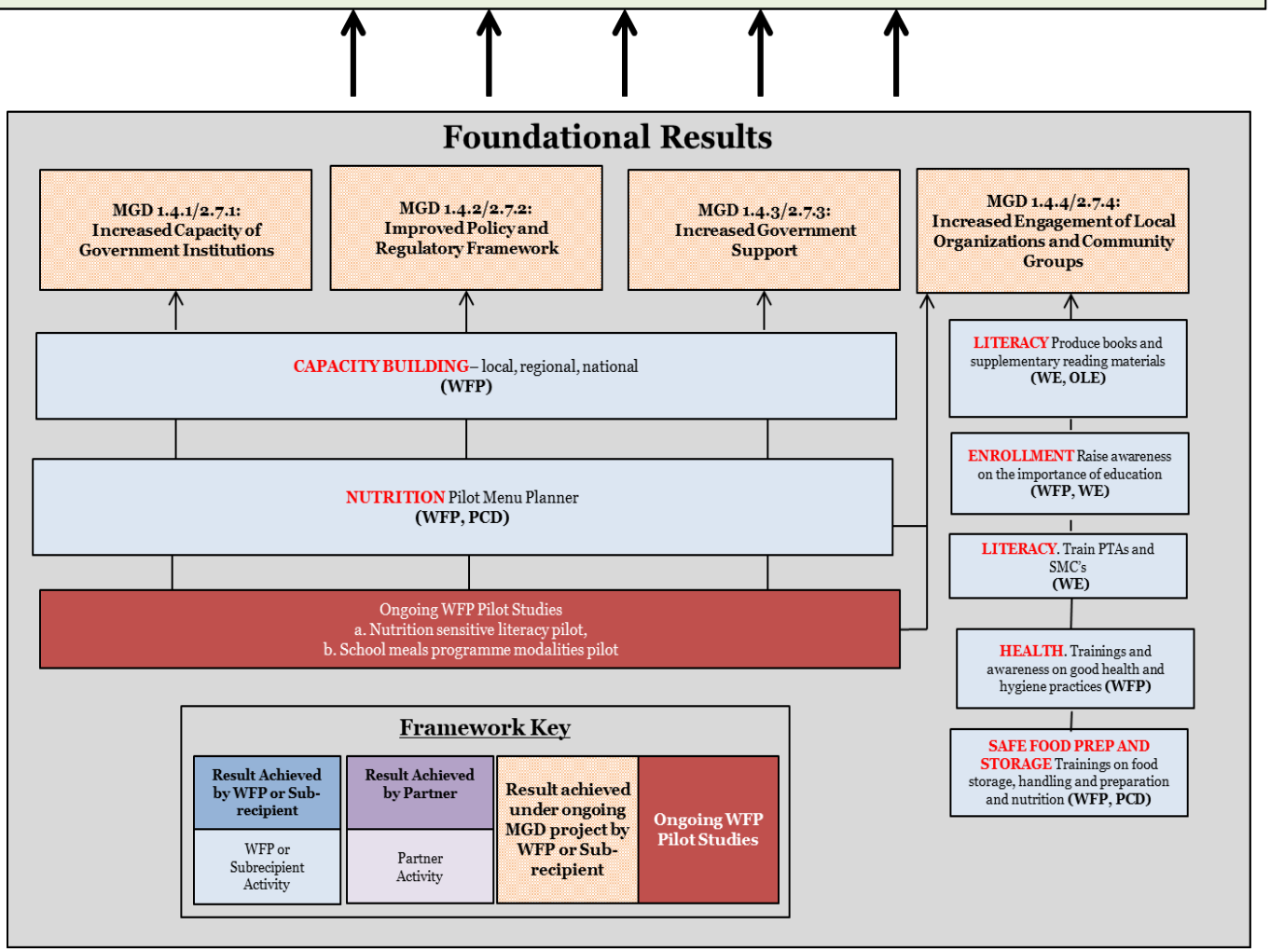


Annex IX: Case Studies

S.No.	Name of the school	District	M/RM
	DL		
	Nanigad Basic School	Baitadi	Dashrath Chand Municipality
	Kaladhunga Basic School	Doti	Sayal
	Ramchandra Basic School, paachkariya	Jajarkot	Kushe Gaaunpalika
	Bhagabati Basic School	Bajhang	Talkot Rural Municipality
	Himalaya Basic School-Tham	Darchula	Marma RM
	EGR		
	Kalika Primary School, Gari-2	Jajarkot	Nalgadh Municipality
	Adharbhut School, Jyamire-5	Rukum West	Sani BHeri Rural Municipality
	Himalaya Basic School, Gawang-2	Rukum East	Bhume Rural Municipality
	Shivabhawani Basic School, Tallo Bhatoda	Bajhang	Bithadchir Rural Municipality
	Durgeshwori Basic School	Darchula	Marma Rural Municipality
	Tedi Basic School	Doti	Dipayal Silgadi Municipality
	HGSF		
	Shree Teleshwor Nath Basic School, Parol Pichaiya tole	Mahottari	Balba Municipality
	Karuna Basic School	Bardiya	Bar Bardiya Municipality
	SIDP		
	Janata Primary School	Dailekh	Bhagwatimai Rural Municipality
	Khinnai Satyadevi Basic School, Bagarpaata	Bajura	Tribeni Municipality
	Sharada Basic School	Darchula	Malikarjun Rural Municipality
	Ganesh Primary School, Labisha	Jajarkot	Naalgaaun
	Bhumeshwor Basic School	Bajhang	Bitthad chir Rural Municipality
	Himalayan Janajagriti Basic School	East Rukum	Putha Uttar Ganga Rural Municipality, Bachhi Gaun
	Deep Jyoti Basic School	West Rukum	Saani Bheri Rural Municipality
	Akhanda Jyoti Basic School	Doti	Shikhar Municipality

a. Digital Learning (DL) Program

Name of the School: Nanigad Basic school
Name of District and Municipality: Baitadi, Dashrath Chand Municipality

The Nanigad Basic school in the Dashrath Chand municipality of Baitadi district, is a modest government school which, prior to the DL program, had been employing traditional methods of teaching.
In school, the students of class 2-4 are taught Mathematics, Science, English, Nepali whereas the students of class 5 are just taught Mathematics, Science and English. Apart from this, regular computer classes are also conducted for the students, as per the class routine. The school also has its own book corner with the provision of supplementary books for the students, which helps them to read and learn on their own and supplement classroom teaching.

Despite the availability of all the basic necessities required for classroom teaching, the head of the school thought of applying for the DL program, the main reason for it being that the students tend to show more interest in studies while using the Digital Learning resources, leading to better learning outcomes and increased acquaintance with digital technology. With this vision of the head teacher, the school applied for the Digital Learning program as soon as the application process was initiated by the *SajhaSikshya E-Paati*, in District Education Office. After the school was shortlisted, a survey team arrived at the school, interacted with the head teacher, SMC members and the program began in the month of 2072 B.S., as per the Nepali calendar, after which things started to change rapidly. The program promised to extend support to the school in the form of furniture and equipment for a digital lab, establishment of E-library and provision of internet facility. Program officials also conducted a one-day training for the School Management Committee (SMC) and the head teacher.

Since then, the digital learning program has provided the digital learning content, training, digital library, furniture and technical support whenever required. The provision of these resources has by far been sufficient in terms of meeting the students' demand. These resources have helped the school to conduct digital learning activities and impart knowledge using a combination of traditional as well as digital methods of learning. This has also improved the class organization and management practices. With the onset of the program, the Digital resources *(E-Paati)* have constantly helped to foster student development and have proven to be an efficient method for both teaching and learning. However, the effective use of these resources was only possible due to the efforts of the school staff, especially the teachers and the head teachers who were trained in using the digital resources. The teachers received training on topics like the digital learning methods, use of digital learning to aid traditional teaching, use of internet, classroom management and maintenance of the digital resources. A total of three training sessions have been conducted since the inception of the program. The training process has helped the teachers in managing the curriculum along with using the digital resources. It has also made them capable of training and orienting new teachers regarding the use of the DL resources. The DL program has also helped the teachers in other ways like eliminating the need to develop physical learning materials and helping to cover the curriculum on time. This also provides equal opportunities to the students and has resulted in an improvement in the degree of qualitative learnings amongst the students.

The school has a separate lab for digital learning activities. To make the best use of the DL resources (E-*Paati*), learning activities are conducted in groups of students based on age, gender and academic performance. Flexibility of timetable is ensured so that every class can access the digital learning lab, on each working day, at least once. The school also organizes joint monthly summary meetings, to discuss the progress and develop future strategies to implement the program. The DL medium has slowly become the preferred teaching option for the teachers. They use the laptops (E-*Paati*), projectors and related equipment on a regular basis.

Ove this period, the school has slowly seen better learning outcomes amongst the students with an increase in the rate of regular attendees over time. The rate of students who used to leave school after lunch, has also reduced considerably as more students are showing interest in learning. The admission rate has also gradually increased with the current enrolment rate being at cent percent (all seats occupied). The grades have improved too, which provides evidence for enhanced education outcomes amongst the students. The students have found the digital content easy to comprehend , which has made the learning process quicker. These resources also have some negative effect in terms of blue light emissions and lack of written practice. Therefore, it is important to keep a balance of classroom teaching along with the use of the digital lab.

The implementation of the program also comes with a set of challenges like shortage of electricity in the area, lack of internet and difficulty amongst students to understand mathematics using the digital medium. Apart from this technical problems always exist in terms of the use of technology. In case of a technical issue, program officials are contacted for advice who in turn direct the problems to IT professionals. Apart from this, security and maintenance of DL infrastructure and facilities has always been an issue given the remote location of the school.

Even though challenges exist in operational and behavioral aspects, the local government and the school management committee has always extended full support because of which the program has been able to achieve the desired outcomes. The local municipality has established a repair and maintenance fund of 25,000 NPR to look after the DL resources. Projector, printer and laptop has been provided by the municipality. The have also hired a computer teacher for the school. But support is still needed in the form of a stable Wi-Fi connection, provision of professional teachers and re-training of the old teachers to help sustain the program in the long run. Additional books in the library, projectors, laptops and furniture are some of the infrastructural needs which is crucial to attain the program vision. Along with this, active participation and support of parents, teachers and local communities is essential to help sustain the program in case of no external support.

b. Early Grade Reading (EGR) Program

Name of the School: Kalika Primary School, Gari-2
Name of District: Jajarkot, Nalgadh Municipality

The head teacher of Kalika Primary School had long been noticing that the students in early grades (class 1-3) were comparatively weaker in Nepali, than what an average school going student of that age group should have been. The school was already following the traditional methods of teaching like the explanatory method, exhibition method, question answer method and discussion method. The teachers used materials prepared by them or study materials bought from local markets, to conduct classes for early grade students. Despite following all the necessary protocols, the learning achievements for the early grade student still seemed lower in comparison to other schools.

Since the school was already benefitting from the school meals program, the head teacher decided to apply for the EGR program as well. The program began in the year of 2071, as per the Nepali calendar, and has been functional in the school since then.

Amongst the first things that were done as part of EGR program school, was the training of school staff and provisioning for a book corner with coursebooks and reference books. Post the training, the teachers in this school were seen using some unique and innovative techniques to teach the students. For example, the teachers often conduct classes using engaging games and tasks while also using songs and rhythm to make children memorise things. Apart from this, conducting peer group activities like group wise division of students in class and use of group library, has put emphasis on peer group learning. The teachers teach using the study materials provided by program and have started grading the students using a learning record table.

A total of three training sessions have been conducted in the school which included a six-day teachers' training followed by a two-day refresher training. The focus of the training was on two subjects i.e., Nepali and mathematics. Teachers were trained on how to conduct activities on letter identification, word identification, sentence formation, learning and understanding, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They were also oriented about the use of the teaching materials provided to them and use of different types of study materials as per the grade of the student. The training focused on the need to change the existing teaching techniques for children while also involving the parents for the holistic growth of the child at home as well as the school. The teachers were also guided on classroom management and conducting learning events like educational fair.

The impacts were soon visible as the students started showing greater interest in studies, increased involvement in the classes and regular use of the book corner. Teaching through games, story recitation and pictures, have had a positive impact on the children's creative and oratory skills over time. The educational materials provided for each class have helped the early graders to identify the letters and learn themselves. The use of pictures and games have made learning more effective, along with the use of songs, dance etc. which have promoted the importance of audio consciousness *(dhwani sachetna)* among the children. The students are now able to read and write freely while also answering questions and raising doubts in the class,

which clearly shows increased participation of children during classes. The students have started to learn faster and much more easily and effectively as compared to pre-intervention times. The school has also seen an increase in student's enrolment and attendance rate since the implementation of the program, which though might not be attributable to only the EGR program but can of course prove that there has been an impact of the program in bettering the learning outcomes like students' attention, attentiveness, and interest in the class. It has also made the teachers identify the problems that the students face in learning and then develop strategies to teach them accordingly. The teachers have been quite enthusiastic and motivated to teach the students using innovative teaching methods.

This transition was not easy and came with its own set of challenges. The learning ability of the weaker students was very poor, as compared to their better off classmates i.e., there was a huge gap in learning capabilities. Teaching wasn't done in a child friendly environment and very few teaching materials were used, which made the learning process very mundane and monotonous. The school had little interaction with the parents and the community while also lacking sufficient number of trained teachers to establish a communication channel between the school, parents and the community. This coupled with few appointments of permanent teachers in the school had made the situation worse. Things started to slowly improve as teachers were trained gradually and their work started to be monitored. They received refresher training and had access to teaching and learning materials like course book, syllabus, white boards, magical wall, sponge letters, word board, sentence boards and posters. The teachers now have a positive effect on classroom management and have also played an influential role in managing the curriculum. There is now a greater coordination amongst the parents, community and the teachers who all play their part in helping the children to learn better. The school also plays a role here to support the program by using and updating the learning record table, promoting use of the educational materials, using EGR trained teachers to train other teachers, coordinating with parents and providing them the student's progress report. Along with the school, the community has played a major role in supporting the program in the form of parents sending their children to school regularly, maintaining proper sanitation and hygiene practices at home and creating a favorable environment for the child to study at home as well as the school. The SMC has supported the construction of the necessary physical infrastructure, sitting arrangements and conducted regular monitoring.

Even though conditions have improved there are some operational challenges that hampers the real potential of the program to create a change. The teaching has not been as organized as expected, as some students still have low attendance rates due to the difficult terrain which makes it harder for some to reach the school regularly. Some teachers also face difficulties in using the educational materials, drawing connection between the EGR materials and the contents of the school syllabus and thus, have reported that it is difficult to use all resources in a limited time.

Therefore, to receive the fruitful benefits of the EGR program, the efforts of not only the teachers is important but constant support is needed from the parents, communities, school management committee, local government bodies and implementing agency. Parents must help their children to develop an interest towards studies and guide them to make timetable while also helping them to study at home. Greater number of teachers must be appointed with the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials to continue the innovative teaching techniques promoted by the EGR program. Arrangement to refresher trainings is needed to keep the teachers well updated. Preparation of educational materials using locally available resources, taking the help of the community if possible, might also prove to be a good strategy. The EGR program must be continued along with timely monitoring of activities, to develop future strategies and recommendations.

c. Home Grown School Feeding(HGSF) Program

Name of School: Karuna Basic school
Name of district and municipality: Bardiya, Bar Bardiya Municipality

The food management committee (FMC) of the Karuna Basic school is the apex body in the school which is responsible for the provision of the home-grown school meals to the students. The school has arranged for its own cook for preparing the meals for the students. The FMC contacts a local wholesaler, who collects the vegetables from the village and provides them to the school while making himself a profit of 10 NPR per Kg. on an average. The school also procures meat and eggs from his shop. All the food items were supplied by a local cooperative before the lockdown started but due to stalling of many economic activities during the lockdown, the school had to procure from the local wholesaler. The school also gets food items like beaten rice, rice, rice, lentils, bhujaa from mill and salt, oil and spices from the local shops nearby. The students receive different meals each day which are made with local ingredients. This process of procurement and provision of school meals has been continuing way since 2074 B.S., as per the Nepali calendar. The school hasn't received any training as of yet.

The home-grown school meals have led to an increase in enrolment and attendance of children. The dropout rates on the other hand have also gone down. With the locally available food materials, the children are getting fresh and nutritious food. The program has also led to an increase in knowledge about nutrition amongst the local communities. Parental and community participation has increased significantly. Because of the local sourcing of food as and when required, the problem of rotting of food items or spoilage has been completely eliminated.

Everybody from the local government to the parents, have played key roles in supporting the program. The local government has been playing the role of a mediator between WPF and the school. The parents are supporting by managing the firewood required to cook meals. The various other stakeholders involved are the cooperative which used to supply the food materials, WFP which provides Rs 15 per student each day on the basis of the attendance, rural municipality, and local government to coordinate between WFP and school, rice mill which supplies the rice and lentils and the wholesale store which used to provide vegetables, meat and eggs. With all this in place, the school suffices all its requirements of rice, lentils and pulses, vegetables, egg, meat and fruit locally using the HGSF program. A personalized school meals menu has been developed as per the availability of food materials, which is as follows: fried rice on Sunday, pulses and eggs on Monday, Maize, *Bhuja* and fruits on Tuesday, beaten rice and meat on Wednesday, *Jaulo* (pudding) on Thursday and chapatti and curry on Friday.

Since the implementation of the program, the educational outcomes of the students have been seen as improving. The school has noticed a constant increase in attendance rate and decrease in the dropout rates. Absenteeism due to illness and other medical reasons has decreased as the students have started to consume fresh and nutritious school meals, grown using locally sourced food items. This has also benefitted the local farmers, as the school has created a demands for local food items which motivates them to fill this gap and supply their produce to the school.

Even after having everything in place, some challenges still exist like the shortage of firewood, lack of storage facility, lack of sufficient utensils, meagre payment of the cooks and lack of trainings on how to manage and maintain the system. Apart from this, the per student allocation of Rs. 15 per day is barely able to suffice the needs of the students especially during particular seasons when certain food items reach sky soaring prices.

Some key areas where work still needs to be done are- the arrangement of a kitchen garden within the premises, increase in cook's salary and arrangement of firewood. The cooks, SMC and the local government need to be further trained on how to effectively manage the HGSF program in the school. Apart from this, construction of a storehouse at the village level and provision of extra utensils are some of the infrastructural demands that also need to be fulfilled.

d. School Infrastructure Development (SIDP) Program

Name of School: Janata Primary School

Name of district and municipality: Dailekh, Bhagwatimai Rural Municipality

The SIDP infrastructure support has been operational in operational in Janata Primary school since 2076 A.D, as per the Nepali calendar. The school has, since then, received support on construction of tippy- taps, compost dumps, seeds for vegetation, dustbins for every class, water filter, dish wash tools, soaps etc.
Currently there are four operational toilets within the school (two for male and female teachers respectively and two other toilets for boys and girls). Apart from this there are two dustbins for organic/composting waste and one for inorganic/non-composting waste, along with tippy-taps for students in the school.. The students can be seen washing their hands using soap and water on a regular basis. The program has also constructed cooking house/kitchen with adequate ventilation (four windows) and provided improved cook stoves. All of the above infrastructures (dustbin for every classes, installing tap, digging dump, etc.) have been added through the SIDP but with the coordination of IDS Nepal.

The systematic development of infrastructure within the school has led to the inculcation of handwashing, sanitation and hygiene practices amongst the students and the staff. With the increase in use of toilets, the necessity to keep the toilets clean is also understood by the students and staff. There has been an enhanced awareness amongst students about washing hands with soap and water, especially after using toilets and before eating food. The increase in awareness is also fairly evident as the classrooms are now being kept cleaner and tidier. Apart from this, the students have also developed the habit of consuming clean drinking water. The availability of clean drinking water, coupled with the use of improved cook stoves, has also affected the food preparation practices within the school. The proper disposal as well as segregation of waste in the composting and non-composting bins, are also some of the good practices adopted by the students and the staff. The teachers have played a big role in imparting the knowledge of sanitation and hygiene amongst the students. The storekeeper has also been noticed to show increased knowledge of these practices. The kitchen ambience has changed drastically since program implementation with availability of an improved cook stove, properly ventilated kitchen and a clean cooking space. The smoke emissions and need for firewood have also been reduced considerably, thereby creating a safe working environment for the cook.

There were no specific challenges faced during the implementation of the SIDP in the school. Although there were a few difficulties in the timely sourcing of the infrastructure, which was duly solved by the head teacher. The school doesn't receive any additional funds for maintenance, although the infrastructure is still maintained on a regular basis as it was being done before the program implementation.

Annex X: Inclusion of GEEW in the Evaluation

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) forms an integral component of the programme as well as for WFP. The FY2017 intervention has stressed on interventions that could have an indirect impact on gender dimension within the target group and the society. Program components have gender-sensitive indicators such as ensuring participation and involvement of women members in the school management committees (SMC) and food management committees (FMC). Through its WASH component, WFP has developed toilets for both boys and girls in some districts so that the lack of access to toilets does not hinder their attendance. At the community and school level, the programme aims to create a comfortable environment where discussions around girl child education can be initiated. The programme also aims to facilitate female leadership amongst teaching groups in the current phase. In the long run, in alignment with the government's structure of basic schools, a renewed focus on adolescent health, micro-nutrient perspective on reproductive health and strengthening of WASH facilities to address issues around adolescent health and reproductive health is planned.

Responding to the intervention, FY17 research design incorporates gender dimensions. Like in case of baseline study where the gender related outcomes were seen to be indirect results of the program, the WFP team has suggested looking into areas of enquiry pertaining to:

i. Inclusion of girl child in education; number of school days for girls; dropouts amongst girls and decision making for girls in case of dropout.
ii. Involvement of women in the management of SMP
iii. Health and nutrition of girls
iv. knowledge and practices on WASH (menstrual hygiene in particular)

The baseline results concluded that the SMP had positively influenced the gender dynamics of the community by encouraging education for girls and emphasizing on its importance. Utilizing different mechanism, the MTE will analyse the programme's progress on indicators stated above and if the programme has been able to build upon the improved gender dynamics.

- The MTE will ensure due importance to gender dimensions across all stages. Given the existing social structures and their impact on gender, our approach follows in Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEEW) principles, and the evaluation and sampling methodologies are designed to provide sex-disaggregated insights. We will be sampling 10 Grade III students, i.e. five girls and five boys, from each of the 90 schools in each treatment arm and from the 45 comparison schools. Alongside the quantitative analysis, the evaluation will adopt gender-sensitive participatory tools as part of the qualitative research component through FGDs, IDIs and KIIs so that the voices of women, girls, men and boys are sufficiently heard and used. The list of indicators, including gender-sensitive indicators, has been provided in Annexure VI.
- The execution of the MTE will also ensure appropriate sensitiveness during administration. Firstly**, female enumerators** will be involved in cases where gender-sensitive questions will be involved. Moreover**, training will be provided to the enumerators by gender experts** from the team to ensure sensitivity of questions are upheld, and boundaries are respected.
- At an analysis stage too, the focus will be on understanding the impact disaggregated across boys and girls (students), as well as the impact of specific girl student-focused interventions. Through adopting a gender-sensitive approach, the MTE will provide recommendations to address GEEW issues and priorities for actions to improve GEEW in school meal and child nutrition activity.

Annex XI: Stakeholders and Involvement in the Evaluation

Stakeholder	Interest in the Evaluation	Involvement in Evaluation	Key stakeholder
Internal (WFP) stakeholders			
WFP Country Office (CO) Nepal	Responsible for the planning and implementation of WP interventions at country level. It has a direct stake in the evaluation and an interest in learning from experience to inform decision-making. It is also called upon to account internally as well as to its beneficiaries and partners for performance and results of its programmes.	Focal point for operation Direct stake in the evaluation-decision making on the next steps of the project	-SMP program unit of WFP CO -Monitoring and Evaluation unit (Key-Informant)
WFP Regional Bureau for Asia based in Bangkok (RB)	Responsible for both oversight of COs and technical guidance and support, the RB management has an interest in an independent/impartial account of the operational performance as well as in learning from the evaluation findings to apply this learning to other country offices. The Regional Evaluation Officers supports CO/RB management to ensure quality, credible and useful decentralized evaluations	Responsible for both oversight of COs and technical guidance and support	-RB representatives (not engaged in data collection process) - Engaged in quality assurance and feedback on ToR, reports

WFP Head Quarters (HQ)	WFP HQ technical units are responsible for issuing and overseeing the rollout of normative guidance on corporate programme themes, activities and modalities, as well as of overarching corporate policies and strategies. They also have an interest in the lessons that emerge from evaluations, as many may have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus.	Responsible for both oversight of COs and technical guidance and support	-WFP HQ representative (not engaged in data collection process) - Engaged in quality assurance and feedback on ToR, reports
WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV)	OEV has a stake in ensuring that decentralized evaluations deliver quality, credible and useful evaluations respecting provisions for impartiality as well as roles and accountabilities of various decentralised evaluation stakeholders as identified in the evaluation policy.	OEV has a stake in ensuring that decentralized evaluations deliver quality, useful and credible evaluations.	-OEV Management representative (not engaged in data collection process) -provide technical guidance to CO, M&E and evaluation manager
WFP Executive Board (EB)	The WFP governing body has an interest in being informed about the effectiveness of WFP programmes. This evaluation will not be presented to the Board, but its findings may feed into thematic and/or regional syntheses and corporate learning processes.	Findings from the evaluation may feed into annual syntheses and into corporate learning processes	-WFP GB representatives (not engaged in data collection process)
Other WFP Countries	Other WFP Country Offices may also benefit from the findings, which can contribute to corporate learning on implementation of capacity development interventions.	Findings from the evaluation may feed into technical assistance and support of other country Programs	-WFP COs representatives (not engaged in data collection process)
External stakeholders			
Beneficiaries	As the ultimate recipients of food assistance, beneficiaries have a stake in WFP determining whether its assistance is appropriate and effective. As such, the level of participation of schoolboys and girls, and their parents, teachers and community members from different groups disaggregated by male and female, will be determined and their respective perspectives will be sought in the evaluation.	Primary respondents of quantitative and qualitative data collection Their perspectives will form the basis of the study and provide the necessary lens and direction on Program receptivity	(Engaged in data collection process) -Students -School Teachers, Staff and Administration -Community Members
Government of Nepal	The Government has a direct interest in knowing whether WFP activities in the country are aligned with its priorities, harmonised with the action of other partners and meet the expected results. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology will have particular interest in issues related to capacity development as the direct institutional beneficiary. The Food for Education Project (FFEP) and Department of Education are the main implementing partners. The Ministry of Health and Population's Family Welfare Division and the Ministry of Forests and Environment, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and the National Planning Commission (NPC) are WFP's collaborative partners.	The Food for Education Project (FFEP), Department of Education/ministry of Education are the main implementing partners.	(Engaged in data collection process) -FFEP representative -MoEST/CEHRD representative -MoHP, Child Health Division, MoESTP ,MoWCSW, MoALD, NPC
Local Government Bodies	The local government bodies will have an interest to know whether the program is on track even after change in governance structure	Nodal point in extending the programme	**Central Level** • Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) • Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD)

			• Food for Education Project (FFEP) **Provincial Level** • Education Development Directorate under Ministry of Social Development **District Level** • Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU) • FFEP District Unit under District level **Municipality Level** • Education Section
United Nations Country Team (UNCT)	The UNCT's harmonized action should contribute to the realisation of the government developmental objectives. It has therefore an interest in ensuring that WFP programmes are effective in contributing to the UN concerted efforts. Various agencies are also direct partners of WFP at policy and activity level.	Findings from the evaluation may feed into their developmental agenda	(Not Engaged in data collection process) -UNCT representative
Non-governmental organisations (WFP Nepal's cooperating partners)	WFP's cooperating partners – World Education Inc., Open Learning Exchange Nepal and Partnership for Child Development –collectively implement different activities (early grade reading, digital literacy, and school nutrition (digital menu planner) respectively for the McGovern-Dole FY17 grant cycle, at the same time, having their own interventions. They will be keen to know the findings of the evaluation; the results directly reflecting the efficacy of their work and through that, opening opportunities for continued collaboration. The results of the evaluation might therefore affect future implementation modalities, strategic orientations, and partnerships.	WFP's cooperating partners collectively implement different activities (early grade reading, digital literacy, and school nutrition (digital menu planner) respectively) for the MGD FY17 grant cycles, at the same time, having their own interventions	(Engaged in data collection process) -World Education -Open Learning Exchange -Partnership for Child Development -IDS -
USDA Food Assistance Division (FAD)	USDA has specific interest in ensuring that operational performance reflects USDA standards and accountability requirements, as well as an interest in learning to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions.	Findings from the evaluation may feed into annual syntheses and into corporate learning processes	(Not Engaged in data collection process) -USDA representative
UNDAF WASH group	UNDAF WASH group interested in evaluation to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions.	Findings from the evaluation may feed into annual syntheses and into corporate learning processes	(Not Engaged in data collection process) -UNDAF WASH group representative
Local Education Development Partner Group (LEDPG)	LEDPG including United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Civil Society and others under the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) supporting the government of Nepal's education sector plan and programmes.	Findings from the evaluation may feed into their developmental agenda	-LEDPG representative

Annex XII: Activity-wise Stakeholders Analysis Matrix

Component	Activity type	Stakeholder List
School Mid-Day Meal Program	Provide School meals to primary grade and basic grade students Provide training on food preparation and storage to cook and school staff Provide training on Commodity Management to storekeeper/school administration Provide training on nutrition and hygiene to school staff including teachers	MoEST, USAID, STC, SSRP/SSDPs, MOHPP, UNICEF (WASH), NCE, UNICEF (Education), WASH District Committees, RDEOs, NECD, Food for Education Project, UNICEF (Nutrition)
Literacy Support	Distribution of school Supplies (computers and teaching materials) Training of teachers/school administrators on use of digital and printed material Targeted events to increase community awareness and engagement on the importance of education Establish library corners and e-libraries	MoEST, OLE, WE, USAID, STC, SSRP DPs, UNICEF (Education), NCE
WASH	Support District WASH committees Establish school level WASH coordination committees Establish Child Clubs Capacity building and awareness generation of students and parents through trainings to school management committee members/schools staff/district level stakeholders Awareness generation campaigns on WASH	IDS, ,, UNICEF (WASH), NRCS, NCE, SSRP DPs, District WASH Committees
Construction and rehabilitation	Distribution of school furniture and equipment Provide kitchen and cooking utensils	NRCS, MoEST, UNICEF (WASH), NRCS, NCE, SSRP DPs, District WASH Committees
School Infrastructure	Building latrines, kitchens, water stations Providing energy saving kitchen stoves	GoN/AEPC, SSRP DPs, WASH District Committees, CEHRD, NRCS
Capacity development	Strengthening of the MoEST's ability to use the electronic Standard Report System (eSPR) Develop implementation guidelines for Nepal's national school feeding strategy Assist the MoEST and MoF in developing annual funding strategies for the NSFP including public-private partnerships and innovative government partnerships (These are dependent on the successful completion and full adoption of Govt school feeding strategy pending under the new federal structure) Capacitate the government to run home-grown school feeding programme. Organize study visits for key education officials as tool for learning	UNICEF (Education), WE, WFP

Annex XIII: Performance Indicators for Evaluation of FY17

Result Number	Indicators	LOP Target	Achievement till MTE 2020
MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of daily school meals (lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	120,694,365	63,691,076
MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of school-age children receiving daily school meals (lunch) as a result of USDA assistance	207,874	211,647
MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of take-home rations provided as a result of USDA assistance	855,461	798,562
MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of individuals receiving take- home rations as a result of USDA assistance	237,284	210,148
MGD SO1	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions	218,054	214,342
MGD SO1	Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	846,050	831,647
MGD 1.1.2	Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	2,299,782	1,955,844
MGD 1.1.4	Number of teachers and teaching assistants trained as a result of USDA assistance	1,456	1,451
MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials trained as a result of USDA assistance	3,120	2,859
MGD 1.4.4	Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) or School Management Committees (SMC) supported as a result of USDA assistance	2,003	2,003
MGD 1.3.4	Number of students enrolled in school receiving USDA assistance	21,815	21,815
MGD 2.3	Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance	2,759	2,598
MGD 2.5	Number of students receiving deworming medication(s)	175,052	136,999
MGD 2.4	Number of schools using an improved water source	760	542
MGD 1.3.3	Number of educational facilities (school kitchens and institutionally improved cooking stoves) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	231	60
MGD 2.2	Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	1,820	2,042
MGD 2.7.2	Number of child health and nutrition policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance:	2	2
	Stage 1: Analyzed		
	Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation		
	Stage 3:Presented for legislation		
	Stage 4-Passed Approved		
	Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun		
MGD 1.2.1.1/1.3.1.1/2.5	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance	210,874	214,342

Annex XIV: Sample distribution

The study adopted the same panel of schools as adopted during baseline. The objective of adopting the same panel was to ensure more rigorous comparison of results. However, the MTE could not capture the change in results. Instead, it focused on capturing the change in perception of results through semi-structured interactions with stakeholders such as head-teachers, EGRA trained teachers, cooks, storekeepers and parents.

However, the sample calculation has not been carried out at the school level. In line with the baseline school outreach, we reached out to 225 schools during the MTE (180 treatment and 45 control). Telephonic interviews were carried out with head-teachers, EGRA trained teachers, cooks, storekeepers, and parents of beneficiary students. The sample selection adopted during baseline followed the following approach.**Stage I-Selection of treatment municipalities**: Five or 20% of program municipalities from each district having various categories of interventions and schools were sampled[113] adopting a simple random sampling approach. After selection, the municipalities were further mapped against the required sample size from each category (by school type). In case, selected municipalities failed to meet the required sample size, fresh municipalities were selected. During baseline, the administrative unit were village development committees (VDCs). The same schools were mapped to their respective municipalities after the federal government was formed.

Stage II- Selection of schools: The same schools selected during baseline were re-selected for the MTE. Schools were selected adopting a proportionate random sampling approach during baseline. It is understood that the programme implementation has been modified by coupling all SMP intervention with the WASH intervention. This necessarily translates to the fact that schools identified in the baseline under SMP and SMP+EGRA categories are currently absorbed under SMP+WASH and SMP+WASH+EGRA categories. Hence, instead of five arms, like the baseline, the MTE had three arms: SMP+WASH; SMP+WASH+EGRA and Comparison. To ensure continuity of the sample, we consideredthe same schools as selected in the baseline. However, instead of 45 schools from each category, we had 90 schools in each category. That is, schools that were sampled under only SMP or SMP+EGRA category during the baseline will be considered as SMP+WASH or SMP+WASH+EGRA. This added to the schools originally selected under SMP+WASH category during baseline. A retrospective baseline on WASH was created for schools that were only SMP or SMP+EGRA at the baseline. The respondent sample frame in each school was created purposively based on the data provided by WFP i.e respondents whose telephone numbers were available. A random sampling approach was adopted for the selection of respondents from stakeholder category.

Stage III- Selection of comparison arm: Like the treatment arm, the comparison group comprisedof schools that had been selected, as comparison schools during the baseline. They were selected among the sampled *municipality*[114] under the treatment (intervention) group but had not received any support from the McGovern-Dole Program or WFP. Apart from controlling for the exposure to intervention, it was ensured that only basic schools formed the sample frame for the comparison school. From the already identified schools during baseline, the respondents were selected based on their availability for the discussion. The telehpne database prepared during the baseline was used as the frame. No replacements were considered for the selection

[113] The programme municipalities will be first arranged in the alphabetical orders and then required municipalities (not less than five municipalities) will be selected randomly from each district.
[114] VDC/ GAUNPALIKA during baseline

Annex XV: Data Collection Tools and Methods

Sl. No	Respondents	Research Instrument	Description of the tool
1.	Parents	Quantitative Structured Interviews	Parents will be interviewed to assess if and how household variables and covariates affect a student's performance at school. Informed consent also needs to be taken from the parents before interviewing the children
2.	Teachers engaged in teaching early grade	Quantitative Structured Interviews	To understand and explore what teaching and learning methods are used in the class, the level and type of teacher student engagement and on ground implementation of the project
3.	Head-teachers/principal	Quantitative Structured Interviews	To explore and understand the reach of SMP and its various components in the school
4.	School cooks and storekeeper	Semi-Structured Interviews	To explore the quality and process of cooking, maintaining stock and other related aspects
5.	Ministry of Education, Nepal	Key Informant Interviews	Insights on policy perspective from key officials at the Ministry. This is important to understand the relevance of the Program.
6.	Department of Education, Nepal	Key Informant Interviews	
7.	Food for Education Project	Key Informant Interviews	To understand the Program in an in-depth manner. Insights on the relevance, efficiency and sustainability will be gathered
8.	Department of Education, district offices	Key Informant Interviews	To elaborate on the understanding of the Program in each district and district wise differences and challenges
9.	Implementing partners	Key Informant Interviews	To understand the Program in an in-depth manner. Insights on the coordination, facilitation will be drawn for their respective component/activity

Annex XVI: COVID-19 adaptation approach

Given the pandemic situation and the escalation of it in program implementation and evaluation regions, it is assumed that in-person interactions and observational study will not be logistically feasible and may not be welcomed by community members. While the research design remains the same as proposed in the report (Section 5.3), the evaluation will undergo methodological adjustment. Adapting to the situation, it is proposed that 'remote' methods be used to collect data to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, coherence, and sustainability of the program. A mixed-methods approach using quantitative methods, such as structured interview schedule and school assessment results as well as qualitative methods such as in-depth-interviews) will define the data collection.

- **Telephonic/ Online interviews**: Barring structured interviews with children which require an in-person interaction, all quantitative structured interviews as well as qualitative interviews will be over a telephone or feasible online mediums with respondents such as teachers, principal, cooks, community members, government stakeholders and partner organizations. Given an already established contact built during the baseline evaluation between the data collection team and the teachers as well as the community members, telephonic/ online interviews will be made possible. Given the EGRA guidelines, EGR assessments need to be conducted through one-on-one interactions. The feasibility of which appears limited, given the COVID-19 scenario. It will not be ethically appropriate to conduct interactions with school students at such a juncture. We thus propose to conduct interviews with schoolteachers of Grade III and elicit qualitative understanding on the learning outcomes.

  Telephonic interviews will also be used for evaluating the light touch interventions of SSMP, SIDP and DL to prepare brief case studies. To understand the effectiveness and impact of the programs, interviews will be held, as planned, with teachers, local community, local government members and partner organisations.

- **Using existing school assessments results and records**: The process monitoring report produced by WFP in November 2018 shows that most schools maintain complete and correct records[115]. Given the reliability of data which has been ensured during the monitoring activities, we initiallyinitiallyinitially proposed to use existing school records like enrolment, attendance, and registration figures for all sampled schools to assess SO1.. However, teachers did not have access to the same as schools were closed during time of data collection and so existing school records could not be collected. With the EGR assessment being discontinued in the light of COVID-19, the school assessment records of children who have graduated to Grade III (10 children from each school; 5 girls and 5 boys) which be assessed to comment at an overall level.

Group	Tools	Treatment Group		Comparison Group	Total
		Arm I	Arm II	Arm III	
Combination	-	SMP+WASH	WASH +SMP+EGR	Non-program	
No. of schools	-	90	90	45	225
Assessment of Grade III EGRA students	School assessment records	900	900	450	2250
Head teacher interview	Telephonic/ Online interviews	90	90	45	225

[115] On an average, the attendance registers were available in 98% of the schools across the districts (range 82-100). Among that school where school attendance register could be observed, the proportion of schools with complete and correct record keeping was 79% and 77% respectively.

Cook interview	Telephonic/ Online interviews	90	90	45	225
Storekeeper interview	Telephonic/ Online interviews	90	90	45	225
Semi-structured interviews of teachers teaching early grade	Telephonic/ Online interviews	90	90	45	225

Respondents and Research Instruments for COVID adaptation

Sl. No	Respondents	Research Instrument	Description of the tool
1	Parents	Quantitative Structured Interviews	Parents will be interviewed to assess if and how household variables and covariates affect a student's performance at school. Informed consent also needs to be taken from the parents before interviewing the children
2	Teachers engaged in teaching grade III	Quantitative Structured Interviews	To understand and explore children's progress after analysing school assessment results and records, what teaching and learning methods are used in the class, the level and type of teacher-student engagement and on-ground implementation of the project
3	Head-teachers/principal	Quantitative Structured Interviews	To explore and understand the reach of SMP and its various components in the school
4	School cooks and storekeeper	Semi-Structured Interviews	To explore the quality and process of cooking, maintaining stock and other related aspects
5	School Committee In-charge/ representative	Semi-Structured Interviews	To explore impact of school and food management committee on SMP
6	Ministry of Education, Nepal	Key Informant Interviews	Insights on policy perspective from key Ministry officials. This is important to understand the relevance of the Program.
7	Department of Education, Nepal	Key Informant Interviews	
8	Food for Education Project	Key Informant Interviews	To understand the Program in an in-depth manner. Insights on the relevance, efficiency and sustainability will be gathered
9	Department of Education, district offices	Key Informant Interviews	To elaborate on the understanding of the Program in each district and district wise differences and challenges
10	Implementing partners	Key Informant Interviews	To understand the Program in an in-depth manner. Insights on the coordination, facilitation will be drawn for their respective component/activity
11	Teachers teaching early grade	In-Depth Interviews	To explore the perspective of the teachers on the Program and its various aspects, its impact and benefits to the students and to their teaching et al.

The overall approach taken up in the adaptation is to minimize in-person interactions. We propose to enhance the involvement of teachers, parents, and community members through remote methods. While the proposed methods capture our approach, there might be modifications based on the ground scenario in terms of mobile network coverage and other accessibility issues.

Annexure XVII: Details of MGD investment in Nepal

Partner	Awarded	Budget	Duration	Areas covered
WFP			4 years	
WFP	FY 2017-21	$29 million	4 years	Karnali (West Rukum, Dailekh, Jajarkot); Sudur Paschim (Accham, Baitadi, Bajhang, Bajura, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Doti) and Lumbini (East Rukum) provinces
WFP	FY 2014-16	$26.9 million	3 years	Mid (Dailekh, Rukum and Jajarkot) and Far-Western Districts (Bajhang, Baitadi, Doti, Dadeldhura, Achham, Bajura, Darchula,)
WFP	FY 2011-13	$18 million	3 years	Mid (Dailekh, Rukum and Jajarkot) and Far-Western Districts (Bajhang, Baitadi, Doti, Dadeldhura, Achham, Bajura, Darchula,)
WFP	FY 2005-11	$6.2 million	5 years	Rasuwa, Makwanpur, Nuwakot, Ramechhap and Udhaypur

Annexure XVIII: Distribution of students across interventions

Intervention	Pre-primary		Grade 1-5		Grade 6-8		Total		
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Total
SMP+WASH	4,311	4,425	22,593	25,545	3,381	3,911	30,285	33,881	64,166
SMP+WASH+SIDP	200	188	1,176	1,228	409	427	1,785	1,843	3,628
SMP+WASH+EGR	6,987	7,561	29,604	33,230	5,976	6,443	42,567	47,234	89,801
SMP+WASH+EGR+SIDP	464	542	1,974	2,347	366	431	2,804	3,320	6,124
SMP+WASH+EGR+DL	674	751	3,030	3,517	8	10	3,712	4,278	7,990
SMP+WASH+EGR+DL+SIDP	146	131	537	591	-	-	683	722	1,405
Total	**12,782**	**13,598**	**58,914**	**66,458**	**10,140**	**11,222**	**81,836**	**91,278**	**173,114**

Annexure XIX: Key program component modifications

Component	Implementation partner	Partner type	Key change in implementation[116]
SMP	CEHRD, GoN	Government	The SMP in the session 2075/76 will focus on 1,591 schools across 9 districts, with 2 districts having transitioned to the government cash-based program
WASH	Integrated Development Society	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	The three-star approach for WASH has been implemented in 9 program districts, in schools where SMP is functional
EGRP	World Education	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	Collectively the intervention is covering select schools in 8 of the 9 school meals districts (Achham, Bajura, Bajhang, Darchula, Doti, Jajarkot, Rukum East and Rukum West).
DL	Open Learning Exchange, Nepal	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	
SMMPP and HGSF	Partnership for Child Development	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	WFP is adapting the SMMPP to the Nepal context and implementing the approach in 8 of the existing cash-based SMP districts in consultation with CEHRD and will later be expanded to other NSMP districts.

[116] USDA, 2020. *Annual Work Plan*. McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Nutrition Program. USDA.

Annexure XX: Survey protocol

1. Introduction

A. Context of Study

The data collection protocol is for the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole (MGD) Food for Education and Child NutritionFY17-FY20 award cycle (referred to as FY17) in selected food insecure rural and urban municipalities of 11 districts across Provinces 5, 6 and 7, commissioned by the World Food Program, Nepal Country Office. The MTW will be conducted between November 2020 to March 2021.

In line with previous USDA MGD Grants, World Food Program had commenced its third phase with two strategic objectives of **Improved literacy among school-age children (SO1) and Increased use of health and dietary practices (SO2).** The objective of the MTE is to provide relevant feedback to the WFP on the key changes that FY17 grant has been able to bring forth and act as a feed forward mechanism for the implementation of the third phase of the program.

B. Data collection approach

The MTE follows the MGD baseline design conducted in 2018. The baseline involved in-person interactions with all stakeholders including a large-scale sample survey of early grade three students to understand their learning outcomes. While the MTE was initially designed to adopt the same approach, the COVID-19 pandemic led to significant delays and modifications in the MTE research design and approach.

Given the pandemic situation and the escalation of it in program implementation and evaluation regions, in-person interactions have been modified to remote mechanisms of data collection. Considering this, observational studies and interactions with students have been dropped in the MTE. Remote means of data collection will be administered to other key stakeholders including head teachers, teachers, cooks, storekeepers, and parents. Simultaneously, interactions will be carried out with WFP MGD implementation partners, as well as government stakeholders.

This document lays down specific guidelines for conducting remote telephonic interviews for MTE.

2. Research approach & methodology

The MTE, like the baseline, will adopt a quasi-experimental design. The quasi-experimental design will necessarily have two groups: a treatment group and a comparison group. Schools covered under the programme will form the treatment group while schools not covered under the programme but from the same districts will constitute the comparison group. The study adopts a longitudinal panel with schools from the baseline selected for interactions. Telephone numbers of the stakeholders have been sought from WFP and will be interacted with.

A mixed-methods approach relying more on qualitative means of enquiry will be adopted. With the primary level stakeholders (stakeholders in direct interface with program delivery), we propose to carry out semi-structured interviews while key informant interviews will be carried out with secondary level stakeholders (stakeholders involved in program strategy).

The quantitative component of the study will be carried out with school representatives. However, the sample calculation has not been carried out at the school level. In line with the baseline school outreach, we propose to reach out to 225 schools during the MTE (180 treatment and 45 control). Telephonic interviews will be carried out with head-teachers, EGRA trained teachers, cooks, storekeepers, and parents of beneficiary students. The quantitative arm will adopt a purposive sampling approach to ensure adequate sample coverage.

Qualitative assessments, on the other hand, will be critical to understanding the relevance and effect of the programme design and implementation mechanism. It will also help comprehend whether the programme responds to the needs of the target community. Key informant interviews (KIIs) over telephone will be used for the qualitative deep dives across stakeholders selected purposively. The KIIs will be conducted with local government representatives as well as program partner to assess the on-ground implementation of the school feeding programme. A key element of the KIIs will be to assess whether the programme outreach has been equitably extended to all socio-economic groups and gender. While the quantitative survey will provide numbers, the KIIs will help delineate the change process or uptake process of the programme across the targeted beneficiaries. Interactions with local government

representatives will help understand the equity focus approach of the programme. Using thematic and content analysis of the qualitative data, the MTE aims to comment on sustainability and scalability of the programme as much possible.

A. Research tools

1. Quantitative

In light of the difficulty of conducting in person interactions, we did not interviewg children for the MTE. Semi-structured research tools administered with head teachers, teachers, storekeeper and cooks helped understand program achievements and at school level and interviews with parents helped understand their perception of the impact of the program on child's literacy, health and nutrition. The tools, while covering the basic characteristics, cover the modalities of the SMP, WASH and EGR wherever applicable. The questions are largely perception based, which try to capture the respondents view of the impact of the program over time on the health and literacy status of children, their own personal development (in case of head teacher, teacher, cook and storekeeper) and the indirect impact on the community at large. The tools will also capture the impact of COVID on the different components of program intervention as well as on the community (refer to Annex I for key areas covered).

One respondent per category for each school were attempted for Head teachers, Teachers, Storekeepers, Cooks. In case of Parents, interviews two interviews per school were attempted. Table (1) below outlines the overall sample distribution for the study. An intervention/control school will be the primary sampling unit for this study. There are five respondent categories from each school, who will be interviewed for the purpose of the study which are as follows:

Table 1: Overall sample distribution for the study

Group		**Treatment Group**		**Comparison Group**	**Total**
	# per school	**Arm I**	**Arm II**	**Arm III**	
Combination		SMP+WASH	WASH +SMP+EGR	Non-program	
No. of schools		90	90	45	225
Parents	2	180	180	90	450
Head teacher	1	90	90	45	225
Cook	1	90	90	-	180
Storekeeper	1	90	90	-	180
Teachers teaching early grade	1	90	90	45	225

2. Qualitative

Key informant interviews (KIIs) over telephone will be used for the qualitative deep dives across stakeholders selected purposively with different partners like-World Education, Open Learning Exchange, Partnership for Child Development, IDS, CHD, including government officials like MoEST/CEHRD representative MoHP, Child Health Division, MoESTP ,MoWCSW, MoALD, NPC and representatives of local government bodies at the central, provincial, district and municipality level.

S.NO.	**Stakeholder**	**Research Tool**	**Number of Interviews**
1.	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Nepal	Key Informant Interviews	2
2.	Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD)	Key Informant Interviews	2
3.	Education Development under Provincial Level	Key Informant Interviews	2
4.	Directorate under Ministry of Social Development	Key Informant Interviews	1
5.	Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU)	Key Informant Interviews	1
6.	Municipality Level Education Section	Key Informant Interviews	1
7.	Food for Education and Child Nutrition project	Key Informant Interviews	3-4
8.	Department of Education, district offices	Key Informant Interviews	1 per district

S.NO.	Stakeholder	Research Tool	Number of Interviews
9.	Implementing partners like-World Education, Open Learning Exchange, Partnership for Child Development, IDS,	Key Informant Interviews	1 per implementing partner

Along with the key intervention combinations, the programme also carries out light-touch interventions at a smaller scale. We will carry out case study-based assessment exercises for each of these interventions

- School Meal Menu Planner (SMMP) and the Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) programme: Baitadi and Daldeldhura have transitioned from WFP's in-kind SMP programme to the government's cash-based programme. In one municipality of both the districts, PCD has been implementing the SMMP programme while facilitating linkages with local producers for homegrown produce for school feeding. A case study approach will be adopted to document best practices, lessons learnt and areas of improvement. One school from each district will be selected in consultation with WFP CO and key stakeholders will be contacted and information will be collected through telephonic interviews. Previous monitoring, evaluation, and other studies by partner organisations will be analysed and data will be triangulated to construct a narrative.

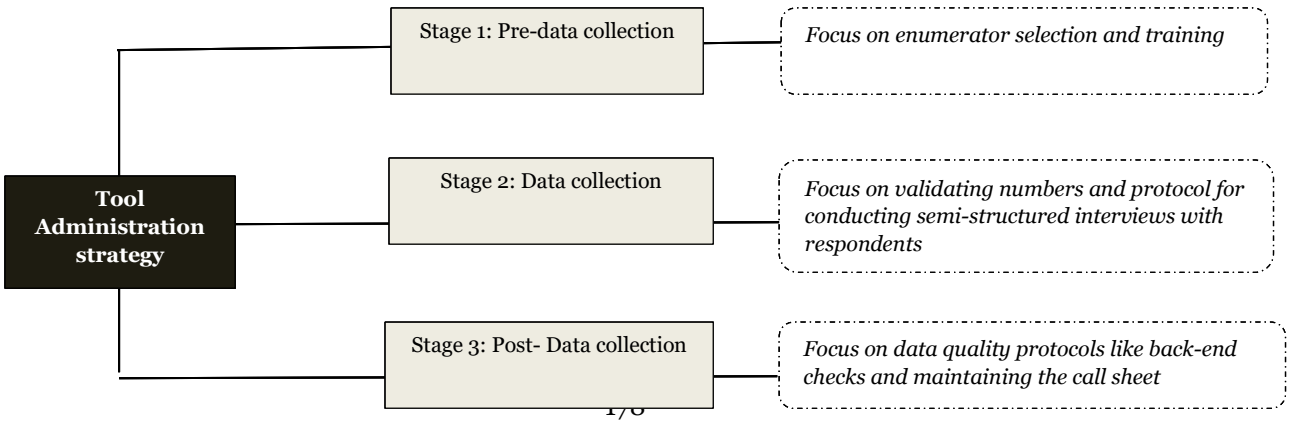
- School Infrastructure Development Programme (SIDP): For the SIDP intervention as well, we have used a case-study approach for getting insights. . One school with SIDP intervention will be selected from each of the operational SIDP districts. In addition to the McGovern Dole districts, additional case studies from other districts where SIDP has been operational has also been developed. Qualitative interview guide was developed for enquiry.

- Digital Literacy initiative: Like the baseline, a case-study approach of assessment will have to be opted for the DL initiative as well. One school with DL intervention will be selected from Darchula and Jajarkot. Telephonic -interviews with one early grade teacher teaching with e-pati (digital interactive learning activities) and headteacher will be conducted for each school. Questions will be asked to understand aspects relating to session delivery, student response and enthusiasm as well as the state of infrastructure and equipment. Key stakeholders will be asked to share photos, if possible, of the school for validating the claim. The case-study based assessment will comment on the processes being adopted and their sustainability. In consultation with the teachers, the assessment will also document the best practices to serve the purpose of better program effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

3. Tool administration strategy

Our approach for the evaluation of the program will take an explanatory sequential approach and move towards a systematic convergence of quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluation will analyse the results through data collected using the semi-structured tools and then builds on the results to explain them in more detail with the KIIs.

The tool administration strategy is divided into 3 stages i.e., Pre-data collection, data collection and post data collection.



B. Pre-Data Collection

Enumerator selection

The enumerators will be selected from NARMA's existing roster of 200 enumerators with whom they have worked in the past. Enumerators will be shortlisted based on a) years of experience in research, b) years of experience in the education sector c) experience working in the regions of program implementation. During the selection process, the emphasis will be placed on the enumerator's experience with qualitative research and their skill set that could help drive deeper conversations to understand the perceptions of the respondents.

Enumerator training

A five-day training will be held by Sambodhi and NARMA to communicate the significance of the project, the need for data collection as well as the way in which the tools are to be administered. During the training, the significance of ethics of research and data collection will be communicated to the enumerators and they will be guided on how to practise the same while conducting the interviews over the telephone. Adequate training will be provided to enumerators by the gender experts to uphold sensitiveness during the administration of questions and mock interviews will be observed to derive the learnings.

C. Data Collection

Validation of telephone numbers of stakeholders: For data collection, the telephone numbers provided by WFP will be contacted. The head teacher has been identified as the entry point for telephonic data collection, a validity check will be run for their phone numbers and they will be informed about the telephonic interview ahead of time. It is during this time that the enumerators will also seek permission from the head teachers to reach out to the other stakeholders i.e., the teachers and the cooks.

Data collection mechanism: Data will be collected through telephonic interaction. Telephone numbers of the stakeholders will be sought from WFP and will be interacted with. To ensure smooth execution of data collection, we have developed a systematic method of approaching and revisiting respondents. During a telephonic data collection, we anticipate two outcomes: a) respondent receives the call; b) respondent declines the call. The figure and the section below explain our approach in addressing both situations.

Moreover, in case of call drops due to poor mobile network, the respondents will be reached out again. The respondents will be contacted again for a minimum of five times and a **maximum of 12**. While the data is being collected with individual stakeholders, schools have been considered as a primary sampling unit. A school is considered complete only when interviews with the following three respondent categories are completed: **Head Teacher, Cook and at least one Parent.**

I. Interview protocols

Introduction

- The enumerators will be introducing themselves highlighting their names and the organisation they represent. The introduction will involve the enumerators providing a brief yet adequate insight on the importance of the study.
- **The respondents will be apprised of the possible interview duration and their consent would be sought before carrying out the interview.**
- **In case the respondent is busy, the call will be rescheduled for a time that suits the respondent.** In case the respondent is available, a consent for recording the interview will be sought and privacy and confidentiality clauses will be explained by the enumerator.

While conducting the interviews

- Enumerators will not be selective about the respondent unless the respondents are either known to them or are abusive. In either case the entries will have to be noted explicitly.
- **Enumerators to follow the same order as given in the respective tools while also ensuring that the time committed to the respondent is adhered to.** However, care will be taken that interviews are not rushed, and respondents are able to understand the questions being asked.
- **To ensure that the respondent has comprehended the question, it will be advised that the enumerator repeats the question**.
- The tool has qualitative questions which will need to be administered with utmost care. Enumerators will need to forge a conversation and add probe questions wherever necessary.

Completing the interview

- At the end of the interview, the enumerator will need to thank the respondent respectfully and answer their questions if any.
- The purpose of the discussion will be reiterated, and the confidential nature of the exercise will be emphasized on once again.
- The enumerator will thank the respondent for his/her time and cooperation.

Ethics of Remote Data collection

For a mixed method study with greater emphasis on the qualitative component, it is critically important that researchers are aware of how they are conducting themselves in an ethical manner throughout the course of research, especially during data collection.

As part of following the ethics of data collection, a significant step is to obtain consent from participants before starting the interview; one which must be obtained cautiously when using remote mechanisms. It is necessary that the researchers ensure that the participants understand the exact nature of the project and have given their fully informed consent for the use of the information recorded for the purpose of the study. Also, since in case interviews conducted on the telephone are required to be recorded, it is necessary to seek permission of the participant to record the interview and also inform them that the recording of the interview can be stopped at any time on request. Similarly, ethics must be complied to even post data collection, especially for maintaining the confidentiality of the data collected. To meet confidentiality, once collected, data is to be transcribed and stored on a password protected computer and only the people involved in the project can access the research data.

II. Post call

Data documentation: The open-ended questions in each of the tools might prove difficult for the interviewer to fill up during the interview process. Therefore, for some of the questions, the enumerator may have to replay the call recording and note down the answers accordingly with utmost care. In some cases, the call recording may also be used to re-check the data entered. This process will be undertaken as soon as the interview has been conducted.

D. Post Data Collection: Data Quality Protocols

Quality assurance aims to assure that the data collected is in accordance with the procedures and that the data meets the requisite standards of quality. In order to, assure data quality for the data collection process[117], we will be using the following mechanisms:

Back-checks/ Re-interviews: A powerful tool in checking the quality of the data is to systematically check the information for respondents. This is done by conducting a short re-interview/back check with some respondents and checking the results with what was collected by the team to reduce the types of problems that affect the accuracy of the survey data. This will be done by the enumerator of other team to reduce biases and problems that affect the accuracy of the survey data. The process will be overseen by Sambodhi. Keeping the school as our primary sampling unit, back-checks will be conducted with

[117] It is to be noted, that ensuring quality of data will be a priority throughout the entire assignment, not restricted to during the data collection phase but will also encompass pre (risk identification and mitigation strategy, questionnaire development, translation of the tools, programming the questionnaire) and post data collection (validity checks, consistency checks, range checks) phases as well.

10% of the interviewed schools for all stakeholders (at least one parent from the school), within the first two weeks of fieldwork. To conduct the back-check, a shorter tool, comprising of respondent characters and few perception-based questions, will be followed.

Maintaining Call-Sheet: A call sheet is a record-keeping sheet that is used by telephone survey interviewers to keep track of information related to the calls they make to reach survey respondents. The information that is recorded on a call sheet captures the history of the various call attempts that are made to sampled telephone numbers. Thus, in order to ensure quality and also monitor the process of data collection, the call sheet will act as a record of the status of each contact number chosen for the study. The call-sheet will also be a record for updated/ alternative numbers collected in case of wrong phone numbers, staff replacement etc.

For this study, the numbers in the call sheet will be divided into two categories, which will be updated after each round of calling:

- Live Contact: Telephone numbers which need to be tried again.
- Dead Contact: Telephone numbers that have been completed / ineligible/ unreachable.

This categorisation into LIVE and DEAD contacts, will help to schedule and prioritize call-backs efficiently.

Annexure XXI: WFP Strategic outcomes and interventions

Strategic Outcome	WFP's intervention/ support
Strategic Outcome 01- Affected populations in Nepal have timely access to adequate food and nutrition during and in the aftermath of natural disasters and/or other shocks	• Organized general food assistance using both food and cash modalities, followed by emergency nutrition assistance through the distribution of specialized nutritious food. • Supported the Government to implement a blanket supplementary feeding programme in the five most affected districts for a period of three months. • Integrated social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) sessions into the overall emergency nutrition assistance for PLW and other caretakers of the children affected by floods.
Strategic Outcome 02- Food-insecure people in targeted areas have improved nutrition throughout the key stages of the life cycle by 2025.	• WFP's mother and child health and nutrition programme provided nutritious food to prevent malnutrition for PLW and children aged 6-23 months in districts of the Karnali where high stunting rates are most prevalent. • Supported nutrition education to health post staff in the Karnali, as part of the delivery of infant and young child feeding messages. • Strengthened the capacity of female community health volunteers to deliver these messages through health mothers' group meetings. • Renewed field level agreements with two cooperating partners – Manahari Development Institute (MDI) and Support Activities for Poor Producers of Nepal (SAPPROS) – which supported the distribution of WFP's nutritious food. • Continued to provide meals of fortified rice, lentils and oil for children between pre-primary and eighth grade for over 200 school days in 11 food-insecure and remote districts. Also placed field coordinators in all implementing districts, increasing its oversight and technical assistance to schools receiving food. • Supported the Government to develop its first integrated national school meals implementation guideline, which sets up nutritional standards and management modalities for school meals in Nepal. • Expanded an evidence-based menu planner for nutritious school meals and continued receiving support on menu design, programme budgeting, food and nutrition education, and resource mobilization to scale-up Nepal's national home-grown school feeding programme.
Strategic Outcome 03- Vulnerable communities in remote, food-insecure areas of Nepal have improved food security and resilience to climate and other shocks by 2030.	• Worked with the Ministry of Forests and Environment, United Nations (UN) agencies and cooperating partners to assist vulnerable communities in shock-prone areas to adapt to climate change and build long term resilience against these shocks through technical assistance, capacity strengthening and creation of assets. • Applied the food assistance-for-assets and food assistance-for-training modalities under the CAFS-Karnali and joint UN RWEE programmes to address the immediate needs of the target population through short-term

Strategic Outcome	WFP's intervention/ support
	employment, while also improving their long-term food security, access and resilience through productive assets. • Supported targeted community members in establishing innovative micro agri-businesses, such as food processing methods, production-based enterprises and forest-based enterprises. • Carried out orientations to local governments and communities to further support their understanding of climate change, how it impacts them and measures to mitigate related shocks. • Under the Purnima and Build Back Better projects, WFP supported the rehabilitation of trails, roads and trail bridges in six districts of Province 3, helping to improve livelihoods, road access and connecting food-insecure communities to local markets.
Strategic Outcome 04- The Government of Nepal has strengthened capabilities to provide essential food security and nutrition services and respond to crises by 2023.	• In 2019, WFP completed construction for two of seven planned provincial Humanitarian Staging Areas (HSAs) in Dhanghadhi and Nepalgunj airports. • Supported the setup of Food Security Information Centres in three provinces and 12 municipalities as part of its support to the federalization of the Nepal Food Security Monitoring System, also known as NeKSAP and worked to strengthen household food security monitoring. • Supported the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development in crop yield forecasting and related capacity strengthening and cooperation. • WFP implemented Forecast-based Financing (FbF) activities in collaboration with GoN and other partners. • WFP supported the organization of disaster preparedness exercises (including simulations) and the installation of non-food item warehouses in four highly flood-prone communities.
Strategic Outcome 05- Government efforts towards achieving Zero Hunger by 2030 are supported by inclusive and coherent policy frameworks across all spheres of government by 2023.	• Supports the Government's formulation of rules and regulations for the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act 2018. • Contributed to finalizing the National 15th Five-year Plan Approach Paper (2019/20—2023/24), providing substantive inputs on the sections on food security and nutrition, agriculture, cooperatives and poverty alleviation. • Provided inputs for the Food Bill (Karnali Province) to promote the production and conservation of food as well as to ensure the right to food for its population. • Providing Technical support to the Karnali and Sudurpaschim provincial governments in several ways like preparing sectoral profiles, conducting food security and nutrition stakeholder mapping, contributing to the formulation of Disaster Risk Reduction Management Regulations, etc. • Supported the National Planning Commission to strengthen its National Nutrition and Food Security Secretariat in organizing food security-related policy and international, multisectoral meetings and events.

Annexure XXII: Programs by International Funders in Nepal

International body	Program	Geography
UNICEF	UNICEF's programmes for 2018-2022 will focus on areas related to health, nutrition, child protection, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, and social protection.	Country level
Save the Children, Nepal	Program domains include Childs Rights Governance, Child Protection, Education, Health and Nutrition, Livelihoods, HIV and AIDS and Humanitarian Response.	Working with over 100 partners in 63 districts of Nepal
Plan International, US	Interventions specific in health, education, earthquake response and COVID 19 response.	Presence in 8 districts of Nepal and working through partners in 42 districts across the whole country.
Helen Keller Nepal	Activities include essential nutrition actions, homestead food production, local multisector governance, and improved nutrition interpersonal communication. Also using ARCH research to advocate for improved programs for infant and young child nutrition, and COVID-19 response.	Country Level
Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)	Child-Centered Disaster Risk Reduction (CCDRR) program	*Direct Implementation:* Baitadi, Bajura, Dhading, Dhanusha, Parsa *Indirect Implementation:* Achham, Dolakha, Saptari
FINNIDA	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project	Baglung, Myagdi, Parbat, Syangja and Tanahun of Gandaki Province and Arghakhanchi, Gulmi, Kapilvastu, Pyuthan and Rolpa districts
CARE Nepal	Addressing Child Marriage in Nepal through Behaviour Change Communication and Social Mobilization	Dhanusha, Mahottari, and Rupandehi districts
GIZ	Support to the Health Sector Programme (S2HSP)	Far Western, Mid-Western and Central development regions
Water Aid	Multiple programs addressing WASH needs of communities and their surrounding environments.	16-20 districts with the lowest ranking HDI number and severe water and sanitation issues
Action Aid Nepal	Women's rights, Education, disaster management, Resilient livelihoods and COVID 19 mitigation.	16 districts across Nepal in collaboration with 10 project partners.
Adara Development	Holistic Community Development, Child Protection & Development, Child Repatriation, Education and Primary Health.	Humla district
Child Fund Japan	ChildFund has been supporting children through sponsorship program, and Special Assistance Projects to respond to the specific needs of the people and the area.	Sindhupalchok district

[Name of commissioning Office]
[Link to the website]